

UNIT 1

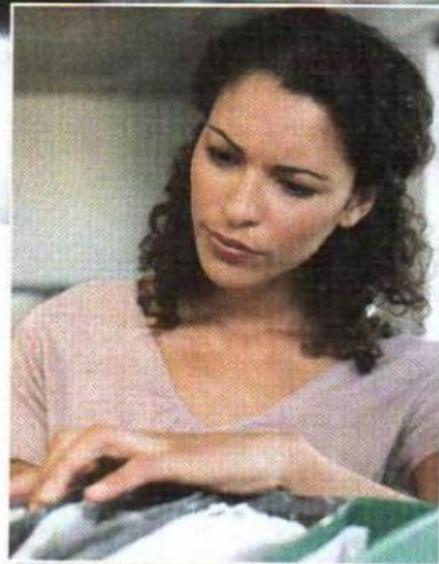
Research and preparation

- Identifying the stages in the job application process
- Researching yourself
- Highlighting your skills and experience
- Researching the market



Identifying the stages in the job application process

Most of us spend between 60–80% of our waking hours working, so it's important to find a job that brings true satisfaction. If you haven't found it yet, then don't give up. Keep looking until you find a job that you love doing.



1 a Teresa Fernandez, a recent graduate, is applying for a job in marketing. Match the extracts from documents and conversations (a–h) to the stages in the job application process (1–8).

1 Sending a cover letter	4 Responding to interview questions	7 Researching the market
2 Sending a CV/resume	5 Making interview small talk	8 Researching yourself
3 Sending a follow-up letter	6 Reading a job advertisement	

a

MARKETING ASSISTANT, Bristol

circa £25K pa

We are a leader in the international logistics business, with operations in over 20 countries. We are seeking a young, dynamic professional to join our marketing team. You will have a good first degree in marketing or a related subject, and ideally some experience of working in the marketing department of a large company. Above all, you must have a positive attitude, strong creative skills, and an ability to work well in a team. Full training will be provided. There are excellent opportunities for promotion within the department.

b

'Teresa?'

'Yes. Hello.'

'Good afternoon. My name's Alan Cassidy. Sorry to keep you waiting.'

'That's all right. I've been enjoying your company brochure. It all looks very impressive. It's nice to meet you at last.'

'Thanks. Have you travelled far to us today?'

'Quite far. I'm currently based in London, so I came on the train this morning.'

I am a recent psychology graduate with first-hand experience of marketing, customer service and sales. I would like to apply for the position of Marketing Assistant, as advertised in *The Guardian*.

I find the prospect of working for your company very attractive because it will enable me to put my deep theoretical knowledge of human nature into a very practical context in a successful international firm.

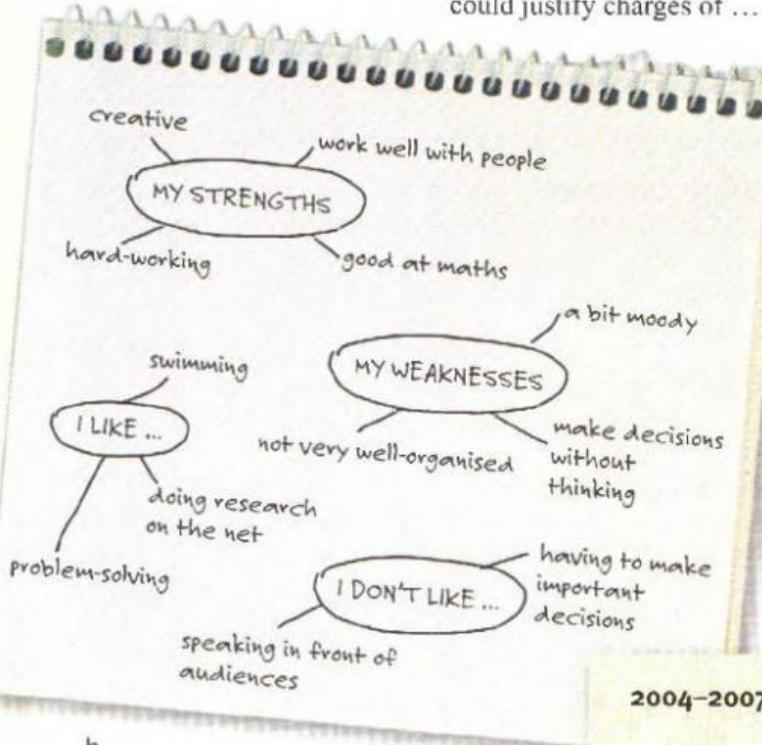
c

d

I am writing to thank you for giving me the opportunity of an interview today. Everyone in your office was friendly and made me feel very welcome.

e

As we discussed during the interview, I believe my skills and experience would enable me to make a very useful contribution to your team. On my journey home I gave more thought to your question about pricing. I checked your prices against how much your competitors are charging for equivalent services, and calculated that with your strong reputation for quality, you could justify charges of ...



h

'Good afternoon. Faster Forwarding Logistics. How can I help you?'

'Hello. My name's Teresa Fernandez. Could I speak to Mr Cassidy in Marketing, please?'

'I'm afraid he's in a meeting. Can I take a message?'

'I'm not sure. I was calling to see if there are any vacancies in your marketing department. I'm a recent psychology graduate, and I'm very keen to work for a company like yours, because of your excellent reputation.'

'Actually, I think there is a vacancy. There was an advert in *The Guardian* last week. Have you seen it?'

'No, I must have missed that. Do you have a copy of the advert that you could send me?'

'Of course, but you'll have to be quick: the closing date is tomorrow.'

f

'What would you say are your main weaknesses?'

'Well, I didn't use to be very well-organised. Nothing very serious, but for example I used to forget my friends' birthdays or try to rush university assignments to get them done at the last minute. But in the last few years I've learnt some nice tricks to help me organise my life – simple things like writing down all my tasks for the day and not relaxing until I've done everything I need to do.'

g

2004–2007 **Kingston University**

- BSc (Hons) Psychology (2.1)

2008

Customer service assistant, Packaging Palace

- Resolved customer complaints
- Created customer loyalty programme
- Liaised with management on pricing strategy

C Read the extracts again. Which extracts mention:

- 1 details of Teresa's work experience? C ____
- 2 details of Teresa's studies and qualifications? ____ ____ ____
- 3 the job salary? ____
- 4 Teresa's weaknesses? ____ ____
- 5 evidence of Teresa's skill with numbers? ____ ____ ____
- 6 where the vacancy is advertised? ____ ____
- 7 evidence of Teresa's research skills? ____
- 8 teamwork? ____ ____ ____
- 9 a compliment from Teresa about the company? ____ ____ ____ ____
- 10 evidence of Teresa's research into the company? ____

d Do you think Teresa has a good chance of getting the job? Why (not)?

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?

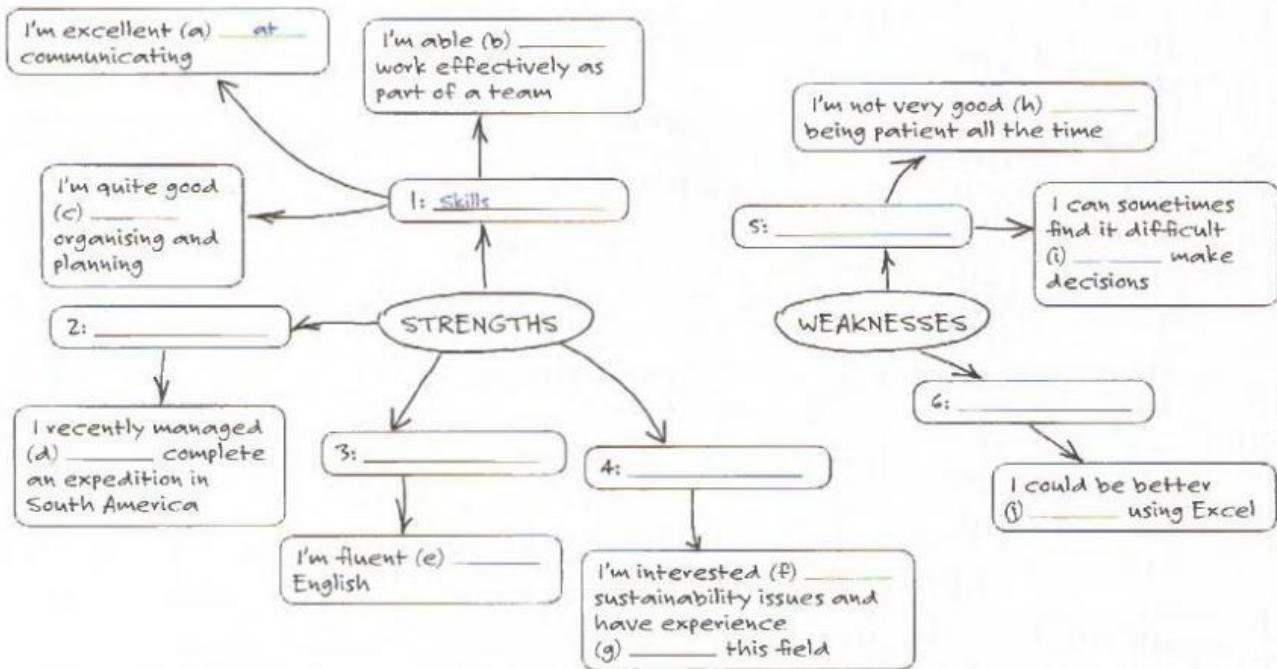
Your strengths and weaknesses

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



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 <u>uncreative</u>	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 work, classes and meetings, and when I can't make it, I let people know ahead of time.'

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?

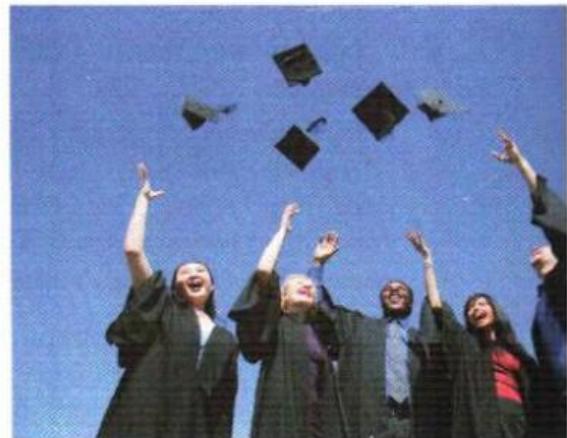
Your qualifications

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.

award complete graduate hold obtain read

- I graduated with a BA in Sociology from the University of California in Los Angeles in 2007.
- I completed Economics at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). I then obtained 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.
- I graduated with a BA in Hotel & Catering Management from Hong Kong Polytechnic University. I also obtained an MBA in Marketing, which I completed last year.
- After graduating from the School of Oriental Languages and Communication with a BA (Hons) in Mandarin Chinese and English in Maastricht (The Netherlands), I was awarded a scholarship to study International Relations at the College of Europe, Warsaw.



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

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

c In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- What qualifications do you have?
- Where did you go to university?
- When did you graduate?
- What types of career are common for people with your qualifications?
- Which of your qualifications is most likely to impress a future employer?

Highlighting your skills and experience

Employers will ask for transferable skills or competencies – the skills, knowledge and behaviour they consider necessary for a particular job. Reviewing your previous experience will help you to identify your transferable skills and recognise jobs that you are qualified for.

5 a In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 What general skills and knowledge do most employers look for in job applicants?
- 2 Apart from specific qualifications and technical expertise, what skills and knowledge have you got that make you employable?

b Match the transferable skills (1–8) to the examples of professional behaviour (a–h).

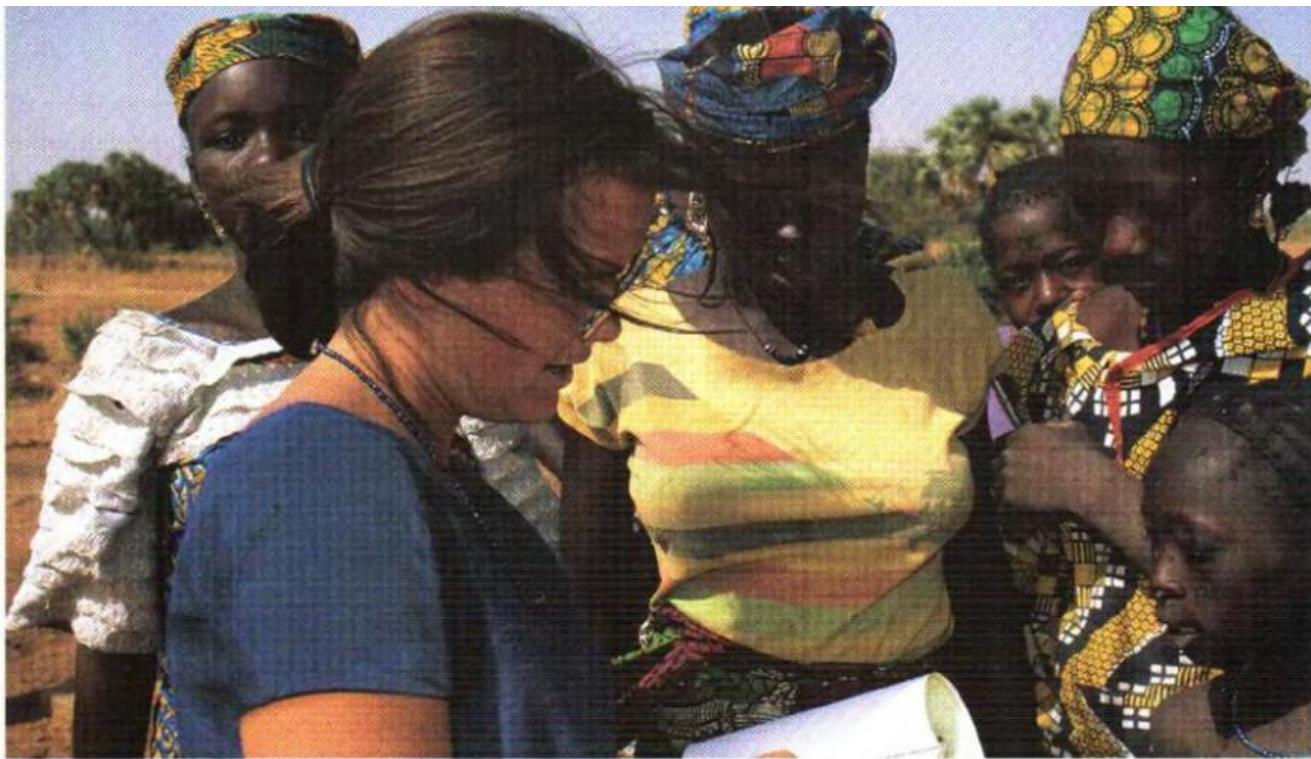
1 analytical skills	a I have a justified belief in my ability to do the job. I am able to express my opinion or provide advice when necessary. I am good at making decisions.
2 creativity	b I actively seek feedback on my performance and carefully consider feedback. I demonstrate an interest in and understanding of my own and other cultures. I understand my own strengths and limitations.
3 self-confidence	c I am good at getting a good deal. I am good at developing and managing relationships with others. I am able to persuade, convince and gain support from others.
4 communication skills	d I am able to formulate new ideas to solve problems. I am able to think ahead to spot or create opportunities. I set aside thinking time to come up with alternative ways of getting things done more efficiently.
5 independence	e I can work with sustained energy and determination on my own. I can find ways to overcome obstacles to set myself achievable goals. I strive towards my own targets and refuse to settle for second best.
6 interpersonal skills	f I am good at data analysis. I am excellent at interpreting data to see cause and effect and am able to use this information to make effective decisions.
7 negotiation skills	g I am able to express myself effectively. I am able to make my opinions totally clear and am rarely misunderstood. I produce clear, well-written reports that can be easily understood.
8 self-awareness	h I am good at working cooperatively. I am good at working and communicating within a team to achieve shared goals. I am a good listener.

c Write your own examples of behaviour for the following transferable skills.

Compare your answers with the suggestions in the answer key.

- 1 flexibility I am not rigid in my approach to work.
- 2 leadership skills
- 3 organisational skills
- 4 teamworking skills

d Identify three key transferable skills of your own, which you have used at work or university. In pairs, tell each other about your skills, giving examples of your behaviour.



e ►1.3 After creating her mind map, Silvia talks to Sophie about her university and work experience. Listen to the conversation and answer the following questions.

- 1 When did Silvia apply for her MA course?
- 2 What was Silvia doing in Africa?
- 3 What job did Silvia have at university?

f ►1.3 Complete the extracts from the conversation using the correct form of the verbs in the box. Listen again and check your answers.

apply convince deal give plan talk understand work

- 1 'I applied for my MA course while I was working in Africa, and even managed to start doing some research for the course before I came back to England.'
'So you're clearly quite good at _____.'
- 2 I _____ for an NGO as part of a large team with people from all over the world. We all lived together and shared a bathroom. The work was quite varied and I was _____ different tasks to complete each week.
- 3 ... our main aim was to educate local people about the need for reforestation. We tried putting up posters, but this didn't have much of an effect. We needed to find a better way to communicate this message. Later on I _____ to respected members of the community, and _____ them to talk to other people in the village. This approach was far more effective.
- 4 When I was at university I was the communications officer of the student union and I was responsible for _____ with suppliers. I had to order food and drink for university concerts and so on. It was always possible to get a better deal if you were good on the phone. It wasn't just a question of being persuasive though, it was really a case of being clear and expressing yourself well, making sure that everybody _____ what I was saying.

g In pairs, discuss which transferable skills in Exercises 5b and 5c are demonstrated in each extract (1–4).

h Complete the phrases for demonstrating transferable skills using the correct verbs in brackets.

- 1 analytical skills (*analyse / conduct / identify*)
a identify a mistake b data c a survey
- 2 creativity (*invent / solve / suggest*)
a a machine b an alternative c a problem
- 3 communication skills (*explain / give / write*)
a a report b an idea c a presentation
- 4 interpersonal skills (*listen / resolve / work*)
a a dispute b to a point of view c with 'difficult' people
- 5 leadership skills (*chair / delegate / motivate*)
a a meeting b a team c tasks
- 6 organisational skills (*decide / implement / meet*)
a deadlines b on priorities c a plan
- 7 teamworking skills (*contribute / discuss / support*)
a an issue b to a meeting c a colleague
- 8 negotiation skills (*change / convince / negotiate*)
a someone's mind b with someone c someone to do something

i In pairs, think of some more specific actions or tasks which demonstrate transferable skills.

j Identify three of your transferable skills. Make notes about the things you have done in the past that demonstrate these skills. Use the phrases in Exercises 5h and 5i.

k In pairs, take turns to tell each other short stories about the things you have done that demonstrate your transferable skills, using your notes from Exercise 5j. Try to guess which transferable skills your partner's stories demonstrate.

l Think of three different jobs and list two transferable skills that are essential to each job.

Job 1 _____	Job 2 _____	Job 3 _____
Skill 1 _____	Skill 1 _____	Skill 1 _____
Skill 2 _____	Skill 2 _____	Skill 2 _____

Researching the market

Finding a job

Once you know yourself, it's time to start researching the market – finding out more about the type of job you want and the companies and organisations that have similar posts. Doing this will help you make a short list of the places where you'd like to work.

6 a In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 Where would you start looking for a job?
- 2 Which of these methods would you consider using?
 - job agencies / headhunters • the Internet
 - newspapers and magazines • cold calling / mailing
 - networking

b ►1.4 Listen to five people discussing job-hunting. Which job-hunting method in Exercise 6a does each speaker recommend?

Speaker 1 _____

Speaker 4 _____

Speaker 2 _____

Speaker 5 _____

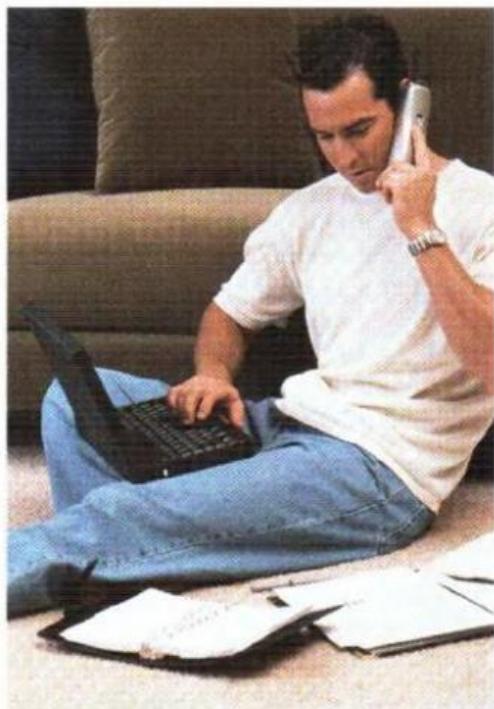
Speaker 3 _____

c ►1.4 Listen again and, in pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 Do you agree with the advice the speakers give?
- 2 Have you used these methods in the past? Would you try any of these methods?
- 3 What are the advantages and disadvantages of each method?
- 4 Can you think of any other job-hunting methods?

Cold calling

Cold calling means phoning a company to enquire about job opportunities which have not been advertised. The phone conversation is used to generate interest in you as a potential employee. The aim of the call is to get an invitation to send your CV.



7 a In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 Have you ever tried cold-calling a company? Was it successful?
- 2 What advice would you give somebody cold-calling a company in your country?

b ►1.5 Eryk and Patrick are looking for work in the hotel industry in London. They both have experience working in hotels in their own countries. They decide to cold-call a number of hotels in London to try and find a suitable job. Listen to their calls and decide who has the more successful cold calling technique.

c ►1.5 Complete the extracts from Eryk's call (1–5) using the sentences (a–e). Listen again and check your answers.

- I have worked for a number of big hotels in Poland.*
- I would like to speak to Janet Robinson.*
- What background experience are you looking for?*
- Are you looking for someone with experience such as this?*
- Are you looking for employees with international experience?*

- 1 *Good morning. I'm Eryk Pawlak. _____ Is she there?*
- 2 *I have considerable professional experience in the hotel industry. _____*
- 3 *My mother tongue is Polish, but I can also speak Spanish, having worked for a big hotel in Spain. _____*
- 4 *To begin with I mainly worked managing a team of cleaners and porters. However, my Spanish improved quickly and I was moved to reception, where I dealt with customers both face to face and on the phone. _____*
- 5 *'Do you have a degree?'
'Yes, I have a degree in tourism. _____'*

d Match the extracts (1–5) in Exercise 7c to the following cold calling techniques (a–e).

- Give just enough information about yourself to generate interest in yourself as a potential employee. 2
- Respond to questions with your own questions to find out more about the company.
- Use positive questions that invite a 'yes' response.
- Mention one or two concise achievements, using facts and figures where possible.
- Ask to speak to the decision maker by name.

Job advertisements

A good job advertisement is designed to attract the most suitably qualified applicants. It's not just applicants that are competing with each other for jobs; employers are also competing with each other to attract the best candidates for their vacancies.

8 a In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- What information would you expect to find in a well-written job advertisement?
- What makes a good job advertisement?

b Employers usually try to squeeze as much information into their job advertisements as possible. However, because advertising is expensive and space limited, they tend to use abbreviations to describe roles in as few words as possible. Write the full meanings of the following abbreviations using the words in the box.

agency annum clean current curriculum driving
earnings experience licence of on per per
point sale target vitae week

1 CCDL <u>current clean driving licence</u>	5 OTE _____
2 CV _____	6 PA _____
3 EXP _____	7 PW _____
4 AGY _____	8 POS _____

c Which abbreviation would you expect to see in a job advertisement:

- if you need relevant professional experience for the position?
- if the salary mentioned was for the whole year?
- if a job agency is advertising the job?
- if the position requires experience of selling products to customers?
- if the take-home pay will be part basic salary and part performance-related pay?

d Job advertisements tend to use a lot of jargon, like *proactive team player*. Look at the extract from a job advertisement. In pairs, discuss what the terms in bold actually mean in specific, practical terms. Why are they important skills in the workplace?

Great graduate job opportunity
Are you a **team player**? Are you **flexible, dynamic & results-focused**?
Do you have **good organisational skills**?
Then we are looking for you ...

e Match the jargon in Exercise 8d to the following questions. In pairs, take turns to ask and answer the questions.

- 1 Do you have a personality that will fit in with the rest of the team? Are you willing to help with tasks outside your job role when required?
- 2 Are you someone who wants to work, is prepared to do what it takes to fulfil your job function and make money for the company? Will you be aware of how your actions affect the company as a whole?
- 3 Are you innovative and creative? Are you the type of person who thinks intelligently and can generate ideas to improve things?
- 4 Are you prepared to work to meet the demands of the business, which might involve relocating to another office or working extra hours – even weekends?
- 5 Do you meet deadlines, work well with others and get things done? Can you produce reliable work under pressure and be trusted with multiple responsibilities?

f Read the two job advertisements and answer the following questions.

Underline the parts of the advertisements that support your answers.

- 1 For which job is a university degree essential?
- 2 Which job places more emphasis on being flexible and adaptable?
- 3 Which job offers a higher salary?
- 4 What should you do if you wish to apply for the Media Assistant position?
- 5 How will you know if Media X is interested in your application?

Trainee Finance Recruitment Consultant – £30–£35K OTE. Queen Careers

Your Profile: Are you a graduate or of graduate calibre with a track record of success? You will have a minimum of two years' solid sales experience and the hunger to succeed! For a trainee finance recruitment consultant no two days are the same, and you must be a great multi-tasker with the ability to push yourself further and further all the time. The right candidate will be target-driven, articulate, determined and overall 100% focused on a career in recruitment.

The Role: The role of a trainee recruitment consultant is varied from day to day. One day you could be sourcing and screening candidates for your current roles, and the next everything from cold-calling new clients to negotiating contracts. You will be working on the secretarial and support team liaising with high-flying candidates and well-established companies in the investment banking sector, so your presentation skills should be second-to-none.

The Company: Very well-established and situated in a fantastic central London location, this is an opportunity to work for a market-leading worldwide specialist in investment banking and financial recruitment consultancy. Professional and consultative in approach, they offer second-to-none training from ground level upwards with bonuses, incentives and fun along the way.

If this sounds like the career for you please email Elizabeth@Queencareers.com or call 0870 12341234.

Closing date: 15th May

Media Assistant. Media X

Quote Ref: 007584 MX

An excellent opportunity to work for a leading international education group in a small but lively media department.

We are looking for a well-organised and motivated graduate to become part of an international marketing/media team. The key objective of this role is to support the team in producing a range of print and online materials for worldwide marketing and sales teams. Tasks will include reporting to the media manager, managing fact files, accurate proof reading and editing, inputting content into our website CMS, coordinating and gathering information, warehouse and stock management and collating and writing newsletters.

We are looking for a graduate with excellent communication skills, accurate written English, good attention to detail and some experience of working in a marketing environment.

Proficiency in MS Office and excellent command of English language are essential; additional languages would be a plus.

Training will be provided for Adobe Creative Suite and Tridion, although any working knowledge of either software package would be advantageous.

Qualification Level: Undergraduate degree essential.

Salary: circa £28K pro rata

Email your CV and cover letter to colm@MediaX.com by May 23rd.

Please note that due to the large volume of responses expected, only successful candidates will be contacted.

g Read the job advertisements again and find expressions to match the following definitions.

- 1 A Latin term meaning *approximately* used to talk about salaries. This term informs you that the salary is not fixed but may be around 10% higher or lower depending on your relevant experience and qualifications. _____
- 2 A term used to inform you of the date by which the employer must have received your application. Also sometimes called a deadline. _____
- 3 An abbreviation meaning *thousand*. _____
- 4 A term used to inform you that you must quote the reference number when you apply for the position. This number should be clearly marked on your envelope (if you apply by post) or the subject line of your email, as well as at the top of your cover letter. _____
- 5 A Latin term meaning that your salary is calculated according to what proportion of a full-time job your hours make up. So, if the salary is quoted at £18,000 based on a full-time week of 40 hours and you are working 30 hours per week, you will be paid an annual salary of £13,500. _____

h In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 What are the main transferable skills required for each job?
- 2 In which job would you expect to work under more pressure?
- 3 Which job would you prefer to do and why?

i Many job advertisements request familiarity with certain tools, skills or languages that are relevant to the job. In pairs, put the expressions in bold in order of knowledge and experience required.

- Proficiency in MS Office and **excellent command** of English language are essential; additional languages are a plus.

- Training will be provided for Adobe Creative Suite and Tridion, although **working knowledge** of either software package would be advantageous.

j Write sentences about your own knowledge and experience using the following expressions.

- I am proficient in ...
- I have an excellent command of ...
- I have a good working knowledge of ...

k Sort the phrases in the box into two groups.

ideally you will have **is essential** ... is necessary ... is preferred ... is vital
the successful candidate will be would be a plus ... would be advantageous
... would be desirable ... would be welcome you must be ... you will have ...

1 Skills which candidates must have

... is essential _____

2 Skills which the employer hopes for (they may still consider the candidate if they don't have all of them)

l Which of the phrases in Exercise 8k are used in the two job advertisements on page 16?

M Read the following job advertisement. Find words that mean someone who is:

- 1 good at finding solutions to problems. _____
- 2 able to speak a language without any noticeable mistakes or effort. _____
- 3 flexible and able to work on different projects at the same time. _____
- 4 good with computers. _____
- 5 good at maths and dealing with numbers. _____

Junior Consultant

Organisation: FUTERRA

Location: Central London

Salary: £18,000–£20,000



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Are you a great communicator? Want to make a difference? Talk to Futerra!

Futura is a communications agency that specialises in the environment and social change. We work with government, businesses and NGOs and have an exciting opportunity for a new junior team member. You'll need to be resourceful and have fantastic research skills, common sense – and, of course, fluent English. You must be adaptable: there will be lots of desk-based research, but you may also find yourself hitting the phones or helping at events. You'll also have to be computer literate and numerate. You'll have a degree in a relevant discipline and a keen interest in communications, and be able to demonstrate a commitment to sustainability, whether through previous roles, internships or student activities. You'll find us bright, passionate, committed and all-round fun people.

N What skills and experience would you need to stand a good chance of being interviewed for the position? Do you have the transferable skills and experience required for the position at Futerra?

O Research the market and find a number of job advertisements for vacancies that match your criteria for work. Analyse the advertisements and identify whether you have the transferable skills and experience required for the position.