Researching yourself

Before you look for the perfect job, write a CV or apply for a job, you need to do some research. Researching yourself is the key to finding the job that is right for you.

2 a ▶1.1 **Silvia Carnali is approaching the end of her degree course at university. She has decided to start looking for a job, but is not sure where to begin. Silvia asks her friend Sophie, who works in the university careers office, for some advice. Listen to their conversation and, in pairs, discuss the following questions.**

1 What is the first thing Sophie suggests Silvia does?
2 How does Sophie identify her transferable skills?
3 Does Sophie think personality tests are very important?
4 What is the final piece of advice Sophie gives Silvia?

b **Have you tried any of Sophie's suggestions? Did they work for you?**

Your strengths and weaknesses

The first thing you need to do when starting the job-hunting process is a self-assessment of your own strengths and weaknesses. This process will help you identify the skills, qualifications, experience, knowledge and personal characteristics that employers are looking for.

3 a **After talking to Sophie, Silvia produced a 'mind map' to highlight her strengths and weaknesses. Complete the sentences (a–j) in Silvia's mind map on the following page using the prepositions *in*, *to* or *at*.**

b **Complete the headings (1–6) on the mind map using the words in the box.**

Achievements	Experience	Knowledge
Languages	Personal characteristics	~~Skills~~

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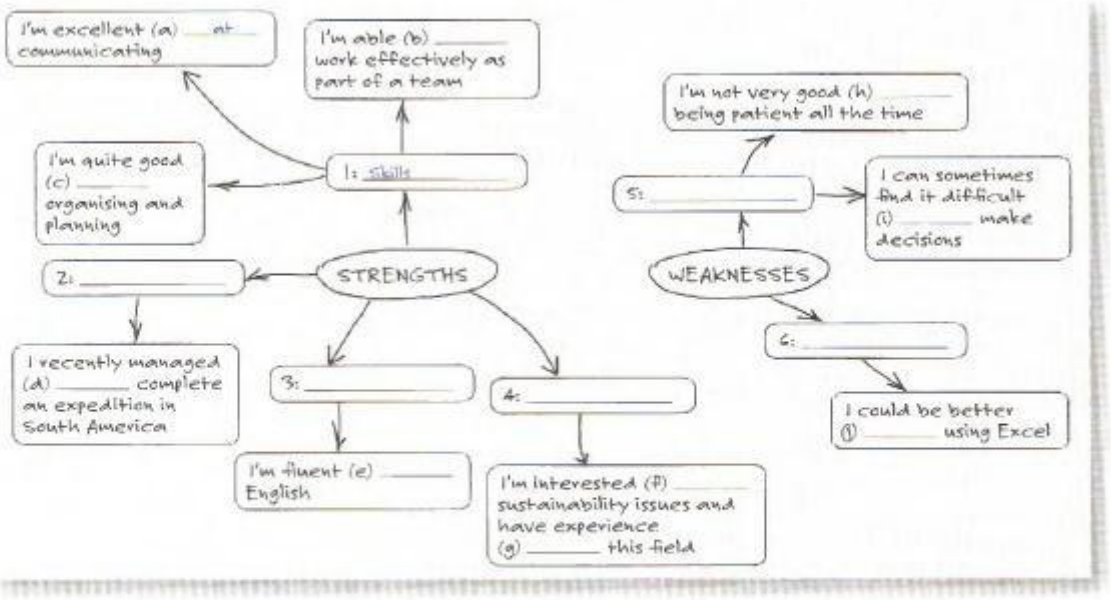

c ▶1.2 **Listen to two friends, Federico and Jack, talking about Federico's strengths and weaknesses. In pairs, discuss the following questions.**

1 What has Federico recently decided to do?
2 Why has he made this decision?
3 What does Federico claim to be good at?
4 What would Federico really like to be able to do?
5 What is Federico doing in order to achieve this aim?

d ▶1.2 **Listen again and underline the personal characteristics in the box that best describe Federico. In pairs, discuss your answers using evidence from the conversation to support your opinion.**

creative	disorganised	flexible
impatient	reliable	successful

e **Match the personal characteristics (1–6) to the questions (a–f).**

1	creative	a	Do you always do what you say you'll do?
2	decisive	b	Are you good at getting other people to agree with you?
3	flexible	c	Are you good at making your mind up quickly?
4	organised	d	Are you able to plan ahead successfully?
5	persuasive	e	Are you able to cope with last-minute changes?
6	reliable	f	Are you good at coming up with imaginative solutions?

f **Make the personal characteristics in Exercise 3e negative by adding a prefix (*dis-*, *in-* or *un-*).**

1 uncreative 3 _____ 5 _____
2 _____ 4 _____ 6 _____

g **In pairs, take turns to ask and answer the questions in Exercise 3e. Discuss your individual strengths and weaknesses, giving specific evidence.**

A: *'Do you always do what you say you will do?'*
B: *'Yes, I'm very reliable. I'm always on time to [illegible] and when I can't make it, I let people know ahead of time.'*

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h Draw a mind map similar to Silvia's, showing your strengths and weaknesses. Add as many bubbles as you like. Try to use the following phrases.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Positive characteristics	Negative characteristics
I'm excellent at ...	I'm not very good at ...	I am ...	I can sometimes be ...
I'm able to ...	I could be better at ...	I try to ...	Occasionally I am ...
I'm interested in ...	I'm reasonably good at ...		I can be a little bit ...
I recently managed to ...	I would like to be able to ...		

i In pairs, discuss your mind maps. Do you share any common strengths or weaknesses?

Your qualifications

At all stages during the job application process you will need to be able to describe your academic qualifications clearly.

4 a Complete the sentences using the correct form of the verbs in the box. You will need to use some verbs more than once.

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1 I graduated with a BA in Sociology from the University of California in Los Angeles in 2007.
2 I _____ Economics at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). I then _____ a Master's in Security Studies at the University of Birmingham, which included a semester at New York University at the Centre of European Studies.
3 I _____ with a BA in Hotel & Catering Management from Hong Kong Polytechnic University. I also _____ an MBA in Marketing, which I _____ last year.
4 After _____ from the School of Oriental Languages and Communication with a BA (Hons) in Mandarin Chinese and English in Maastricht (The Netherlands), I was _____ a scholarship to _____ International Relations at the College of Europe, Warsaw.

b Complete the sentences using the prepositions *at*, *from*, *in* or *with*.

1 I started my career at Johnston Group after graduating ___ Hanyang University ___ a BA and MA ___ Chemical Engineering.
2 I graduated ___ 2008 ___ an MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice ___ Tokyo University.
3 I also obtained a BSc ___ Computer Science ___ Moscow State University ___ 2005.
4 I read Modern Languages ___ The National University of Singapore.

c In pairs, discuss the following questions.

1 What qualifications do you have?
2 Where did you go to university?
3 When did you graduate?
4 What types of career are common for people with your qualifications?
5 Which of your qualifications is most likely to [illegible]

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