Progression skills module 6: Capturing success

Teacher notes

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Department for
Education

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Contents

Preface to Progression skills modules

Aims of this series

Progression skills modules are designed to support schools in delivering practical pupil workshops to help focus gifted and talented (G&T) or potential gifted and talented pupils to aim high and achieve their best. For example, over the course of the series, pupils will be asked to assess their prior achievements and successes, as well as some of the barriers they have overcome and may still face; they will reflect on what it means to be gifted and/or talented and how this may impact on their identity; they will be supported with strategies for learning and achieving the highest grades and they will be encouraged to think ahead and plan for an ambitious future. Although the materials are designed with Key Stage 4 in mind, they can easily be adapted for use with younger pupils as appropriate.

Each skills module comprises:

- a teacher or tutor guide with notes, plans and resources for a sequence of workshops;

- linked pupil handouts to accompany the activities (pupils' handouts are also supplied in these teacher notes);

- linked presentation slides.

How to use these resources

Each Progression skills module consists of a number of workshops that are designed to last for up to 90 minutes. However, these can be adapted and used selectively, as separate activities, with gap tasks for pupils to complete independently.

It will be helpful to provide pupils' handouts as a workbook for pupils to keep and use. Pupils' handouts have been offered in Word™ format to provide schools with the flexibility to adapt and tailor them to their own needs. Some elements of the handouts, such as the *Progression workshop contract, Handout 1: Top tips for action* and *Handout 2: The good word guide*, are the same in every module, to encourage pupils actively to capture learning and apply it elsewhere. Similarly, *Handout 20: Conclusion: how to learn from this workshop* is provided in every module for pupils to read for themselves. Teachers should prompt pupils to use these pages.

The activities can work with small groups of pupils or larger groups, but a minimum membership of six is recommended. The optimum group size is 10 to 15 pupils. The social networks built up in these skills workshops are a key to their success and it is important to try and create new friendships and peer groups by bringing different types of pupils together. For example, passive compliant pupils could be encouraged to work with more extrovert pupils; bright under-achieving pupils may benefit from working with highly able pupils. Schools and local authorities (LAs) may wish to consider pooling resources with other schools and working collaboratively on providing opportunities for their pupils to work together in the Progression skills workshops. Teachers who run workshops for larger groups will find it helpful to recruit mentors to support small-group and paired work. Non-teaching staff or older pupils, for example, Year 12 and Year 13 students, can be briefed for this role. Ensure every adult in the room knows how to facilitate rather than tell; at every opportunity they should encourage pupils to think about how the topics link back to their everyday lives, and how they may use what they have learned to change their future.

Some practical tips

Before workshops start, set up the room with all the chairs in a U-shape or circle (or two U-shapes, one inside the other) around the centre of the room. The mentors' and teachers' chairs should be part of the circle or U-shape. Place name stickers on each chair and arrange for the pupils to be in mixed groups. Try to avoid friendship groups. Explain that the learning objectives include developing social skills and building new social networks. It is good for pupils to work with people they don't know.

Explain how important it is to build up friendships in life beyond school and that college and university students enjoy making new friends, once they get over the initial awkwardness.

Optional: Ask mentors (or a few pupils) to take responsibility for a camera and take pictures throughout the workshop. They can put these pictures onto a screensaver slide show and play this and music at the appropriate times, and in future workshops.

Useful resources

- Laptop, slides and music or relevant, illustrative movie clips
- Music list
- Slide presentations
- Camera
- Flipchart paper, pens and reusable sticky pads
- Sticky notes
- Paper
- Pens
- Glue
- Pupils' handouts
- Envelopes
- Name stickers

Key themes and objectives addressed in this skills module

Key theme or concept	Main aims and goals	Pupils' starting points	Outcomes
Capturing success	To ensure pupils record/ acknowledge their achievements for the record – for the school, for themselves and for their future applications to college, university or work Simple steps to CV building	May not feel their achievements are acknowledged May not feel there is value in them	Understand, articulate, record and share their successes See how these can contribute to their future

This module will answer the following questions:

- How do I record and organise my achievements for a college or job application?
- How do I go about applying for a job?

1 Introduction: you can make it happen!

Objectives

- To set the context and motivate and enthuse pupils

- To begin to explore their understanding of what it means to be gifted and talented

- To consider how this relates to their own identity

- To help pupils to begin to see their peers through fresh eyes

Resources

Progression workshop contract handout

Handout 1: Top tips for action

Handout 2: The good word guide

Handout 3: The GROW model

Handout 4: Current reality prompt sheet

Slide 2: The GROW model

Flipchart paper and pens

Reusable sticky pads

Sticky notes

Important note: Make sure pupils are aware of and encouraged to use *Handout 1: Top tips for action* and *Handout 2: The good word guide.*

Activity

Explain who everyone is, why they are all here and, in particular, why the pupils are here. Read the *Progression workshop handout* contract together to make the expectations clear to everyone.

Ask what they are expecting: what they have been told or have heard about the Gifted and Talented programme so far. Use this as a basis to build confidence and reinforce the message of individuality and individual journeys. If necessary, correct any erroneous assumptions about the programme. Talk about the aims of this series of workshops, in particular:
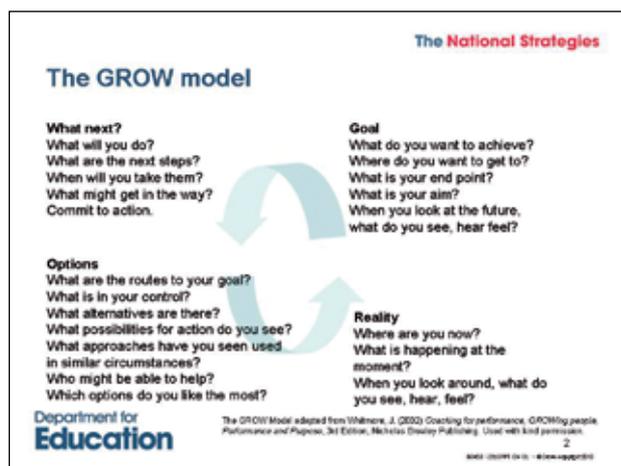
- to gain increased self-awareness;

- to understand how the careers and jobs they will have in future can be shaped and influenced by choices they make over the next few years;

- to encourage them to keep finding out more about careers and jobs;

- to help them identify and develop their hopes and ambitions and begin to see a pathway towards realising them.

Task

Ask pupils to think about their dream job, or any career aspirations they may have. (Reflect on responses from *Workshop 4: What's my journey – tackling barriers* in *Progression skills module 3: Getting ahead – strategies for success* (00039-2010PDF-EN-01)).

The purpose of this exercise is for pupils to check in and arrive – to recognise where they are now, how they got here, the successes and effort that they have made.

Show slide 2 and refer pupils to *Handout 3: The GROW model*, which they may have come across in previous Progression skills modules.

The **National Strategies**

The GROW model

What next?
What will you do?
What are the next steps?
When will you take them?
What might get in the way?
Commit to action.

Goal
What do you want to achieve?
Where do you want to get to?
What is your end point?
What is your aim?
When you look at the future, what do you see, hear feel?

Options
What are the routes to your goal?
What is in your control?
What alternatives are there?
What possibilities for action do you see?
What approaches have you seen used in similar circumstances?
Who might be able to help?
Which options do you like the most?

Reality
Where are you now?
What is happening at the moment?
When you look around, what do you see, hear, feel?

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The GROW Model adapted from Whitmore, J. (2002) Coaching for performance, GROWing people, Performance and Purpose, 3rd Edition, Nicholas Brealey Publishing. Used with kind permission.

2

Explain to pupils that they are now going to look at their current situation. Knowing our starting point helps us determine the journey ahead. We need to recognise where we are now and how we got here, identifying some of our achievements along the way. Pupils should now create a representation of their current reality, using the GROW model.

Explain that this is about being a reflective learner: pupils recognise their feelings, prepare logical results/outcomes and learn from experience. It may be worth revisiting the *Progression workshop contract* at this point, as pupils are about to get into personal matters which require respect, discretion and sensitivity. This will help them to feel able to 'open up' to their peers.

Ask pupils to discuss their current reality with a partner, using the prompt questions on *Handout 4: Current reality prompt sheet*. What do their partners notice? Does anything please them? Does anything concern them? Have they moved forward from where they were when they last used the GROW model?

What next?

Ask pupils to continue their discussions, this time identifying five practical activities that will help them get to where they want to be. Examples are given on *Handout 4: Current reality prompt sheet*.

Compile from the discussion a list of practical activities on a flipchart for later reference. A pupil can be asked to do this for the group.

2 What is a personal statement?

Objectives

- To understand what a personal statement looks like

- To begin exploring positive phrasing words

- To understand the criteria for an effective personal statement

Resources

Handout 5: 'What is a personal statement?' quiz

Handout 6: Positive phrasing and buzz words exercise

Handout 7: The criteria for an effective personal statement

Personal statements from **www.purepotential.org**

Optional: Teachers may wish to put the answers to the quiz onto a slide, and to print the positive phrasing exercise on card.

Activities

Explain that 43 per cent of young people now go to university. This means it is more difficult to get places at competitive universities. University admissions officers state that the personal statement content is important. It's the same as a job application. It's about providing evidence of why you're a great applicant. The Association of Graduate Recruiters report that on average, 48 people apply for every one job. Both indicate how important it is to have:

1. a CV (developed further in *Workshop 3: What is a CV?*);

2. a personal statement that is attractive, has good content, shows the applicant's experience and leaves a good impression;

3. a personal portfolio (developed further in *Workshop 4: What would I include in my own CV or personal statement? A look at personal portfolios*).

Pupils therefore need to consider keeping a portfolio of relevant information so they can adapt their CVs and personal statements.

Explain to pupils that they should be thinking about these things now. Point out that aspirations and a positive attitude towards university entry will give them inspiration during the times when their studies seem tough, and will help keep their minds focused. Make it clear to pupils that the personal statement plays a vital role in the university application process. Pupils need to gain the experience they need while they are in Year 10, 11 and 12 because the application process begins in early September in Year 13. The personal statement is effectively their means of explaining how they meet the universities' criteria.

'What is a personal statement?' quiz

Ask pupils to complete *Handout 5: 'What is a personal statement' quiz* as a means of starting a discussion to answer the question 'What is a personal statement?' Give them three minutes to complete the quiz on their own, then ask what they think the correct answers are and develop what they say into short discussions using the information below.

The National Strategies   9
Progression skills module 6: Capturing success
Teacher notes

1. **The personal statement is usually around 2000 words long.**

False. The limit is 4000 characters (approximately 600 words), which is why you need to write concisely.

2. **Pupils have to submit a separate personal statement to each university.**

False. You only submit one regardless of how many universities or courses you apply to.

3. **The deadline for Oxford and Cambridge, medicine, dentistry and veterinary science is earlier than for other courses.**

True. The deadline for these is 15 October (the main deadline of 15 January) so if you are thinking of applying to Oxford or Cambridge or studying one of these courses, you should start thinking about your application around three months earlier.

4. **Applications open 1 September.**

True. Applications open at the beginning of September but many pupils leave writing their personal statements until the last minute. You should start writing your statement over the summer holidays, giving you plenty of time to perfect it. In that period you should also ask family and friends to look over it and make suggestions on how you can improve it. Be aware that all of this takes time.

5. **Admission tutors wait until all the applications have been submitted before making offers.**

False. Admissions tutors do not wait until all applications are in before they start assessing applications and handing out offers. It is important to get your applications in early to ensure you have the best chance of securing a place at your first-choice university. Some independent schools send applications in September.

6. **Long, complicated words and sentences are more likely to impress admission tutors.**

False. You simply need to be clear and concise in conveying your ability in and motivation for your chosen subject, along with any extra-curricular activities you have done.

7. **The statement should include your AS grades.**

False. There is a separate section in the form where you include details about your academic grades. Do not use up your precious word count on information the admissions tutor can access on the UCAS form.

8. **It is fine to lie in the personal statement as long as no one finds out.**

False. Admissions tutors read thousands of personal statements every year and will often be able to spot lies. You might be called for an interview in which you might be asked about any element of your application. Most importantly, this is not the right way to go about your life! That said, it is important to sell yourself effectively, which is why you should now start to think about building up real, relevant experience to demonstrate commitment to your subject.

9. **It is OK to use parts of other people's statement as long as they don't apply to the same universities as you.**

False. Copying someone else's work is never a good move and UCAS has developed sophisticated software to spot plagiarism.

10. **Your personal statement should be a life history of your achievements.**

False. You have a strict word limit, so only include relevant information in your personal statement.

Additional information for discussion

The personal statement is a short personal essay which describes your motivation to study, your interests, experiences and personal character. It is the most important element of the UCAS application. Most universities do not interview applicants, so a powerful and persuasive statement can provide admissions tutors with a good reason to offer a place. Personal statements are particularly important due to the competitive nature of the admissions process: there can be as many as 20+ pupils with identical grades battling for each place on some courses – but personal statements (plagiarism aside – see below!) are always unique, and to separate you from the field it must be as distinctive as possible.

Optional activity

Refer pupils to *Handout 6: Positive phrasing and buzz words*. This provides examples of short extracts with blank spaces from three different (high-quality) personal statements. Pupils should choose one extract to concentrate on from:

● medicine

● law

● economics.

This task requires good reading skills. Refer back to *Workshop 3: Reading* in *Module 4: personal learning and thinking skills* (00452-2010PDF-EN-01), advising pupils to skim and scan before reading for detail. Give learners time to fill the gaps with appropriate, positive phrases from the buzz word list, to make the passage sound more persuasive and powerful. Pupils should do this individually and then discuss their answers with the group, considering the relative merits of each, and perhaps comparing it with other pupils' answers.

Positive phrasing activity: sample answers

Personal statement 1: medicine

… A high pressure job that combines intellect and hard work, a sense of duty and **commitment** to patients and the whole community is the perfect job for me. …

… The clinical exposure was inspiring and **enabled me** to see how rewarding a career in medicine would be. …

… Through attending healthcare-related Aim higher summer schools and courses in universities such as UEA, Imperial College and St George's University I have **strengthened** my understanding of a career in medicine. …

… Through **taking part** in extra-curricular pursuits I have acquired skills which I believe are important in healthcare. …

… This was a humbling experience, which involved a large amount of fundraising, communication, perseverance and **dedication**. …

… **My role has taught me** how to delegate, be diplomatic and be an assertive leader as part of an effective team, as all doctors in the NHS must be. I have also developed my **compassionate** and caring temperament over many years by being a student mentor, which involves listening to, giving advice to and building relationships with particularly vulnerable pupils. …

… I have participated in musical tours to cities such as Venice, Salzburg and Paris and I believe my love of music, which over the years has taught me **discipline** and diligence, will help me deal with the stress and challenges which are involved with studying medicine.

Personal statement 2: law

… The 'Young Lawyers of Tomorrow' programme, for which I was selected through an application and interview, **furthered my** enthusiasm to read law. …

…This problem highlighted the need for careful analysis of the terms of a contract to establish whether they had been kept, whilst thinking **creatively** and negotiating on behalf of the client. …

… Work experience at Peters & Stevens solicitors in Richmond has **enabled me** to actively learn how legal problems are actually resolved. **Moreover**, working on a case which had seen media attention was a very exciting prospect, but one where I had formed a bias towards the accused because of newspaper articles I had read. …

… This experience has taught me to maintain a critical distance from emotional prejudices, and to instead put reliance on devising opinions through a **logical** and reasoned thought process. …

…Aside from academic study I am an active member of the school debating society, which, through lead roles in debates, has helped to develop my **communication** and persuasion skills. …

… **In addition**, I have also represented my school at cricket and my form at football during various school inter-form competitions from which I have developed my teamwork skills. …

… I therefore thoroughly look forward to actively involving myself in the extra-curricular activities offered at university, whilst developing a high standard of legal reasoning and argument, not only to transfer such skills into the wider context of employment, but to also develop myself **intellectually**.

Personal statement 3: economics

… Recently, I was able to **explore my interests** in Macroeconomics whilst working in a school group, giving a UK inflation report to a professional economist. …

… To **strengthen** my finance-oriented career aspiration, I recently undertook three weeks' work experience at PricewaterhouseCoopers. I **enhanced** my teamwork skills by working on projects with the Finance department, whilst liaising with other managers. …

… Leading the team, which specialised in retailing, was a great **responsibility** that I took on whole-heartedly and, I believe, successfully. …

… **The opportunity** was one of the most satisfying weeks of my life, as I enjoyed a variety of outdoor activities. **Communication** within the team was crucial, but being able to live and bond with a similar age group, whom I barely knew, was an equally important asset achieved. …

… Through pursuing an active interest in such hobbies, as well as managing the pressures of a part-time job, sporting commitments and social life, I have been prompted to utilise my time **effectively**. …

Take it further

Ask pupils to study the personal statements on *Handout 6: Positive phrasing and buzz words* again or select three personal statements from the Pure Potential website (**www.purepotential.org**).

Ask each pupil to use *Handout 7: The criteria for an effective personal statement* to help them analyse each personal statement, identifying the essential skills and experiences listed and giving them a 5-star rating.

Mentors should help pupils where required. At the end of this workshop, reinforce the point that pupils should maintain an updated CV and/or portfolio of their experiences and examples of work, which will help them in future years to convince employers they have the qualities sought; even minor experiences which they might forget may involve important and relevant skills. We will return to this in *Workshop 3: What is a CV?* and *Workshop 4: What would I include in my own CV or personal statement? A look at personal portfolios*.

In their groups, pupils discuss the overall impression of the personal statements; each member of the group reports their findings. An overall 5-star rating on the quality of each personal statement should be agreed by the group.

Facilitate a whole-group discussion in which the groups compare notes and 5-star ratings.

3 What is a CV?

Objectives

- To set the context for and define a CV

- To help pupils assemble key words/phrases/ideas and thoughts for a CV

- To study a wide range of CVs and their content

Resources

Handout 8: CV template

Handout 9: CV words and phrases

Activities

Tell the pupils that the words curriculum vitae (CV) are Latin and their literal translation is 'course of life'. Their CV will constantly change and need updating as they go through life.

Explain to the pupils that their curriculum vitae must be simple and concise, must sell them to a potential employer, and must be easy to read and tailored to what the reader is looking for in the job specification. Emphasise that generally speaking the employers will shortlist people with the best CVs and best covering letters. Go on to explain that CV writing is a way of advertising yourself and they should try to use language that their reader uses. An effective CV will demonstrate their ability to communicate and that they possess the skills, experience, behaviour, attitude and morality that the employer is seeking.

Stress that they need to:

- write two pages only;

- adapt their CV for each position;

- present themselves in a positive light (there is a school of thought that writing positive statements about their personality and strengths and capabilities helps someone become more like the person they describe);

- avoid long paragraphs: an employer only has limited time to check through CVs, so don't waffle;

- have a balance of black and white on the page; don't have every inch of the page covered in text;

- spell check: not only should you carefully proofread it yourself, but get someone else to do it; a fresh set of eyes often spots things you have missed;

- keep it relevant and informative and let their skills and experience stand out; remember that space is limited.

The basic format may vary but will include:

- name, followed by the word or 'CV' or 'Curriculum Vitae';

- Personal character *(About me)*

- Experience *(What I have done)*

- Key achievements *(What I'm most proud of)*

- Academic background *(list your qualifications)*

- Career history *(Work backwards from the present)*

- Personal details *(name, contact details, etc.)*

Ask pupils to fill in the boxes on *Handout 8: CV template* with instructions/recommendations for a friend. Give some examples and suggestions from the CV sample template below.

Your Name – Curriculum Vitae

Personal character *(About me)*

- Describe your strong points, skills and qualities, e.g. team player, creative thinker

- Pick qualities that meet the requirements of the job you are applying for

- Be concise

Experience *(What I have done)*

- Demonstrate your knowledge and understanding

- Point out how these meet the job specification

- Each bullet point must show a different ability, e.g. work to deadlines; as the choreographer for the school fashion show I was given a significant degree of autonomy and used my own initiative while working to a tight deadline for a fashion show

Key achievements *(What I'm most proud of)*

- Describe your achievements

- Give examples that show your potential to do the job

- Have a wide variety of achievements

- Give details of the achievement the year you achieved it and some facts

e.g. 2007–2009 I completed my Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award. This equipped me with teamwork and leadership skills. It also taught me the importance of preparation. I was actively involved as an assistant coach for a disabled children's football team; this developed my sense of responsibility and taught me to converse with a wide range of people.

Academic background *(list your qualifications)*

- Add dates; school/college/university attended; academic qualifications achieved

e.g.

2002–2009   XXXXX **school**

Academic qualifications:

A Levels:	Fine art (A)
	Business and economics (C)
	Classical civilisation (C)
AS levels:	Fine art (A)
	Classical civilisation (B)
	Geography (B)
	Business and economics (C)
10 GCSEs:	1 A*, 3 A's, 3 B's (including English and maths) and 3 C's

General points

- Remember to have someone proof read your CV for good spelling, punctuation and grammar.

e.g. Information technology **key skills levels 1 and 2**

Career history *(Work backwards from the present)*

- What jobs have you done in the last few years? (You can include work experience and voluntary work)
- When did you do them?
- Who where you working for

Personal details *(name/contact details, etc.)*

- Add name; contact details – address/mobile number/email address; driving licence

Optional activity

Ask pupils to complete *Handout 9: CV words and phrases* using CV samples that can be found on the website. They may wish to search for famous people's CVs or simply look for good examples. Use the handout to record good CV words/phrases and CV ideas they could use in the future.

Take it further

Ask pupils to search the website for quality CVs and make a scrapbook of the good ones. The scrapbook could include lists of key words, phrases, ideas and thoughts, as well as diagrams and cut-out statements or parts of statements, with pupils' comments added. Pupils might look for alternative, useful CV templates that they would prefer to use. Useful websites are **www.businessballs.com/curriculum.htm#cv-template-structure** and **www.cvbuilder-advice-resources.co.uk/**

This is an opportunity for pupils to reflect on their learning and a good source for assessment.

4 What would I include in my own CV or personal statement? A look at personal portfolios

Objectives

- To introduce a career/learning portfolio
- To collect useful information and ideas for a CV or personal statement
- To help pupils understand how to stand out from the crowd

Resources

Handout 10: Building a portfolio: essential skills and experiences

Handout 11: Standing out from the crowd

Slide 3: The learning portfolio

Activities

1 Build a portfolio

Explain that a portfolio is a collection of evidence describing the pupil's progress, developments and achievements. For example, it may include certificates, letters of commendation, award letters etc.
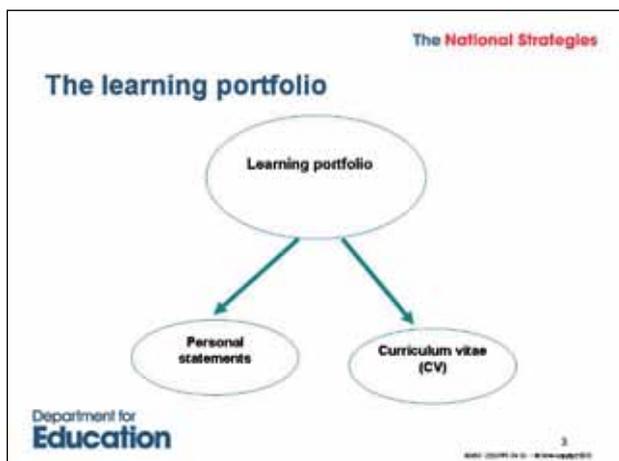
A portfolio aims to:

- present a record of the pupil's progress;
- collate evidence of the learning happening both in and outside of school;
- encourage reflection on learning and development.

If pupils have not already been provided with a learning portfolio (for example by the local authority), encourage them to develop their own version using the headings in handout 10. It should record information about their:

- Personal character *(About me)*, e.g. Good time management
- Experience *(What I have done)* Reading around the subject, extracurricular activities, wider skills;
- Key achievements *(What I'm most proud of)*, e.g. Young Enterprise scheme award, First team captain
- Academic background *(list your qualifications)*
- Career history *(Work backwards from the present)* jobs (part-time/holiday jobs); apprenticeships; work experience
- Personal details *(name, contact details, etc.)*

Show slide 3.

Explain that the portfolio is a catalogue of information which can be used to inform others and help you compile a high-quality personal statement and CV.

This activity aims to show pupils how to turn achievements into something tangible on a personal statement and/or CV. Suggest that pupils reflect back on exercises they have already done in *Workshop 1: Introduction: you can make it happen!* (their own current reality) and *Workshop 2: What is a personal statement?* (the essential skills and experiences identified in personal statements).

Ask pupils to use *Handout 10: Building a portfolio: essential skills and experiences* to list the evidence they have for their current essential skills and experience and add it to their school portfolio, or start a portfolio using the suggested headings. Pupils can use the prompts on *Handout 7: The criteria for an effective personal statement* to help them with this exercise.

Optional activity

Divide pupils into pairs and ask them to analyse/peer-assess the quality of each other's portfolio. *Does it show a genuine interest in what their partner wants to do (university course, career pathway)?*

Explain to the pupils how to use the circle diagram to organise their thinking and encourage them to look at things from more than one point of view.

- **Helpful:** Positive things in the portfolio that show an interest/passion in or the skills required for a chosen university course or career pathway

- **Unhelpful:** Negative portfolio information that would hinder an application to a chosen university course or career pathway

- **Additional:** Interesting facts in the portfolio not directly relevant to a chosen university course or career pathway. However this could be significant to illustrate your personal attributes and skills

- **Further development:** Areas to be explored in terms of depth and breath

- **Questions:** List questions about the portfolio
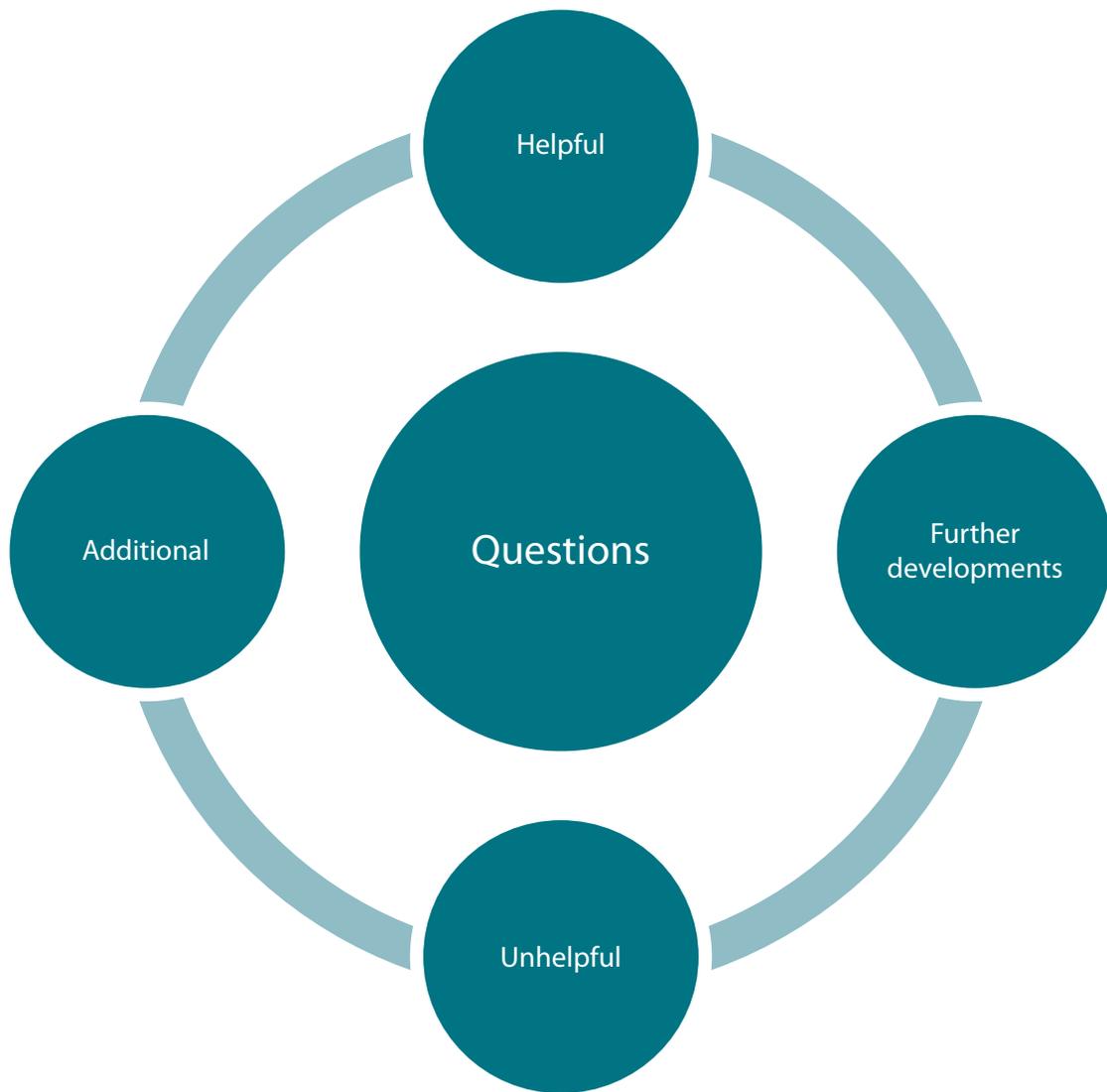
Ask pupils to complete the table on *Handout 11: Standing out from the crowd*.

Take it further

Ask pupils to show the results of the circle diagram exercise to their parents, friends, teachers, and other adults, to seek advice on how they can gain more experience and stand out from the crowd.

5 Applying for a job or position

Objectives

- To familiarise pupils with job adverts
- To begin to explore how to approach companies directly
- To help pupils design a job hunting flyer
- To help pupils develop a contact list

Resources

Handout 12: Job title task

Local or national newspaper job sections

An individual to sit in the hot seat (e.g. a visiting undergraduate/employer or teacher/mentor)

Activities

1 Seeking work

Tell the pupils that they are going to look for jobs that fit their strengths. Discuss what that might mean: skills; qualifications; personality type; passion.

Explain the many ways pupils can look for work – on the internet, in newspapers, in journals, at job centres and employment agencies, by word of mouth and by approaching companies directly. This workshop is about understanding job adverts.

Share the job adverts in your local or national paper among the pupils. Ask them to find up to five jobs they consider interesting and explain to a partner what attracts them to that job.

2 Hotseating

Ask pupils to work in pairs to write down at least eight 'What ifs' about job hunting. For example:

- What if I can't get a job?
- What if I can't find a job I like or feel confident about?
- What if I get offered a good job after my GCSEs?
- What if I can't go to university?
- What if I have no work experience?
- What if my family/friend has a company and they offer me the chance to work with them?
- What if I don't understand what a job entails?

From all these personal questions they need to create some questions to put to the invited guest on the hotseat. For example, *What if I can't get a job,* becomes *How did you get your job,* or *how many jobs did you have to apply for before you got one you wanted?*

Invite a visiting undergraduate/employer or teacher/mentor to sit in the hotseat. Pupils use their 'What if' question to build up information about applying for jobs.

Optional activity

This activity is about approaching companies directly.

Ask pupils to design a job hunting flyer. A good example can be found at **www.businessballs.com/ freematerialsinword/jobhunter-flyer-example.doc**.

Discuss the following content with pupils:

- What a headline might say
- Something they can offer a company
- What they want from the job
- Appropriate humour
- Work experience/trial periods
- Give experience
- Contact details

Take it further

Refer pupils to *Handout 12: Job title task*, and ask them to research company websites and job adverts to find 10 companies that interest them and which offer jobs they could do. Explain that this task is the start of an employment contact list, a useful tool they can build on as they progress through their career.

Ask pupils to design a spreadsheet as described on the handout. They should list 10 companies and find out the names of at least three bosses and what their job title is.

6 Tailoring the CV for the job of a learning detective

Objectives

- To understand the basic structure of a CV and covering letter
- To be aware of the 'dos and don'ts' of a CV or personal statement
- To highlight the use of buzz words

Resources

Handout 8: CV template

Handout 13: The learning detective

Handout 14: Dos and don'ts

Handout 15: CV covering letter template

Pupils' portfolios

Activities

Ask pupils to draft a CV for the job of learning detective, described on *Handout 13: The learning detective.*

Explain the need to follow the steps below when writing the first draft.

1. **Basic structure**: Use *Handout 8: CV template* to brainstorm ideas.

2. **Bullet-point contents within the structure**: Order the content within the structure. Prioritise content – which element in each section of the CV is it most important for the school to know? What makes a good starter and end-point for each section?

3. **Be aware of 'Dos and don'ts'**: Introduce *Handout 14: Dos and Don'ts* and ask pupils which phrases they think go in each column. (The answers are provided below.)

4. **Be positive**: Turn the bullet points into fluent and concise prose, using appropriate language and active buzz words (refer pupils to *Handout 6: Positive phrasing and buzz words* if necessary).

Do	Don't
… structure it carefully so it's easy to read	… try too hard to be original – it will sound weird!
… ask someone else to read over it and comment on its clarity, accuracy and relevance	… try to be funny or too clever
… check your spelling and grammar	… say anything ambiguous
… use your portfolio to identify appropriate experience and skills	… use a thesaurus to find really long words
… meet your school deadlines as evidence of being reliable and organised	… include anything that is not relevant
… keep a copy for future reference	… use 'I' at the beginning of every sentence

Optional activity

Explain to pupils that they are going to write a covering letter for the learning detective job, using *Handout 15: CV covering letter template*; remind them that this is a personal letter of application – like a personal statement tailored to the job.

Explain that CV covering letters should be designed individually for the job concerned.

Pupils need to look at what the job advert is asking for and make sure that the key skills, attributes and experience are reflected in the covering letter as well as their CV. They need to draw the reader's attention to the fact that the letter profile fits their requirements. The buzz words identified for use in personal statements and CVs can be helpful here.

Advise pupils to avoid fancy fonts and upper case (capital letters). A font size of 10–12pt is recommended.

Take it further

Ask pupils to proofread each other's work (both CV and covering letter). Ask pupils to be clear, constructive and specific with their feedback. As they are about to get into personal matters which require respect, discretion and sensitivity, you may want to remind them of the *Progression workshop contract* at this point.

The following points can be used to help pupils with their assessments:

● What needs amending, editing, rewriting, rephrasing in order to move up the scale towards the best possible CV?

● Spell-check software will not eradicate every mistake, and bad habits die hard.

● Check for unnecessary repetition.

● Look at verb usage – is there a more active and pertinent verb that will better express meaning?

● Be hard on overly poetic language – avoid flowery or self-congratulatory prose. Be tough on generalisations ('I have always loved Physics') and encourage specifics – it is a CV.

● Don't state the obvious, labour points, waffle.

7 Preparing for an interview

Objectives

- To understand body language
- To develop questions for interviews
- To study the hot tips for interviews

Resources

Handout 16: Interviewer skills and techniques

Handout 17: Types of question

Slide 4: The 'onion' model (developing work from previous Progression skills modules)

Activities

1 Elocution game

Explain that the interview is an opportunity to show a potential employer who you are, beyond your CV and covering letter. Divide pupils into pairs and give them one minute each to tell their partner why they want the job of the learning detective and what makes them the ideal candidate. They should give as much detail as they can, without stopping until the minute is over. Both pupils in the pair should have a turn.

Some pupils will find this activity difficult, which should be acknowledged by you on completion. Explain that this is precisely why the next activity is useful. It will help give learners a framework for presenting themselves persuasively.

2 Non-verbal communication (conscious and unconscious)

This section extends the material in *Progression skills module 2: Getting Ahead in Learning* pp.9–12 (0036-2010PDF-EN-03).

Explain that body language needs to be congruent (in line) with intentions. Tell pupils that there is a communication model known as 'Think, say, do' *(Shannon, C. E. and Weaver, W. 1949)*. Ask them what they think this means. Then explain that to get a message across we need to convert it from thoughts to words. These words are then communicated, through tone, dialect, pitch and language. They are also wrapped around our bodies, which give off gestures, and through posture. All of this is sending messages that the other person will interpret to try and understand. It's also compounded by noise. Think of Homer Simpson's challenges around avoiding distractions.

Explain that 'think' is just as important as 'say' and 'do'. You will communicate your mindset/attitude (non-verbal leakage) so you need to make sure that it is congruent (in line) with your intentions. In more emotional communications, the words can play a less significant role than we might think. Mehrabian's research described the relative importance of different components of the message in terms of being understood: words account for 7 per cent of the received message; the sound of the words/voice (vocal influence) account for 38 per cent; and the non-verbal influences (i.e. everything else such as body language, facial expressions etc.) account for 55 per cent *(Mehrabian, A. 1981)*.

Discuss the saying 'it's not only what you say, but also the way that you say it'. Show slide 4: The onion model and note that 'Values/beliefs' (what you think) is more central than 'Behaviour' (what you do).
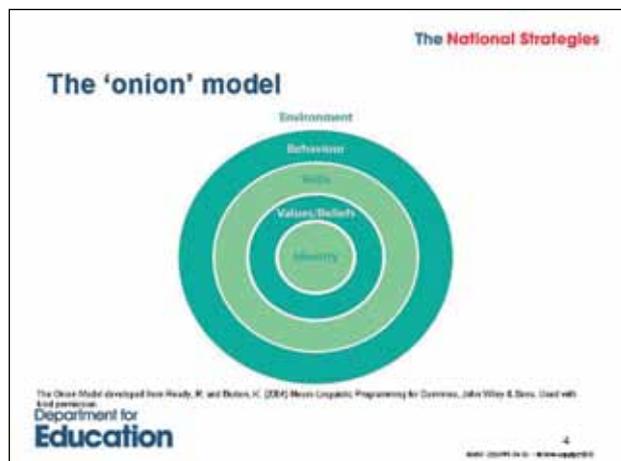
In other words, your attitude is of primary importance and will come through in how you put across your message, and this is probably why we pay more attention to these aspects. Ask pupils how they think this knowledge can be translated into delivering an interview and giving feedback to the interviewee. Ask how often they have had disagreements with someone about the meaning of something that was said (they will have lots of examples). The meaning of the communication is the response it brings out in other people. Model inappropriate as well as appropriate use of words (jargon, slang), dialects, tone, pace to highlight their impact. Ask: *Should we adapt our language, our accent?*

Building rapport can aid communication and there are occasions when this is a good idea. Ask: *Is the interview and its feedback one of these occasions?*

Introduce the idea of body language and ask for examples of when body language can give the wrong impression. Do some role-play in which pupils have to make their body language and their verbal language match and mismatch (e.g. laugh when told 'he is dead'). Have some fun with this through modelling and role play. Ask: *What do you notice?*

Repeat the exercise in the same groups, this time asking pupils to use more meaningful body language for emphasis. Ask them to think about their:

● **Posture**: for example, lean forward when paying attention and stand straight when talking.

● **Gestures**: Don't overdo gestures – try to keep a balance.

● **Shaking hands**: When shaking hands give a firm hand shake; don't squeeze too hard or be too limp, as this can cause negative feelings.

● **Head movement**: Head movements help build good rapport, for example nodding the head while talking and tilting it when listening.

● **Territory**: Get the amount of space between individuals right; standing too close or too far away is not advisable.

Continue practising, using additional lines from films, songs, adverts and so on.

Explain to pupils that people skilled in reading body language can notice and control the most subtle change and read a whole number of cues. However, there is a risk of overanalysing and misinterpreting. How might pupils now use these skills (e.g. in interviews)? Encourage pupils to start people-watching, asking themselves who's flirting, who's fed up with someone, and so on.

Highlight that people in rapport often match behaviour. Ask pupils to look around at who's matching who right now. Give good examples, such as the TV presenters Ant and Dec. Explain that matching can be a way of encouraging rapport, but shouldn't be too obvious or too immediate. If you have time, carry out a matching/mirroring exercise. One person talks and the other subtly mimics their body language. Point out that care is needed, as mirroring can also be patronising.

Optional activity

Play the 'Blah, blah, blah' game. Divide pupils into groups of three and ask them to get into role as interviewer, interviewee and observer. The interviewer has to ask three questions maximum. The interviewee has to answer the questions or present information using only the words 'blah, blah, blah' – so that all their communication focuses on non-verbal communication. The observer offers feedback on how well the response was communicated. If possible, allow pupils to change roles for another round.

Optional activity

Divide pupils into an even number of groups of three or four, ideally with those they have not yet worked with. Ask them to use all the information and knowledge they have garnered over the workshops so far to construct an interviewer question sheet for the learning detective job.

Each group should pick a scribe to draw a map, on flipchart paper, of the important skills pupils expect the headteacher to look for in an interview (e.g. elements from the personal specification, key skills and commitment to the job). Emphasise that this list is not exhaustive, but simply a means to get minds working along a shared direction. The group then turns the skills into questions on the map. Stress the importance of using open-ended questions – how, why, tell me, what (and, to a lesser extent, where, when, which) to get the interviewee talking. Refer pupils to *Handout 17: Types of question*; remind them that they saw this in *Progression skills module 1: Who am I?* (00031-2010PDF-WN-01).

Take it further

Ask pupils to read *Handout 16: Interviewer skills and techniques* and then write down a set of questions they could use to interview a parent or other adult about the skills and competencies required to do their job. They should include questions about transferable skills, what skills were gained at university (if they went) and what skills they gained on the job. The aim is for pupils to find out what skills are needed to do their job.

Ask pupils to reflect back on their transferable skills from all the experiences they have had both in and out of school that could be used at university and in their future career. Get pupils to think carefully about what other people said when they interviewed them. Are there any gaps they need to work on?

8 Interview presentations

Objectives

- To design a presentation for the learning detective interview

- To deliver a presentation

- To evaluate a presentation

Activities

The new world exercise

Tell pupils that they are going to design a presentation for their interview as a learning detective. This is an opportunity for them to show that they understand how we learn, can think creatively, have fresh original ideas, can think 'outside the box' and can work in a team.

Imagine that global warming has caused massive floods across Britain, wiping out cities, towns and villages. A small group of people have survived by climbing to the top of the highest mountains. When the waters disappear, the survivors begin to rebuild Britain. You have been given the task of designing an education system. What will it look like? How will pupils learn? What will they learn? Who will view the quality of the pupils' learning?

Before they start, ask pupils to discuss the following:

- *Is a school a building?*

- *Where does learning take place?*

Presentation design

Each group should address the following in their presentation of what a new world of schooling could look like:

- What would be your 10 immediate main aims?

- What 3–5 main difficulties would you expect and how would you try to handle these challenges?

- What lessons from the modern world would you find most valuable in rebuilding Britain's education system?

- What would be your five main medium- long-term aims?

- Style and structure tip: it's OK to repeat yourself – as long as it is done well! Structure your presentation into three parts:

1. Introduction: Tell 'em what you're gonna tell 'em

2. Make your points: Tell 'em it straight

3. Conclusion and summary: Tell 'em what you told 'em

Optional activity

Each group delivers their presentation.

Before they do so, remind pupils of the following:

- Smile
- Solid well-rehearsed opening
- Impact
- Entertainment
- Interest
- Body-language
- Humour
- Control
- Firmness
- Confidence
- Avoid jokes/sexism/racism
- Speak your audience's language
- Accentuate the positive
- Use prompts
- Participation
- Have fun!

Take it further

Ask pupils to evaluate the skills they have learned in this workshop and the skills they want to take forward.

9 Mock interviews

Objectives

- To introduce pupils to the experience of an interview

Resources

Handout 16: Interviewer skills and techniques

Handout 17: Types of question

Handout 18: Interviewee skills and techniques

Handout 19: Feedback skills

Slide 4: The 'onion' model

Activities

Devising an interview

Ask pupils to design interview questions for the learning detective job.

In pairs, they should design five questions to ask the candidate and decide on the best question. In a group of four, they tell each other their five questions and again decide on the best one.

Each group tells the larger group their best question and explains the reason for their choice.

The questions are then collated for use in a mock interview (a mentor could take responsibility for this).

Tell the pupils that there is only one place left for a learning detective and they must choose the best candidate between them. Tell them to look over the questions again and consider whether there are any questions they want to add.

They may also need to reject some questions: the interview should have 10 questions in total, with each worth 10 marks. The group should devise criteria for marking out of 10 (e.g. they could consider quality of non-verbal communication; range of examples in answers; attitude; whether answers match the personal specification of the job).

Optional activity

Organise a panel of adults to interview candidates for the learning detective job. Alternatively, one pupil from each group can be questioned by another group. In either case, use the three steps below:

Both interviewees and interviewers have five minutes to read *Handout 16: Interviewer skills and techniques* and *Handout 18: Interviewee skills and techniques* respectively and prepare themselves.

4. The group set up the scene – positioning of chairs, etc.

5. Set a time limit for the interview. For example, interviews will start at 10.05 and finish at 10.20.

Take it further

Explain that when working with others it is often necessary to give feedback and receive feedback to help teams and relationships become more effective.

In this activity, pupils will give feedback to each other on their interviewing techniques and/or performance as interviewees. Ask pupils to write their feedback on *Handout 19: Feedback skills* and bring it to the next workshop.

You should see all feedback before it is passed on to the pupils who are being evaluated.

Show slide 4 and remind pupils of the 'onion' model (adapted from Ready, R. and Burton, K. 2004).
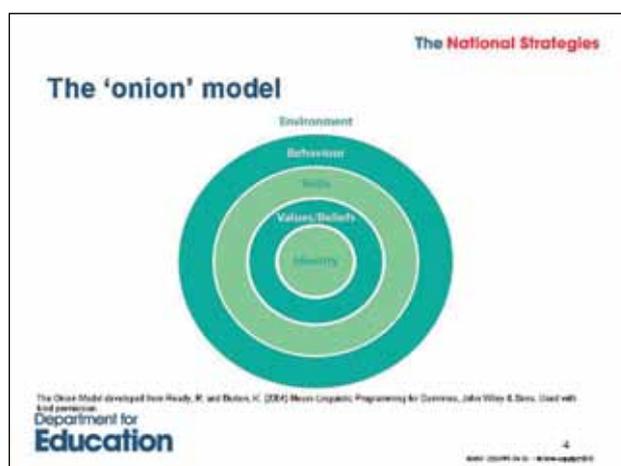
Explain how it can be used for giving and receiving feedback: you can make statements at the behavioural or environmental level, but should never go into beliefs/values or identity. This is because the outer two levels are in the open arena (there for all to see), whereas the most central two are not in the open arena and can only be guessed at (therefore the potential for guessing wrong is pretty high because there are even more filters to go through).

The purpose of feedback is to help someone improve. An easy way to remember what to do is:

AID: This **A**CTION (behaviour/skill) had this **I**MPACT – **D**O more of it/**D**O it differently.

It's about achieving the right impact. Think about what the person you are evaluating did/said, what you felt/thought and what you'd like instead (for 'do differently').

(Adapted from Feedback That Works, Harvard Business Review. Used with kind permission. **blogs.harvardbusiness.org/hmu/2009/04/feedback-that-works.html**.)

Make sure that pupils use positive language, pointing out that the words 'do differently' are deliberately at the environment level, because there is no judgement attached (i.e. wrong, bad, mean) and it's simply about what to do instead. Also point out that they don't have to accept the feedback – it is after all just one person's opinion. Ask: *What are the pros and cons of this?* Discuss the idea that the meaning of the communication is the message received, so information that could help you to communicate more effectively is useful information.

10 Close (use at end of each workshop)

Objectives

- To encourage pupils to engage further in the topics and apply the learning between workshops

- To ensure all pupils are clear about the key learning points and what they have gained from the workshop

- To check how everyone is feeling and to address any unresolved issues

- To elicit feedback on the materials and check that aims have been met

- To check motivation for the task and programme in order to ensure continued attendance

- To finish on a high, so that pupils leave feeling upbeat and positive

Resources

Handout 20: Conclusion: How to learn from this workshop

Activity

1. Encourage networking; ensure pupils have a buddy or group to support them in the use of new skills and knowledge between workshops. Mentors can help here.

2. Ask pupils to summarise key learning points, reiterating and clarifying if necessary.

3. Ask pupils to complete the handouts or learning logs as necessary. Mentors can also check how pupils are doing with this.

4. Encourage pupils who can, or wish to, to try the Take it further tasks.

5. Ask pupils to congratulate each other (in pairs or groups) for something they did well during the workshops.

Encourage pupils to read *Handout 20: Conclusion: How to learn from this workshop.*

Handouts

Progression workshop contract

I want to take part in a workshop that is fun and engaging, and where I feel free to relax, be myself, challenge myself and learn from everyone around me, with an open mind. To make this true for everyone I will do my bit to contribute. Specifically, I will:

- Show respect for others by looking at them and listening to them.

- Show respect for myself by not putting myself down.

- Be positive about the contribution of others by seeing what's good in what they say before I think of what I disagree with.

- Make others feel safe to speak their mind by not making fun of them, but by encouraging them.

- Think of how I can build on or add to the discussion (I may have a key link that will help everyone).

- Cooperate with the task instructions so the workshop can run as intended.

- Feel free to disagree or challenge (politely) anything I need to, so that I can understand the skills I'll need to succeed.

- Be curious and open-minded about others' opinions and ways of doing things.

- Ensure I allow the space for others to make contributions too and not hog all the air-time.

- Appreciate that what I, and others, are good at will differ; that it's not a competition and it's fine just to be myself.

- Understand that everyone learns at different speeds and in different ways; sometimes I'll get something done more quickly than others and sometimes it will take me longer.

So that's OK.

Signed:	Date:

Handout 1: Top tips for action

Record your big ideas and thoughts here to remind you and give you something to look back on.

Handout 2: The good word guide

Successful pupils use a wide vocabulary – sometimes called the academic word list. Keep a note of good words you can use again. Note down any you are not sure of and look them up in a dictionary. Ask your teachers for help in how to use the word if you are not sure.

Handout 3: The GROW model

The **GROW** model is a very popular coaching tool. It represents a process of asking questions that serve to broaden someone's awareness and understanding of their current situation and provides them with the answers needed.

GROW stands for **G**oal **R**eality **O**ptions **W**hat next.

You can think of it as a journey…

Goal: Where do I want to go, get to and achieve? What is my end point?

Reality: Where am I now? What is my current situation?

Options: What options do I have to get to my end point?

What: What will I do **next**? Make a plan.

You can, however, start the questioning at any point and loop back if needed.

What next?

- What will you do?
- What are the next steps?
- When will you take them?
- What might get in the way?
- Commit action.

Goal

- What do you want to achieve?
- Where do you want to get to?
- What is your end point?
- What is your aim?
- When you look at the future, what do you see, hear, feel?

Options

- What are the routes to your goal?
- What is in your control?
- What alternatives are there?
- What possibilities for action do you see?
- What approaches have you seen used in similar circumstances?
- Who might be able to help?
- Which options do you like the most?

Reality:

- Where are you now?
- What is happening at the moment?
- When you look around, what do you see, hear, feel?

The GROW Model adapted from Whitmore, J. (2002) *Coaching for performance, GROWing people, Performance and Purpose*, 3rd Edition, Nicholas Brealey Publishing. Used with kind permission.

Handout 4: Current reality prompt sheet

In pairs discuss with each other your current reality. What do you notice? Ask each other how you have moved forward from where you were when you last did the GROW model.

Prompt questions – current reality

- Who are you? How do you define/describe yourself?
- How did you get here? (This might involve managing feelings and emotions.)
- What have been your achievements?
- What are you good at? Not so good at?
- What are the barriers?
- How do you learn?
- What strategies for success do you use?
- How do others help you?
- How are you currently using/developing your gift/talent?
- What's important to you? Your values, beliefs?
- What's not important to you?
- Do you know what career or university course you want to do?

What next

Identify five practical activities that will help you achieve your goals.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

> **Examples** could include:
>
> Researching potential employers; improving interview skills; gaining relevant work experience; understanding what a CV and personal statement looks like; interview presentations; writing an up-to-date CV; keeping a portfolio of relevant experiences; writing a convincing covering letter; attending careers days (Goldman Sachs, for example); university visits; internships with leading employers; voluntary work; embarking on a gap year.

Handout 5: 'What is a personal statement?' quiz

You have 3 minutes to complete the quiz on your own. Answer true or false.

1. The personal statement is usually around 2000 words long.

2. Pupils have to submit a separate personal statement to each university.

3. The deadline for Oxford and Cambridge, medicine, dentistry and veterinary science is earlier than for other courses.

4. Applications open on 1 September.

5. Admission tutors wait until all the applications have been submitted before making offers.

6. Long, complicated words and sentences are more likely to impress admission tutors.

7. The statement should include your AS grades.

8. It is fine to lie in the personal statement as long as no one finds out.

9. It is OK to use parts of other people's statement as long as they don't apply to the same universities as you.

10. Your personal statement should be a life history of your achievements.

Handout 6: Positive phrasing and buzz words

Fill in the gaps in the following three sample personal statements using words from the buzz word list below:

Furthermore…

In addition…

Thrive under pressure…

Explore my interests…

Skills I have gained…

As well as…

Reinforce…

Has furthered my…

Other (add your own ideas here):

Enable me…

Used my initiative…

Strengthen…

Enhanced…

The opportunity…

I learnt from…

My role has taught me…

Moreover…

1. Positive phrasing activity: personal statement 1: medicine

My drive and desire to study medicine and become a doctor did not stem from one single moment but through gaining knowledge and experience of work in the medical field over several years. A high-pressure job that combines _____ and hard work, a sense of duty and _____ to patients and the whole community is the perfect job for me. Carrying out work experience in two hospitals gave me realistic experience of life as a doctor and the responsibilities it involves. I shadowed doctors in the outpatient's clinic in departments such as cardiology, urology and diabetic medicine. I learnt about good bedside manner by observing a phlebotomist from clinical haematology around geriatric wards, and by spending time in various departments such as audiology, radiology, pharmacy and administration I learnt how the hospital functions. The clinical exposure was inspiring and _____ to see how rewarding a career in medicine would be.

Through attending healthcare-related Aim Higher summer schools and courses in universities such as UEA, Imperial College and St George's University I have _____ my understanding of a career in medicine. I especially enjoyed learning clinical skills such as incubation and measuring blood pressure. I have also become aware of the topical issues facing scientists and doctors in the world today through The Open University undergraduate short course in Human Genetics and Health Issues. The course has expanded my knowledge of genetic diseases and has also developed my independent learning skills.

Through _____ in extracurricular pursuits I have acquired skills which I believe are important in healthcare. During the last two years I have taken a pivotal role in organising a pupil exchange with our link school in Kenya. This was a humbling experience which involved a large amount of fundraising, communication, perseverance and _____. In Kenya we set up a computer room and taught ICT to the pupils and this year on their return trip to the UK we set up a Fair Trade link to promote and ensure sustainability for the community. My involvement with the exchange has stimulated my desire to become a doctor so that I can continue to make a real difference to people's lives.

This year I have the privilege of exercising my leadership skills by being a deputy head girl with responsibility for the house system. This involves organising events such as the summer fete and charity fundraisers whilst also supporting the head girl and other school officials. _____ how to delegate, be diplomatic and be an assertive leader as part of an effective team, as all doctors in the NHS must be. I have also developed my _____ and caring temperament over many years by being a student mentor, which involves listening to, giving advice to and building relationships with particularly vulnerable pupils. It has given me experience of working with fragile and sensitive people and I believe this will help me relate to patients and their families.

Outside school I enjoy playing piano and violin, achieving Grade 4 in both, and taking a principal role in orchestras and concert bands. I have participated in musical tours to cities such as Venice, Salzburg and Paris and I believe my love of music, which over the years has taught me _____ and diligence, will help me deal with the stress and challenges which are involved in studying medicine. I am confident that all the above will help me achieve my aim to become a dedicated doctor; they have taught me to multi-task and withstand the great amount of pressure involved in the medical profession and have also given me unforgettable experiences that will help me in all aspects of my life.

38   The National Strategies
Progression skills module 6: Capturing success
Teacher notes

2. Positive phrasing activity: personal statement 2: law

'Where law ends, tyranny begins'. This statement made in 1801 by William Pitt, whom I studied for A level history, still remains true, as without the rule of law even the simplest of societies would cease to function. I am particularly fascinated by the gradual progression of our legal system through its ever-evolving nature to meet the needs of society. Reading 'Understanding the Law' by Rivlin has allowed me to explore this in greater depth through cases that have significantly changed parts of the law, such as Bushell's case, where a jury's refusal to be punished for their verdict advanced the cause of freedom.

The 'Young Lawyers of Tomorrow Programme', for which I was selected through an application and interview, _____ enthusiasm to read law. The programme, consisting of twelve sessions, gave me exciting opportunities ranging from meeting trainee solicitors at top law firms to discussing various practical legal problems. A role play regarding an unfair dismissal of an employee, for instance, aimed to encourage our groups to find possible solutions without resorting to court mediation. This problem highlighted the need for careful analysis of the terms of a contract to establish whether they had been kept, whilst thinking _____, and negotiating on behalf of the client. I found this and other role plays both challenging and thought provoking in a way that allowed me to explore beneath the surface of the problems and creatively find practical solutions.

Work experience at Peters & Stevens solicitors in Richmond has _____ to actively learn how legal problems are actually resolved. _____, working on a case which had seen media attention was a very exciting prospect, but one where I had formed a bias towards the accused because of newspaper articles I had read. Provided with further facts, I learned that the media's judgment had been based on its emotion to the crime, rather than the actual facts. This experience has taught me to maintain a critical distance from emotional prejudices, and to instead put reliance on devising opinions through a _____ and reasoned thought process. By reading 'The Economist' and 'The Independent' law supplement I keep up to date with current legal matters. This has assisted me in exploring the dilemmas that arise from parts of the law, such as whether it should protect society from potential terrorist attacks at the expense of fundamental civil liberties, and whether, as with the case of the NatWest three, the law has a job to protect British citizens from extradition to countries where harsher laws may apply without reciprocal arrangements in place.

Aside from academic study I am an active member of the school debating society which, through lead roles in debates, has helped to develop my _____ and persuasion skills. At secondary school, I was assigned the role of school ambassador, which included the responsibility of performing duties such as helping to run school events and fundraising for charities. Also as part of this role I mentored younger pupils who were underachieving; motivating and inspiring them to reach their full potential was something I particularly enjoyed. _____, I have also represented my school at cricket and my form at football during various school inter-form competitions from which I have developed my teamwork skills.

I therefore thoroughly look forward to actively involving myself in the extra-curricular activities offered at university, whilst developing a high standard of legal reasoning and argument, not only to transfer such skills into the wider context of employment, but to also develop myself _____.

3. Positive phrasing activity: personal statement 3: economics

GCSE business studies inspired my passion for studying economics. It introduced me to the major theories of economics and made me aware of their true significance not only to industry and business but also to everyday life. I already had some practical understanding of economics through growing up around my parents' retail businesses; I now find it highly stimulating to be able to explore economics at a deeper theoretical level. Recently, I was able to _____ in macroeconomics whilst working in a school group, giving a UK inflation report to a professional economist. Data research was compiled using a variety of published reports, which I thoroughly enjoyed presenting. Participating in the event had further stimulated my desire to learn more about such influential aspects of economics, as well as prompting me to seriously consider a career as an actuary. To _____ my finance-oriented career aspiration, I recently undertook three week's work experience at PriceWaterhouseCooper. I _____ my teamwork skills by working on projects with the finance department, whilst liaising with other managers. I learnt more about business operations, finance, successful management and decision-making through holding the positions of Managing and Operations Director in my Young Enterprise team. Leading the team, which specialised in retailing, was a great _____ that I took on whole-heartedly and, I believe, successfully. This Easter, my passion for outdoor activities led me to the Lake District, for my Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award. _____ was one of the most satisfying weeks of my life, as I enjoyed a variety of outdoor activities. _____ within the team was crucial, but being able to live and bond with a similar age group, whom I barely knew, was an equally important asset achieved. My other passion is for cricket, which has been fuelled by playing in school teams and helping to coach youngsters at a local club.

As someone who is keen to broaden his interests, I was pleased to discover epistemology through documentaries and through reading Almeder's 'Blind Realism'. This provocative yet accessible book has taught me the history of probability and risk along with the evolution of some famous mathematical theories, such as the Theory of Combinations. Through pursuing an active interest in such hobbies, as well as managing the pressures of a part-time job, sporting commitments and social life, I have been prompted to utilise my time _____.

I continue to develop my desire to study maths, economics and all things financial through my schoolwork, outside reading and work experience, which are the main reasons for my actuarial aspirations. Placing these commitments alongside my extra-curricular efforts, I hope it is apparent that I would benefit enormously from the rigours and developmental opportunities of university life.

Handout 7: The criteria for an effective personal statement

Study three personal statements. How well have they covered the essential skills and experiences listed below? Give them a star rating for the quality of each.

* Poor----------------------------------***** Outstanding

Academic skills

- What subjects are they studying?

- What interests them about the subject(s)?

- Have they done any extended research on their subject(s)?

- Is there a piece of work they are particularly proud of?

- Have they attended master classes that have provided a useful insight into an interesting topic or academic area that they are interested in?

(For university modules that can be studied while at school, see **www.open.ac.uk/yass/index.php**).

Reading around the subject

- Have they subscribed to journals, visited particular museums, libraries, historical sites or relevant industrial complexes?

- Is there anything in the news relating to their subject?

- Have they been to university revision lectures (these are often led by current undergraduate students or university lecturers).

Extra-curricular activities

- Have they acted as head boy/girl, prefect, monitor, club/house leader?

- Are they in an orchestra, debating or quiz team?

- Are they in a sports team?

- Have they had personal experiences of additional and unusual responsibility, e.g. caring for an elderly member of the family or supporting younger siblings?

- Have they attended a residential course, taster events or enrichment activities? (e.g. universities often offer residential courses on the university experience or summer schools on an academic theme).

- Have they done any work or university shadowing?

Wider skills

- Have they given a presentation in front of a large audience?

- Do they play a musical instrument, speak another language, or have they had any specialist training?

- Have they faced a problem alone where they have had to use their own initiative to find a solution?

- Have they been trained as a peer mentor or had experience of a university associate mentor (university undergraduates often visit schools to help pupils with their studies)?

Work experience

- What did they do in Year 10/12 for work experience, and what did they learn from it?

- Did they work in a commercial or voluntary setting?

- What do they want to do in the future to fulfil their potential?

- What are their career plans? How do these relate to their intended degree subject?

Personal qualities

- How well do they get on with people?

- How do they behave in different situations?

- What are they like when it comes to the suitability for a course, job or training opportunity?

- What is their outlook and attitude to life and work?

42   The National Strategies
Progression skills module 6: Capturing success
Teacher notes

Handout 8: CV template

Fill in the boxes with instructions/recommendations for a friend on how to fill in the template.

Your name – Curriculum Vitae

Personal character *(About me)*

Experience *(What I have done)*

Key achievements *(What I'm most proud of)*

Career history *(Work backwards from the present)*

Personal details *(Name/contact details, etc.)*

Academic background *(List your qualifications)*

Handout 9: CV words and phrases

Search the internet for sample CVs. You will find **www.cvbuilder-advice-resources.co.uk/** a good starting point.

1.

2.

3.

Use these CVs to make a list of good CV words and phrases.

CV words and phrases

Examples

… determined and decisive; uses initiative to develop effective solutions to problems …

… strong planning, organising and monitoring abilities – an efficient time-manager …

CV ideas

Useful references:

www.businessballs.com/curriculum.htm#cv-template-structure

www.cvbuilder-advice-resources.co.uk/

Handout 10: Building a portfolio: essential skills and experiences

1. Academic skills

2. Reading around the subject

3. Extra-curricular activities

4. Wider skills

5. Work experience

6. Personal qualities

Useful reference:

www.open.ac.uk/yass/index.php

Handout 11: Standing out from the crowd

Name: _____

Partner: _____

What my partner is currently interested in doing at university or as a career:

_____

Organise your partner's portfolio using the following diagram.

Helpful: things in the portfolio that show an interest/passion in or the skills required for a chosen university course or career pathway

Unhelpful: portfolio information that would hinder an application to a chosen university course or career pathway

Additional: facts in the portfolio not directly relevant to a chosen university course or career pathway. However this could be significant to illustrate your personal attributes and skills

Further development: areas to be explored in terms of depth and breath

Questions: list questions about the portfolio
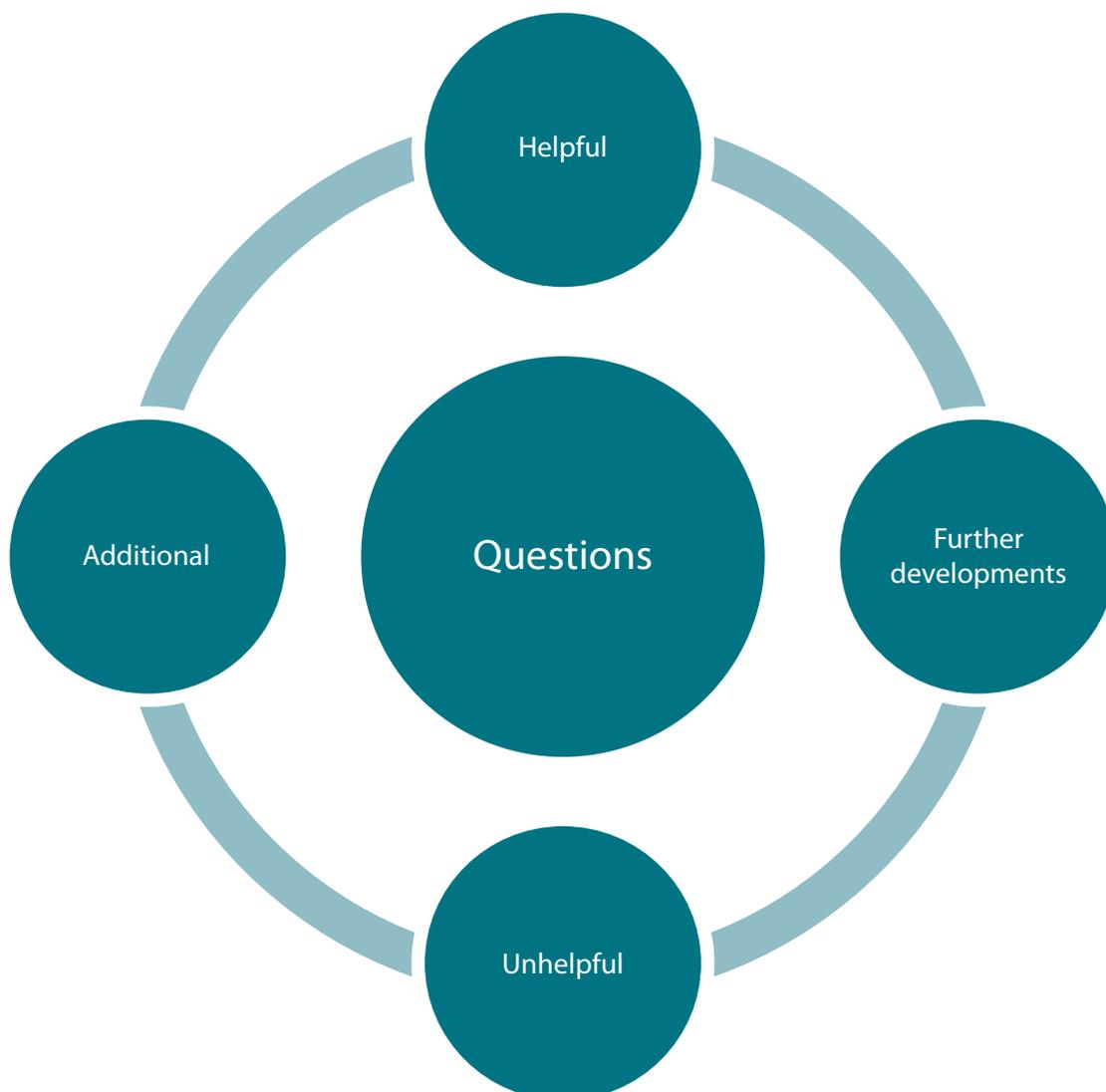
Handout 12: Job title task

Design a spreadsheet with four columns:

- Company name

- Boss's title

- Contact name

- Jobs that interest me

Find 10 companies to start your contact list.

Good places to do your research include the internet, local chamber of commerce, trade associations, library and telephone directory.

Now use the job title list below to help you find out the names of at least three bosses. You can usually find this information on a website or by ringing up the company.

Type of business	Bosses' job titles
Business/manufacturing units on industrial estates	Managing director (MD)
Public services and institutions	Chief executive
Branch offices of larger organisations	Branch manager, general manager, site manager
Shops, retail and leisure outlets	Manager, general manager
Big independent companies	Chief executive (CEO), managing director
Small companies, partnerships, sole-traders, professional services	Owner, boss, managing partner, principal
Educational establishments	Principal, headteacher

Useful reference:

www.businessballs.com/freematerialsinword/jobhunter-flyer-example.doc

Handout 13: The learning detective

Draft a CV for the job of learning detective

Job advert:

> The school wish to recruit a team of six 'learning detectives' who will review the quality of pupil learning in Year 10 throughout the next two terms and report back to the Senior Leadership team of the school. The team will be expected to agree recommendations to improve learning further in this school. Successful candidates who complete this assignment will receive a School Leadership Certificate and be awarded £50 in gift vouchers for Top Shop.

Job description

Learning detectives will work together with the deputy head in charge of teaching and learning and will be expected to attend occasional meetings before and after school. The job requires pupils to work well with others, and pairs will jointly observe one lesson per week. They will design an observation schedule to use in lessons that will help them judge how well pupils are learning. They will be expected to give constructive feedback to the class they have observed.

Person specification

	Desirable	Essential
Good time-keeper		✓
Reliable		✓
Excellent attendance		✓
Self-motivated	✓	
Takes initiative	✓	
Thoughtful and considerate of others	✓	
Has good ideas	✓	
Works well in a team or pair		✓
Prepared to speak in front of a whole class		✓

Handout 14: Dos and don'ts

Do	Don't

Sort the following statements into 'Dos' and 'Don'ts'.

… structure it carefully so it's easy to read

… say anything ambiguous

… keep a copy for future reference

… try too hard to be original – it will sound weird!

… ask someone else to read over it and comment on its clarity, accuracy and relevance

… include anything that is not relevant

… use 'I' at the beginning of every sentence

… meet your school deadlines as evidence of being reliable and organised

… use your portfolio to identify appropriate experience and skills

… check your spelling and grammar

… use a thesaurus to find really long words

… try to be funny or too clever

Handout 15: CV covering letter template

Write a covering letter for the job of the learning detective. This is a personal letter of application – like a personal statement tailored to the job.

Template

Sample

Full name and address details

Date

Reference if required

Dear (Mr/Mrs/Ms Surname)

Please find attached my applications for the position of ………………..

My current ………………….. has given me the required skills capabilities and experience required to apply for this position, notably (give some examples).

I look forward to hearing from you

Yours sincerely

(Sign)

Print your name

Handout 16: Interviewer skills and techniques

Interviewer skills and techniques

1. Create a relaxed atmosphere.

2. Introduce the panel and explain what you are looking for.

3. Use the job's personal specification to design a sheet that lists what it is you are looking for in a candidate, which you can tick off during the interview as appropriate.

4. Practise taking notes and coding them with a star rating system.

5. Listen for evidence of competencies.

6. Let the interviewee do all the talking.

7. Use handout 17 to devise open ended questions that encourage the candidate to talk. Try and avoid questions that are too complicated or daunting.

8. Leave time for the interviewee to ask questions. This is their opportunity to approach topics not covered and show their ability that a person has for any reason not had the chance to show their real capability and potential.

Write a list of questions you can use to interview your parent or another adult about the skills and competencies required to do their job.

Questions:

Handout 17: Types of question

Questioning

Different types of question can be used for different purposes. Here are some examples.

Closed questions require only one-word answers and therefore do not encourage conversation. Closed questions often start with 'Do…' or 'Is…' and are useful for checking or clarifying facts.

- How old are you?

- Do you want to do that?

- Is it a good idea?

My examples:

-

-

Open questions require more than a 'yes' or 'no' answer and therefore are used when you want to get more information. They encourage the other person to talk more freely and therefore give more away. Open questions are useful to help you understand more about someone and how they think and feel.

- What did you think of the film?

- When that happened, how did you feel?

- How did you get to Scotland?

- Tell me about your last party.

My examples:

-

-

Hypothetical questions ask for imaginary responses; you use them to ask someone to imagine what they would do. They are good for encouraging creativity and generating ideas, but are less factual and reliable.

- If you were to go to the Mobo awards, what would you wear?

- What would you do if you won the lottery?

- What would you say if that happened?

My examples:

-

-

Leading questions should usually be avoided as these assume there is a 'right' answer that you are looking for. These are useful if you want to give the illusion you are interested in someone's opinion but really you are giving information in disguise!

- Why don't you go there instead?

- Have you thought about dyeing your hair black?

- Wouldn't it be a good idea to ask the teacher first?

My examples:

-

-

Probing questions encourage someone to give more information at a deeper level.

- When you say worse, in what way?

- Tell me more about your conversation.

- So then what happened, what did you do?

My examples

-

-

Linking the discussion to another area.

- *Closed question*: So when he was telling you about that, did he say anything about me?

- *Linking question*: You said you were going but how are you going to get there?

My examples

-

-

Handout 18: Interviewee skills and techniques

1. Think about the school, its current activities and its priorities.

2. Prepare your answers for the type of questions you'll be asked; in particular, make sure you are able to say why you want the job, what your strengths are, how you'd do the job, what your greatest achievements are and why they are relevant to this job.

3. Prepare good questions to ask at the interview.

4. Try to give examples to illustrate answers.

5. Review your personal goals and make sure you can speak openly and honestly about them and how you plan to achieve them.

6. Adopt an enthusiastic, alert, positive mind-set.

7. Particularly think about how to deal positively with any negative aspects – especially from the perspective of telling the truth, instead of evading or distorting facts, which rarely succeeds.

Handout 19: Feedback skills

Give written feedback of the interviews to help your peers improve their interview techniques.

Remember the 'onion' model: you can make statements at the behavioural or environmental level, but should never go into beliefs/values or identity. This is because the outer two levels are in the open arena (there for all to see), whereas the most central two are not in the open arena and can only be guessed at (therefore the potential for guessing wrong is pretty high because there are even more filters to go through).

AID: This **A**CTION (behaviour/skill) had this **I**MPACT – **D**O more of it/**D**O it differently.

It's about achieving the right impact. Think about what the person you are evaluating did/said, what you felt/thought and what you'd like instead (for 'do differently').

Action: describe their behaviour and skills during the interview – what they did/said.

Impact: What you felt/thought and what you'd like instead.

Do: Suggest things they could do more of or do differently.

AID model adapted from *Feedback That Works*, Harvard Business Review. Used with kind permission (**blogs.harvardbusiness.org/hmu/2009/04/feedback-that-works.html**)

Handout 20: Conclusion: how to learn from this workshop

Your learning is your responsibility. You have probably heard the expression 'You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink'. It's the same with learning. You can have all the information you need but no one can make you learn; you have to do the majority of the work yourself.

Part of the learning process is considering the actual journey of learning as you build your skills and knowledge. Looking back at how far you have come is very rewarding and you will see patterns in your approach that can help you become an even more skilful pupil.

What can you do for yourself to build on the learning from this workshop?

Try out these techniques and apply them to other situations.

- When you meet someone for the first time, think about the initial impression you will make on them, and also that they make on you. Make a note of it somewhere and have a look back after you've known them a while to see how accurate you were.

- Before you ask a question, think about the kind of response you want, then phrase the question accordingly.

- Seek feedback about yourself; ask people what you do well and what you could do better in some areas, then thank them for sharing that with you.

- It's not easy for people to do this, so don't make it any more difficult for them.

- Pay attention and evaluate either another aspect of yourself or someone else, according to one of the models you learned about (such as personality or the 'onion' model).

- Work on 'future-proofing' your brand. Starting today, develop skills that you will need in the near future – it comes more quickly than you think.

- Look at profiles of other people and the way they present themselves. Consider what aspects would work for you and apply them to your profile too, if they fit.

- Think about some groups or organisations you could join that would help you develop some aspects of either yourself or your skills or gift or talent.

Useful resources and further reading

Advice Resources. *CV builder* (**www.cvbuilder-advice-resources.co.uk**)

Businessballs. *Curriculum vitae template - structure* (**www.businessballs.com/curriculum.htm#cv-template-structure**)

Businessballs (2009). *Job hunter flyer* (**http://www.businessballs.com/freematerialsinword/jobhunter-flyer-example.doc**)

DCSF (2009) *Progression skills module 1: Who am I?* Ref: 00031-2010PDF-EN-01 (**www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies** search using the reference number)

DCSF (2009) *Progression skills module 2: Getting ahead in learning*. Ref: 00036-2010PDF-EN-03 (**www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies** search using the reference number)

DCSF (2009) *Progression skills module 3: Getting ahead – strategies for success*. Ref: 00039-2010PDF-EN-01 (**www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies** search using the reference number)

DCSF (2010) *Progression skills module 4: Getting ahead: Personal learning and thinking skills*. Ref: 00452-2010PDF-EN-01 (**www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies** search using the reference number)

DfE (2010) *Progression skills module 5: How do I manage the journey towards my future career?* Ref: 00455-2010PDF-EN-01 (**www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies** search using the reference number)

DfE (2010) *Progression skills module 6: Capturing success*. Ref: 00458-2010PDF-EN-01 (**www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies** search using the reference number)

Open University. *Young Applicants in Schools and Colleges Scheme* (**www.open.ac.uk/yass/index.php**)

Acknowledgements

AID model adapted from *Feedback That Works*, Harvard Business Review . Used with kind permission. (**blogs.harvardbusiness.org/hmu/2009/04/feedback-that-works.html**)

The GROW Model adapted from Whitmore, J. (2002) *Coaching for performance, GROWing people, Performance and Purpose*, 3rd Edition, Nicholas Brealey Publishing. Used with kind permission.

The Onion Model developed from Ready, R. and Burton, K. (2004) *Neuro-Linguistic Programming for Dummies*, John Wiley & Sons. Used with kind permission.

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