



Confidence building

Introduction

The aim of this part is to help you work out what has made you successful in the past, choose the kind of occupation you want and build your confidence in your own abilities. After all, if you don't know how good you are how can any one else be expected to?

In this section you will be looking at some of the skills and strengths you have developed so far, the experiences you have enjoyed, the challenges you have relished and the achievements you are most proud of. Using this information you can think about the options you have for the future and plan your next move.

This is no time to be bashful! Aim to remove all your negative thought barriers and concentrate on the positive attributes you have.

Many people find it difficult, sometimes embarrassing, to identify their skills and strengths. It is sometimes easier to think about what we are not so good at rather than what we do very well. Generally, our culture does not always encourage us to acknowledge, let alone discuss, our capabilities.

“No – one else will believe in you until you start believing in yourself”

This is your opportunity to take a step back and contemplate a very important person – YOU

If you cannot recognise your own skills and strengths, how can other people be expected to?

When asked about skills and strengths people often relate these to work life only. However, many skills and strengths are utilised in interests outside work.

Objective setting and goals

WHAT ARE GOALS?

Goals are ambitions they give you a sense of direction. They can help you to focus your energies and talents so that you achieve what you set out to achieve.

Some people like to have a clear idea of what they want to achieve in life while others will be less clear. Some people will know just how they are going to get what they want, while others prefer to respond to events or leave things to chance. Research has found that to be effective you need to have clearly defined targets and have a clear idea of the steps needed to achieve this goal.

Use goal setting and targets to help you:

- Plan your next steps.
- Work towards a qualification.
- Plan how you will meet your short, medium and long term goals by setting achievable targets.
- Make an action plan that you can use to help you reach your targets and goals.

WHY SET GOALS?

- Goals give you something to aim for.
- Goals give you a reason for working at your learning, personal and career development.
- Goals help you work out the steps you need to take to get where you want to be.

One of your long-term career goals may be to get a particular job, or work up to a senior position. But getting this job or that position can take some time to achieve. You need to set up smaller goals to help you to keep motivated and to keep going.

You will already have started to identify your career goals and the steps needed towards achieving them.

Action planning

Knowing what you need to do, or should do, is different from actually doing it.

The purpose of an action plan is to help you to:

- Get motivated.
- Take the next step towards one of your goals
- Build on your strengths.
- Work on overcoming your current weaknesses.
- Finish a task.
- Prepare for an important event.

Action Plans come in all shapes and sizes but contain the same steps.

S.M.A.R.T. targets help you develop an Action Plan

SMART Targets are the key to successful Action Plans. Smart targets are:

SPECIFIC	they say exactly what you need to do.
MEASURABLE	you can prove you have reached them.
ACHIEVABLE	you can reach them in the next few weeks.
REALISTIC	they are about action you can take.
TIME-RELATED	they have deadlines.

SMART Targets make it easier to decide what to do next.

Making an action plan

What does it need to contain?

- Your career goals, short, medium and long term
- Steps needed to achieve the goals.

If you have defined a career goal but cannot achieve it immediately, for example if you need training or experience, record the steps you will need to take on your action plan.

Your action plan is an important document that will identify your route towards your chosen occupation. It is important that you complete and review your action plan so that you are continuously working to achieve the steps that will help you attain your career goals.

Refer to your action plan to record the activities you need to do to help you achieve your goals. Start by planning the activities you will do first.

You will find your plan more achievable if you state in specific terms what you intend to do. A statement such as, *"read newspapers"* is too general to be of much use. A more specific entry would be, *"Visit library, check job columns in Derbyshire Times, research speculative approaches, aim to add five potential employers to contact log."*

Don't forget your action plan needs to be realistic in term of what can be achieved.

Action Points lead to targets that lead to a goal.

FIRST: decide on your GOALS.

THEN: start to draw up an ACTION PLAN showing what you will do.

Action plan

IDENTIFYING EMPLOYERS

Use this space below to outline the steps you plan to take to identify employers.

Steps	I will have this completed by:	What will I do if I am unable to complete this step?

DEFINING CAREER GOALS

If you have identified your job goals, i.e. the types of job you intend to apply for then you can record them in the box below, using a new plan for each job goal.

My job goal:

- If you are unclear about the types of job you intend to apply for, record on your action plan, the steps you will take to define your job goals.
- If you have defined a job goal but cannot achieve it immediately, (for example if you need training or experience), record the steps you will take on your action plan.

Steps	I will have this completed by:	What will I do if I am unable to complete this step?