

Career Kickstart

Plan Ahead

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Setting goals is important



Setting goals is important. It helps to figure out how to turn plans and ambitions into realities. And we're here to help you along the way

Making long term plans to decide where you want to go in life, what you want to achieve and how you're going to get there might seem scary, but if you break things down into small steps, it will give you real focus and clear direction.

Start by thinking about what you are good at, what you enjoy and the achievements you're proud of. You may want to ask your friends and family to help you with this

What are your career goals and what do you want to achieve? Be realistic about this and don't forget to do your research. Set yourself goals with a date attached, you are more likely to keep to them and they become less of an intention and more action focused. You can also try writing them down – some people get a lot from writing a plan down

Why would an employer be interested in you? Think about your transferrable skills – things like working to deadlines, communicating and networking. To get you started, **have a look at this checklist:**

- Do you have an ability to motivate others?
- Can you recognise and accept challenges?
- Would you describe yourself as a problem solver?
- Do you organise others?
- Have you got an aptitude to work with facts and figures?
- Are you a good communicator?
- Do you have good writing skills?
- Do you have the ability to work independently (unsupervised)?
- Do you use your initiative?
- Have you got an eye for detail?
- Are you able to work under pressure?
- Would you describe yourself as reliable and honest?

To spot your strengths, think back to times when you have been praised for your work. Often, an employer will want to hear real life examples of how you have applied your skills and what the results were. The STAR technique will help with this:

S – Situation: Set the background for your story.

T - Task: What were you asked to do?

A – Action: How did you do it?

R – Result: Was it a successful outcome?

Chat to a tutor or careers adviser about where the jobs are. This will help you match your skills to the opportunities available and find out how you can develop your experience or qualifications

Your needs and ambitions are very likely to change with life experience. So make sure you review them regularly

You can find out more about the ins and outs of making a career plan at:

The National Careers Service website: www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk (England)

Careers Wales website: www.careerswales.com (Wales)

Careers in Scotland website: www.myworldofwork.co.uk (Scotland)