

Things may seem a little foggy at times, when you think about your future work plans. You just need to realise that careers or job planning is about deciding what's *important to you*. This means being able to:

Think about your personal strengths - know yourself better so you can decide what is important to you.

Plan and research your interests - and then realistically apply them to your circumstances.

Understand your ideas, aims and goals - so you can decide on the best way to achieve them.

You will find a series of short activities to help you focus on your future career plans and possibly expand your job horizons by hearing and learning from other people about their working lives and family backgrounds.

Time required:

Approximately 1 hour to get through the four steps, but remember the more thought YOU put into the process the more you will get out of it.

Aims:

- To broaden your knowledge of the world of work
- To give you an opportunity to look at jobs that you wouldn't normally think of
- To understand what's important to you in terms of an occupation
- To understand that a job may not always be for life
- To understand that we continue learning throughout our lives
- To look at and acknowledge the skills that we have and identify those we need: *personal qualities, general skills, job qualities, job specific skills, transferable skills and key skills*
- To understand how personal qualities and skills relate to real jobs

You will need:

- To be logged into www.talkingjobs.net If you are currently logged out, then ask your Personal Advisor for the login details
- Pen and paper
- To complete this activity you will need to print out **Exercises A, B, C and D** found on pages 4-7, *before you start*
- To arrange an interview with your Personal Adviser, after completing this to discuss your findings

Step 1: Let's start Talking Jobs...

1. Begin by listing, on a piece of paper, any jobs you are currently thinking about. Login to the talking jobs website, and **launch the player**.
2. Do any of the jobs listed interest you? If so, go into each one and find out a bit more about the day-to-day activities involved. If not, then pick out two occupations that 'take your fancy' and start looking at some careers that you may not have considered before.
3. The answers to the last three questions (30, 31, 32) asked of each person in the video would be interesting to note down...

Spend however long you want on this. Once you feel happy that you've got enough information, move on to the next step.

Step 2: Values and Motivators

You've started researching the world of work but it is also essential to understand what your own priorities are. The sort of things you are *expecting from employment*. What do you have to *offer an employer in exchange*?

When we make decisions about the world of work we need to look at strengths and weakness but also our values and what motivates us.

Our **values** often come from things like: *childhood experiences; social background; and family*. Experiences of education can also have a major impact on the development of your values.

Our **motivators** are things that can effect your behaviour. *What drives you?* There is a strong link between motivation and personality.

1. **Launch the player**
2. Exploring the interviews with focus on questions 4, 6, 7, 14, 23 and 25 may be of some help
3. Once you have explored the videos complete **Exercise A**, putting ticks against columns 1, 2 or 3

Step 3: Skills – what they are and do you have them?

Let's look at the terms '**personal qualities**' and '**skills**'. Usually qualities describe a person - such as being *cautious; happy; methodical*, and skills cover things, which can be learned, such as *reading a map; cooking a meal; using a camera*.

Some personal qualities - *confidence for example* - can also be learnt because we can be trained to develop these skills through *confidence building courses, workshops etc*.

1. **Launch the player**
2. Exploring the interviews with focus on questions 4, 5, 6, 7 may be of some help
3. Take some time to consider your own qualities and skills and complete **Exercises B, C and D**

Step 4: Job for Life

Jobs for life no longer exist. Many people will experience working for a number of different employers. Sometimes this is through choice, or because of circumstances, or maybe because of a recession.

Some people spend years training for a particular career and then later on decide to have a complete change of direction. This often happens because people start out their working lives with certain **values and motivators**, but these can change along the way. What motivates you at 18 or 21 is not always the same when you reach your 30's or 40's.

Whatever the circumstances, you need to understand or expect that your skills will need updating or developing at some point in your working life.

What's meant by the term '*really good*' job? Well that's a tough question to answer because it's not the same answer for everyone. For some people a *really good job* is one where *fame* or *money* is involved. For others it's the ability to *travel* or feel that they are *helping other people* with their lives.

1. Launch the player

2. Exploring the interviews with focus on questions 3, 4, 9 and 10 may be of some help
 - *What job did they want to do when they grew up?*
 - *Have their ideas changed?*
 - *Why was this, do you think?*

It's also important to understand that almost everyone goes through the process listed below, when it comes to the world of work. Remember however, that you are trying to achieve '**Realistic**'. There's no point in wanting to be a doctor, if you are not prepared to put in the amount of study required. To be a deep sea diver you have to move to or live by the coast. '**Fantasy**' can become '**Realistic**' but only when determination, hard work and a certain amount of luck are involved.

- **FANTASY** - *most people experience this – 'I want to be an astronaut' / 'I want to be a model' / 'I want to play centre forward for...'*
- **TENTATIVE** - *Exploration – what's out there? / let's see what's involved / development of ideas etc.*
- **REALISTIC** - *I've done the research, I've weighed my options, I have the right qualifications, I'm prepared to do the training involved etc.*

You have now finished going through the steps and assessing the skills you have and those you need. You, hopefully, also realize what motivates you, in terms of a job. It is important to discuss your findings with your Personal Adviser who can move you on to the next step of finding appropriate training, courses or work.

It is important to note that some of the people who help the most are not always in possession of the best information. Family and friends have a big influence over the decision making process, but are they the best qualified to do this? Support is of course vital from them but educational and career decisions should be sought from guidance-trained professionals, who understand the world of education and the world of work.

Exercise A: What are my priorities?

Aspect	Meaning	1	2	3
Money	Highly paid job, bonuses, perks			
Promotion	Being able to climb the career ladder			
Status	Receiving recognition for the work you do			
Security	The job is protected from the current economic job insecurities			
Imaginative	Being creative or using your imagination			
Travel	Working nationally or internationally			
Autonomy	Being able to work independently			
Socially useful	The ability to contribute to society or help those less fortunate			
Physical	Heavy or physically demanding work			
Flexibility	Varied work patterns – shift work perhaps			
Personal growth	Developing new skills			
Routine	A stable work environment with work that is familiar			
Competitiveness	Being very target orientated			
Team player	Being part of a team			
Leadership	Managing people or situations			
Expert	Having special knowledge of your work			

Column 1 = important

Column 2 = does not matter (no strong feelings either way)

Column 3 = not important

Exercise B: Do I have it, do I need it?

Personal quality	Do I have it?	Do I need it?	Skill	Do I have it?	Do I need it?
Polite			Reading and writing		
Reliable			Decision-making		
Responsible			Problem solving		
Patient			Public speaking		
Sociable			Presenting information		
Sensitive			Interpreting information		
Friendly			Using plans		
Tidy			Searching for information		
Cheerful			Planning		
Creative			Working to a deadline		
Caring			Discussing		
Trustworthy/Honest			Being organised		
Confident			Accuracy		
Punctual			Using a keyboard		

Exercise C: Do I have it, do I need it?

Job specific skill	Do I have it?	Transferable skill	Do I have it?
Enjoy researching things		Clean	
Good at selling		Motivating others	
Strong		Flexible approach to tasks	
Good at fixing things		Smartly dressed	
Good with children		Good at time management	
Good with animals		Good at decision making	
Good with money		Good at multi-tasking (doing more than one thing at a time)	
Good at analysing data		Thinking of improvements	
Not bothered about getting dirty		Explaining things to people	
Physically fit		Enthusiastic	
Like to work in office environment		Willing to learn	
Happy to work outside in all weathers		Planning ahead	
Good at sorting information		Thorough	
Good with awkward people		Can use initiative	
Handling equipment with precision or speed		Self-motivated	

Exercise D: Key Skills

Most employers now expect every employee, regardless of qualifications, to possess the basic set of key skills listed beneath. They are seen as vital and considered to be 'transferable' skills. Regardless of the occupation or employer these are day-to-day skills that all employees are expected to have or be willing to gain.

Which do you have or which, if any, do you need to develop?

Key Skills:

- **Improve own learning and performance** – set targets, use plan and review progress and achievements
- **Problem solving** – identify problems and options, plan and try out options, check and describe results
- **Application of number** – carry out calculations, interpret information and interpret results and present findings
- **Communication** – writing, reading and discussions
- **Information Technology** – search for and select information, develop information and present information
- **Working with others** – plan work, work towards objectives and exchange information on progress

Key skill	Do I have it?	Where can I get it?	Key skill	Do I have it?	Where can I get it?
<i>Improve own learning and performance</i>		Voluntary work, hobbies, work place, education classes	<i>Communication</i>		Improve reading ability, literacy classes, hobbies, work place
<i>Problem solving</i>		Voluntary work, hobbies, work place	<i>Information Technology</i>		Courses, work place, hobbies
<i>Application of number</i>		Numeracy classes, work place, hobbies	<i>Working with others</i>		Work place, voluntary work, hobbies