



North Western Deanery Careers

## The transition to consultancy

### 1 day careers development session

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

**9.30am to 4.30pm**

**Venue:**

The Place Aparthotel

Ducie Street, Manchester M1 2TP

***A Careers day for higher trainees approaching CCT and successful CESR applicants preparing for consultancy.***

### **Agenda**

Taking on the consultant's mantle

Developing career resilience

Lunch (provided)

Making the most of a consultant locum

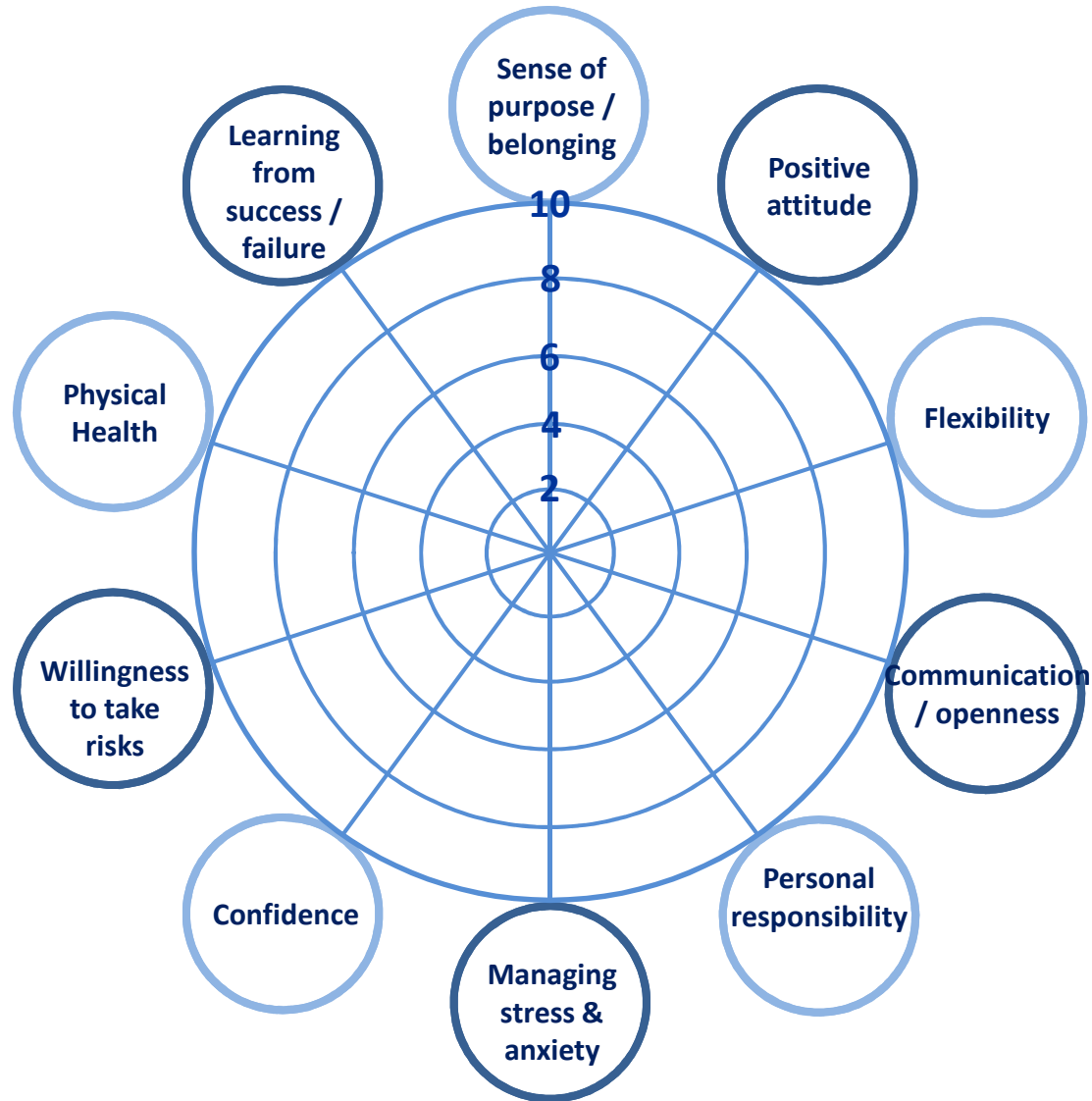
Preparing for interview

Interview practical exercises

Finish



# My Resilience Rating









# 1. Where am I now?

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
1.1 I am fully aware of my portfolio of skills, experience, knowledge and attributes that makes me stand out in the health sector	0	1	2	3
1.2 I have an up-to-date, well-organised, concise and accurate CV which clearly sells my strengths	0	1	2	3
1.3 I have comprehensive physical evidence which provides greater details of my personal portfolio (achievements, reflective logs, examples of feedback)	0	1	2	3
1.4 I regularly seek feedback from people at all levels regarding my performance. For example, my colleagues have given me objective feedback on my strengths and areas for development	0	1	2	3
1.5 I maintain regular contact with professionals in my field in order to know how relevant my portfolio of skills and expertise is to my future employability and career goals	0	1	2	3
1.6 I am aware that in my current position I have a number of internal and external contacts who may be able to provide support with my education and career development	0	1	2	3
1.7 I am clear on my motivations in life and these are closely matched to my current and future plans	0	1	2	3
1.8 I know in which environments I work and learn most effectively and make full use of the current development opportunities available to me	0	1	2	3
1.9 I deal with change and uncertainty in a positive, flexible and open-minded manner	0	1	2	3
1.10 I feel good about myself and have underlying self-confidence in my capabilities	0	1	2	3

SUB TOTAL (MAX 30)

## 2. Where do I want to be?

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
2.1 I know what I want to achieve in my career and have a clear picture of my 'ideal job'	0	1	2	3
2.2 I know what I want to achieve in my personal life	0	1	2	3
2.3 I allow myself enough time to plan my future and regularly set short-term learning and career development objectives	0	1	2	3
2.4 I have creatively explored all the career development opportunities available to me	0	1	2	3
2.5 I have interviews, by way of advisory discussions, with people in my next job or potential future roles	0	1	2	3
2.6 I have examined how my current portfolio of skills and experience could be applied to different career options	0	1	2	3
2.7 I know what level and balance of skills and knowledge will be required to progress and grow in my job, my organisation and my area of expertise	0	1	2	3
2.8 I recognise the benefits and limitations of pursuing particular career paths (eg: I am aware of areas of decline and growth in different fields of work)	0	1	2	3
2.9 I make the most of my network of contacts for advice and guidance on future career plans	0	1	2	3
2.10 I have made an informed decision on my future career based on a realistic assessment of my core strengths, motivations, experiences, opportunities and constraints	0	1	2	3

SUB TOTAL (MAX 30)



## 3. How do I get there?

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
3.1 I am prepared to be flexible and adaptable to achieve my long-term goals and am aware of the different career management options available to me	0	1	2	3
3.2 I have effective time management and prioritisation skills which I apply to managing myself	0	1	2	3
3.3 I continually set myself specific career development objectives with measurable outcomes and written defined timescales. These are committed to paper, but are flexible and reviewed regularly	0	1	2	3
3.4 I break these objectives into practical manageable steps	0	1	2	3
3.5 I have one or more guides or mentors who can help me set realistic plans	0	1	2	3
3.6 I maintain and make effective use of up-to-date information in my field (eg: information about competition for opportunities and health sector information/trends)	0	1	2	3
3.7 I have pinpointed the people who can help me achieve my objectives	0	1	2	3
3.8 I have the ability to learn from the successes and mistakes of others	0	1	2	3
3.9 I understand and have the capability to deal with hidden political tensions and power struggles within the working environment	0	1	2	3
3.10 I am aware of internal and external factors that can help or hinder me (eg: I have considered practical actions that I can take and what factors are out of my control)	0	1	2	3

SUB TOTAL (MAX 30)

## 4. What support to I need?

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
4.1 I am confident at orally promoting the benefits I can bring to a situation (ie good interview and self-presentation skills)	0	1	2	3
4.2 I am able to clearly articulate my strengths through written or visual communication (eg: targeted applications, portfolios, research, presentations, teaching)	0	1	2	3
4.3 I have research skills that I use for investigating and creating opportunities for myself and for gaining support with my career	0	1	2	3
4.4 I am aware of my own comfort zone and actively try to stretch beyond it by taking lots of small risks. I am able to put myself forward for opportunities and promote myself	0	1	2	3
4.5 I continue to develop and maintain a support network with internal and external contacts for advice, encouragement, information and help with my career	0	1	2	3
4.6 I have one or more role models, mentors or coaches from whom I can learn from and receive support in my personal and/or professional development	0	1	2	3
4.7 I regularly review relevant information sources (eg: internet sites, journals, specific magazines and other written literature) within my profession and in management and education	0	1	2	3
4.8 I manage my time effectively and efficiently, spending the greatest time doing things I enjoy and am good at	0	1	2	3
4.9 I know how to add value and be employable in my current (and future) working environment	0	1	2	3
4.10 I know what I want to get out of my employer relationship and what I need to put in. I am confident at negotiating the best deal for myself	0	1	2	3

SUB TOTAL (MAX 30)

## 5. How can I keep on improving?

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
5.1 I regularly review my progress against my objectives and I am able to adjust my goals in the light of changing circumstances	0	1	2	3
5.2 I regularly take dedicated time out to reflect more deeply on my learning	0	1	2	3
5.3 I am aware of when I reach a plateau in my learning and then actively seek new opportunities	0	1	2	3
5.4 I continually assess the balance between my work and personal life	0	1	2	3
5.5 I continue to develop a balanced and flexible portfolio of skills and expertise so that I can be sure of maintaining my future employability	0	1	2	3
5.6 I am able to accept and learn from failure and critical feedback in a positive manner	0	1	2	3
5.7 I maintain an active commitment to lifelong learning and continuing professional development (eg: I have explored what actions I need to take to keep improving)	0	1	2	3
5.8 I continually seek out external feedback on my performance and learn from both successes and failures	0	1	2	3
5.9 I continually develop my support network to provide me with added security, self-confidence, information, guidance and learning etc	0	1	2	3
5.10 I am able to maintain a feeling of self-worth even in the face of rejection	0	1	2	3

SUB TOTAL (MAX 30)

# What next?

This audit provides you with an opportunity to consider your strengths and weaknesses, as expressed through your levels of self-reliance and self-motivation. However, you may also be interested in an overall indication of your performance.

## YOUR PERFORMANCE – A ROUGH GUIDE

Don't worry about your score.

Look at three or four areas in your audit where you scored lowest and take steps to address them.

Keep coming back to this audit as you plan your future.

<b>A</b> 126-150	COMMENT	You're very focused, aware of your strengths and opportunities, flexible in a changing world and a self-starter with all the hallmarks of a true lifelong learner.	ACTION	Keep going because what you're doing is not a static process. Make sure you have realistically scored yourself – and be aware of making general assumptions that can't be backed up with evidence. Focus on continual improvement.
<b>B</b> 101-125	COMMENT	You're well on your way to effectively managing your career and lifelong learning.	ACTION	Take another look at the low scores within your audit. Ensure you understand where the gaps are and develop an Action Plan to address areas for development. Make sure you are using all the resources available to you.
<b>C</b> 70-100	COMMENT	You're doing well, but are you making the most of the opportunities to manage your learning and career?	ACTION	See A and B. You may also wish to consider: How can I be more proactive? Where are my real obstacles? Do they revolve around time, ability, resources or motivation? Can someone help me develop and reflect on my Action Plan?
<b>D</b> Below 70	COMMENT	You're obviously good in certain areas and not all statements may be relevant to you. Think carefully about how you can be more proactive and don't sell yourself short.	ACTION	See A, B & C above. Like many people you have the capability but you need to work on the consistency of your approach. You may tend to react only in time of trouble, frustration or boredom – and then you probably find yourself ill-equipped to deal with the situation, or you've missed a golden opportunity. Positive steps may include: taking time out for reflection, finding a mentor, building your network and researching future opportunities available to you.

# TAKING CONTROL

## A CAREERS HEALTH CHECK

Score yourself out of 10 on the following career management issues (max score = 100)

### 1. TIME-COMMITMENT

Do you create enough time and space for managing your career?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

### 2. SELF-AWARENESS

Do you have an objective awareness of your current portfolio of skills?  
Are you clear what really motivates you?  
Do you understand the barriers stopping you taking control?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

### 3. SELF-PROMOTION

Are you good at promoting yourself on a day-to-day basis?  
Do you have an up-to-date CV?  
How confident are you at interview skills?  
Are you good at celebrating your successes?  
Do you collect evidence of your achievements?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

### 4. PROACTIVITY

Are you proactively making the most of all learning and development opportunities available to you?  
Do you create and seize opportunities – or react within your comfort zone?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

### 5. SUPPORT NETWORK

How effective is your support network and networking skills?  
Do you have enough role models, mentors and providers of information, advice, encouragement and feedback?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## 6. CAREER FOCUS

Are you utilising your skills, knowledge and experiences?  
Are you fulfilled and motivated?  
Do you have a clear idea of what will make you more satisfied in your career?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## 7. STRATEGIC THINKING

How good are you at looking a couple of moves ahead and positioning yourself to seize future opportunities?  
Do you have any career champions who can provide strategic support?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## 8. BROADENING HORIZONS

How good are you at creating stepping stones to reach your targets?  
Are you good at looking 'outside your box'?  
Are you good at managing risks and uncertainty?  
Do you have contingency plans?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## 9. SELF-CONFIDENCE

How confident are you?  
Have you learned to manage rejection effectively?  
Are you actively seeking to grow your self-confidence?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## 10. SUSTAINABILITY

Do you set challenging goals and action plans for yourself?  
Do you have a regular process or structure for review and improvement?  
Are you motivated and persistent enough to sustain your career management?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

\* Discuss your findings with a partner, identifying where you are doing well, where potential gaps lie and future actions required.

**TOTAL (max 100)**

## PRIME SKILLS TEMPLATE

LOVE USING			
QUITE ENJOY			
DON'T ENJOY			
	NEEDS DEVELOPING	REASONABLE	GOOD





# My Skills Portfolio

## PEOPLE SKILLS

### RELATING

- ☐ Welcoming
- ☐ Building relationships
- ☐ Empathising
- ☐ Valuing others
- ☐ Thanking

### COMMUNICATING

- ☐ Talking
- ☐ Presenting
- ☐ Teaching
- ☐ Using languages
- ☐ Listening
- ☐ Liaising

### HELPING

- ☐ Caring
- ☐ Supporting
- ☐ Volunteering
- ☐ Sharing
- ☐ Giving

### EMPOWERING

- ☐ Encouraging
- ☐ Guiding
- ☐ Developing others
- ☐ Coaching
- ☐ Inspiring
- ☐ Mentoring

### MANAGING

- ☐ Realising potential
- ☐ Optimising
- ☐ Co-ordinating
- ☐ Delegating
- ☐ Facilitating

### UNDERSTANDING

- ☐ Having perspective
- ☐ Understanding different cultures, styles and views
- ☐ Empathising
- ☐ Valuing differences

### TEAMWORKING

- ☐ Working collectively
- ☐ Sharing skills
- ☐ Balancing interests
- ☐ Resolving conflict
- ☐ Developing processes

## PROCESSING SKILLS

### PROCESSING

- ☐ Carrying out procedures
- ☐ Following instructions
- ☐ Combining/blending
- ☐ Working structurally and systematically

### ADMINISTRATING

- ☐ Overseeing
- ☐ Completing
- ☐ Delivering
- ☐ Administrating

### MAINTAINING

- ☐ Controlling quality
- ☐ Checking/inspecting
- ☐ Managing information
- ☐ Safety and security
- ☐ Updating

### COMPUTING

- ☐ Word processing
- ☐ Utilising up-to-date IT packages
- ☐ Technical IT skills
- ☐ Setting up IT systems
- ☐ Programming
- ☐ Managing hardware

### WORDS & PICTURES

- ☐ Describing
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Detailing
- ☐ Proofing
- ☐ Drawing
- ☐ Translating

### REVIEWING

- ☐ Progress
- ☐ Performance
- ☐ Evaluating
- ☐ Action planning

### FINANCES

- ☐ Budgeting
- ☐ Costing
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Accounting
- ☐ Auditing

## ENTERPRISE SKILLS

### LEADING

- ☐ Directing people
- ☐ Planning and targets
- ☐ Driving change
- ☐ Evaluating

### NETWORKING

- ☐ Support community
- ☐ Support others
- ☐ Growing relationships
- ☐ Sharing your talents

### STRATEGISING

- ☐ Forecasting
- ☐ Anticipating
- ☐ Researching
- ☐ Financial and business planning
- ☐ Planning scenarios

### SELLING

- ☐ Negotiating
- ☐ Persuading
- ☐ Influencing
- ☐ Meeting needs
- ☐ Closing sale
- ☐ Following up

### SELF-MANAGING

- ☐ Motivating self
- ☐ Managing change
- ☐ Enterprising
- ☐ Seizing opportunities
- ☐ Promoting self
- ☐ Managing rejection

### CHAMPIONING

- ☐ Advocating
- ☐ Pioneering
- ☐ Persuading/influencing
- ☐ Promoting new ideas
- ☐ Sponsoring

### MARKETING

- ☐ Assessing needs
- ☐ Generating possibilities
- ☐ Analysing competitors
- ☐ Positioning offer
- ☐ Enhancing profile

# My Skills Portfolio (continued)

## PRACTICAL SKILLS

### OPERATING

- ☐ Precision working
- ☐ Using machinery
- ☐ Using multi-media
- ☐ Typing
- ☐ Controlling
- ☐ Driving

### CO-ORDINATING

- ☐ Multi-tasking
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Organising
- ☐ Balancing
- ☐ Delegating

### SENSING

- ☐ Hearing
- ☐ Seeing
- ☐ Touching
- ☐ Smelling
- ☐ Tasting

### FIXING

- ☐ Servicing
- ☐ Repairing
- ☐ Re-building
- ☐ Maintaining

### WELL-BEING

- ☐ Exercising
- ☐ Eating healthily
- ☐ Engaging in sport
- ☐ Relaxing
- ☐ Thinking positively

### PRODUCING

- ☐ Manufacturing
- ☐ Crafting
- ☐ Making
- ☐ Constructing
- ☐ Assembling

### NURTURING

- ☐ Plants/Animals
- ☐ Tending
- ☐ Minding
- ☐ Growing
- ☐ Fostering

## EXPLORING SKILLS

### EXPLORING

- ☐ Investigating
- ☐ Opening up new avenues
- ☐ Identifying possibilities
- ☐ Generating alternatives

### INTERVIEWING

- ☐ Questioning
- ☐ Listening
- ☐ Probing
- ☐ Summarising
- ☐ Selecting

### OBSERVING

- ☐ Assessing people
- ☐ Comparing
- ☐ Compiling
- ☐ Learning from data

### LEARNING

- ☐ Studying
- ☐ Reflecting
- ☐ Experimenting
- ☐ Reviewing
- ☐ Refining
- ☐ Improving

### RESEARCHING

- ☐ Gathering information
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Collecting and recording
- ☐ Collating
- ☐ Drawing conclusions

### SOLVING PROBLEMS

- ☐ Analysing
- ☐ Appraising
- ☐ Diagnosing
- ☐ Seeing patterns
- ☐ Prioritising
- ☐ Developing solutions

### REALISING POTENTIAL

- ☐ Uncovering Personal strengths passions and purpose
- ☐ Creating alternatives
- ☐ Making choices
- ☐ Seeking feedback
- ☐ Taking action

## CREATIVE SKILLS

### THINKING Laterally

- ☐ Taking fresh perspectives
- ☐ Using intuition
- ☐ Suspending judgement
- ☐ Seeing new angles
- ☐ Injecting new ideas

### DESIGNING

- ☐ New ideas into practice
- ☐ Developing products
- ☐ Drafting
- ☐ Drawing
- ☐ Programming

### MEDIA

- ☐ Using multi-media creatively
- ☐ Exploiting different media e.g. music, dance, pictures
- ☐ Art and design

### ADAPTING

- ☐ Recycling
- ☐ Re-modelling
- ☐ Enhancing
- ☐ Translating
- ☐ Combining

### CONNECTING

- ☐ Drawing elements together
- ☐ Seeing links
- ☐ Synthesising
- ☐ Sequencing
- ☐ Building on ideas

### CREATING

- ☐ Originating
- ☐ Inventing
- ☐ Innovating
- ☐ Developing
- ☐ Conceiving

### VISIONING

- ☐ Imagining the future
- ☐ Going beyond limits
- ☐ Seeing the whole picture
- ☐ Developing scenarios
- ☐ Turning failure into success

## SKILLS ANALYSIS

Prime Skills

How can I maximise the opportunity to spend more time utilising my prime skills?

What are my development needs?

How do I develop these further?



# MY GOLDEN TICKET

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Action Words for CVs and Application forms

Consider the following words when preparing your CV or completing your application. They will help you to make a positive impression when used coherently as part of your explanation of skills and competencies.

Achieved	Efficient	Processed
Administered	Engineered	Productive
Analysed	Established	Proficient
Built	Expanded	Profitable
Capable	Experienced	Qualified
Competent	Guided	Repaired
Consistent	Implemented	Resourceful
Controlled	Improved	Sold
Co-ordinated	Initiated	Specialised
Created	Led	Stable
Designed	Managed	Successful
Developed	Monitored	Supervised
Directed	Organised	Trained
Economical	Participated	Versatile
	Positive	Wide background

## Expanding your list of Personal Skills

Advising patients	Operating equipment
Arranging events	Organising people and work
Calculating numerical data	Persuading others
Checking for accuracy	Planning agendas
Classifying records	Preparing charts or diagrams
Coaching individuals	Programming systems
Compiling figures	Promoting events
Constructing buildings	Protecting property
Co-ordinating events	Raising funds
Correspondence with customers	Recording data
Counselling people	Repairing equipment
Delegating responsibility	Reviewing
Dispensing information	Running meetings
Drafting reports	Promoting products
Editing documents	Serving the public
Handling complaints	Setting up demonstrations
Inspecting	Speaking in public
Interpreting data	Supervising staff
Interviewing people	Teaching
Maintaining records	Managing staff
Mediating between people	Motivating others

## Useful Words for CVs

Accelerated	Determined	Increased	Presented	Shaped
Accomplished	Developed	Initiated	Presided	Shortened
Accrued	Devised	Inspired	Prevented	Simplified
Accumulated	Directed	Inspected	Processed	Sold
Achieved	Discovered	Installed	Probed	Solved
Acquired	Dismantled	Instigated	Procured	Specified
Administered	Diversified	Instituted	Produced	Spurred
Advised	Diverted	Instructed	Programmed	Stabilised
Altered	Documented	Interpreted	Promoted	Staffed
Analysed	Doubled	Interviewed	Proposed	Standardised
Anticipated	Drafted	Introduced	Proved	Started
Appointed		Invented	Provided	Stemmed
Appraised	Edited	Investigated	Publicised	Stimulated
Approved	Effectuated		Published	Stopped
Arranged	Eliminated	Judged	Purchased	Streamlined
Assembled	Employed			Strengthened
Attained	Enacted	Launched	Re-arranged	Structured
Assessed	Encouraged	Led	Recommended	Studied
Audited	Ended	Lengthened	Recruited	Succeeded
Augmented	Enforced	Lessened	Rectified	Suggested
Averted	Engineered	Liaised	Re-designed	Supervised
Avoided	Enhanced	Lightened	Re-directed	Supported
	Enlarged	Liquidated	Reduced	Surpassed
Bought	Ensured	Lowered	Refined	Surveyed
Broadened	Eradicated		Regulated	
Budgeted	Established	Maintained	Reinforced	Taught
Built	Estimated	Managed	Rejected	Terminated
	Evaluated	Marketed	Rejuvenated	Tested
Calculated	Evaded	Maximised	Related	Tightened
Captured	Exceeded	Minimised	Remedied	Traced
Centralised	Executed	Mitigated	Renewed	Traded
Changed	Expanded	Modernised	Re-organised	Trained
Checked	Expedited	Modified	Repaired	Transferred
Collated	Extended	Monitored	Replaced	Transformed
Collected	Extracted	Motivated	Represented	Translated
Combined		Mounted	Rescued	Travelled
Compiled	Finished		Researched	Trimmed
Completed	Forecast	Negotiated	Resolved	Tripled
Composed	Forestalled		Restored	
Conceived	Formed	Obtained	Retained	Uncovered
Conducted	Formulated	Operated	Re-structured	Undertook
Constructed	Founded	Optimised	Re-vamped	Unified
Controlled		Ordered	Reviewed	United



Consolidated	Guided	Organised	Revised	Unravelled
Converted	Generated	Originated	Revived	Urged
Co-ordinated		Outlined	Re-vitalised	Utilised
Corrected	Halved	Overcome	Revolutionised	
Counselled	Headed			Verified
Created	Heightened	Performed	Saved	Visited
	Highlighted	Piloted	Scheduled	Vitalised
Decreased	Hired	Pioneered	Secured	
Defined		Planned	Serviced	Widened
Demonstrated	Identified	Positioned	Selected	Won
Designed	Implemented	Prepared	Set up	Wrote
Despatched	Improved	Prescribed	Settled	

## Thesaurus

<b>ARRANGED/ PLANNED</b>	<b>BEGAN/ STARTED</b>	<b>CHANGED</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTED</b>
Administered	Built	Altered	Conducted
Arranged	Conceived	Changed	Demonstrated
Assembled	Constructed	Combined	Effectuated
Centralised	Created	Converted	Enacted
Compiled	Devised	Diversified	Enforced
Composed	Established	Modernised	Executed
Co-ordinated	Founded	Modified	Formed
Deployed	Generated	Re-arranged	Formulated
Designed	Initiated	Re-deployed	Implemented
Developed	Inspired	Re-designed	Negotiated
Dismantled	Installed	Re-directed	Operated
Engineered	Instigated	Re-organised	Performed
Mounted	Instituted	Replaced	Presented
Organised	Introduced	Re-structured	Processed
Planned	Invented	Shaped	Produced
Positioned	Launched	Simplified	Provided
Prepared	Originated	Streamlined	Represented
Programmed	Piloted	Tightened	Serviced
Proposed	Pioneered	Transferred	Undertook
Scheduled	Rejuvenated	Transformed	Utilised
Structured	Renewed	Unified	
	Set up	United	
	Started	Vitalised	
Corrected	Accelerated	Decreased	Consolidated
Enhanced	Augmented	Halved	Maintained
Improved	Broadened	Lessened	Regulated
Optimised	Doubled	Lightened	Reinforced



# Interview Tips

Content
Controlling Your Nerves
Staying Positive
Getting Started
- Timing Your Arrival
- First Impressions
- Opening Conversation
- Degree of Formality
- Getting Comfortable
Body Language
- Interviewer's Body Language
- Using Eye Contact at Interview & Optimising It
Selling Yourself
- Listening

## 1. Controlling Your Nerves

It is perfectly natural and healthy to be nervous ahead of an interview. This nervous energy, when properly harnessed, will enable you to present yourself with energy, passion and conviction. Nerves can give you the edge that you need to perform well. However, in order to do so you will need to harness and control your nerves in a positive way.

If you are too calm immediately before an interview, then you may be underestimating the challenge.

It takes energy to stay calm, energy to speak in a lively and interesting way and energy to pay attention to the needs and requests of the interviewer.

Since you only have a finite amount of energy available, learning to control your nerves is important as it lets you focus all of your efforts on interacting with the interviewer in an effective way.

### ☆ Interview Nerves Can Help You...

When you attend an interview, you might notice one or more of the following:

- Firstly, your temperature is likely to increase and you may notice that you have sweaty palms, that you feel slightly flushed and maybe even clammy.
- Secondly, adrenaline may be pumped into your system and this might make you feel shaky.
- Thirdly, your respiration rate is liable to increase and this may make you feel stressed and panicky.

Research has shown that they are not necessarily signs of fear but may indicate that you are gearing up to perform. Many entertainers, public speakers and competitive sports people report the same four symptoms immediately prior to performing - often before giving the best performance of their lives. In the context of an important interview that is precisely what you should be aiming to do.

Therefore, recognizing the symptoms for what they are shouldn't panic you, as they may well enable you to perform better.

☆ **Top Tips for With Interview Nerves**

- *YOU* have been *SELECTED* for interview so focus on all the reasons why you are suitable
- Take a deep breath – ask for a question to be repeated if necessary
- Take a sip of water to give yourself a bit of thinking/breathing space
- Focus on answering the question in hand – don't analyse what just happened – **STAY FOCUSED**
- Isometric exercises (muscle tensing & release) can be useful if your legs or arms get the shakes
- Effective Preparation – considering answers to potential questions linked to the person specification.
- Herbal remedies – like Kalms
- Focus on what you are saying; keep the speed of your conversation steady
- Positive visualisation – picture yourself answering questions well (see later)
- Focus on seeing yourself as a successful candidate

<b>2. Staying Positive</b>
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The subconscious mind works on past experiences, hopes and fears. In being apprehensive ahead of an interview it is easy for your sub-conscious to focus on negative outcomes and thereby magnify your concerns.

If you concentrate on your own nervousness then you will be drawing this to the attention of the interviewer and the impact of your message will be weakened. If you become aware that the interviewer is observing your nervous state this can serve to heighten your self-consciousness.

Before the interview, you should try to visualize an enthusiastic interviewer; who is reacting positively to your responses. Picture yourself holding a clear and interesting discussion/conversation; admit to yourself that you may be nervous but that you are going to use this in a positive way.

Remember that the interviewer is not your adversary and they are not attending the interview in order to pull you down. Their interest lies in what you might say and show them. If you keep your responses focused on the message and try to relax then they will be able to concentrate on taking your message on board.

☆ **Top Tips for Staying Positive**

- Write some positive things about yourself.
  - Jot down your strengths
  - Use only positive statements.
- It is vital to let go thoughts/beliefs that destroy your confidence. Know your self and believe in yourself. We often create our own, imagined barriers by negative thoughts
- Build a positive community around you. People who will encourage you.
- Keep a record of your successes and achievements – they may be applicable to a job/company where you attend interview. Use them.
- Get to know yourself better – recognise if you have a nervous or distracting habit and do something about it. If you wave your hands around when talking, try and hold them gently on your lap at interview, so when you are tempted to wave your hands you can grasp them a little tighter.
- Get a buddy/mentor who will listen to you and support you through difficult times. (Remember to do the same for them too)
- If you go into an interview believing you are going to fail then the likelihood is that you will. If you don't believe in yourself why should an employer?
- If you go into an interview with a positive attitude knowing you have committed yourself to doing all the necessary preparation that was feasible, believing you can succeed then the chances of success are far greater.
- Keep negative interview experiences in perspective: e.g. world famine, global warming etc

**Remember you have been called for interview, therefore, the organisation must believe you can do the job; otherwise you would not be there.**

### 3. Getting Started

#### ☆ **Timing Your Arrival**

You must arrive in time for your interview, arriving late means you start at a disadvantage to other candidates and it may even mean that you will not be considered.

- 👉 Calculate your journey time
- 👉 Allow a margin for delays and other eventualities
- 👉 Check all the available travel information before leaving and amend your journey plans if necessary
- 👉 Always carry a mobile phone so that you can summon taxis or other assistance whilst travelling.

With this careful planning you should arrive early for your interview - ideally about 20 minutes. Where you should then wait will depend on how early you are. Anything over 20 minutes early and it is advisable to wait in a nearby café, coffee shop etc. This has the advantage of helping to relax you and gives you an opportunity to organise your thoughts and re-visit your portfolio.

You are on show from the moment you arrive at the place of interview, so act accordingly :-

- Is there any pertinent information that you could pick up from the venue?
- Remember, it is not only the interviewers that are assessing you but any number of staff may be subsequently asked their opinion of the candidates.
- Take the opportunity to ask the receptionist to look after any excess belongings, as you do not want to walk into the interview room loaded with clutter
- Try to arrive at interview with just a single briefcase, document wallet or bag.

#### ☆ **Creating a Positive First Impression**

You must do everything you can to make a positive first impression when you meet the interviewer.

There is a common misconception that type of handshake and personality is in some way connected. In the interview context there is very little information to go on and so, like many other things, the handshake takes on undue significance. The best advice is to match the handshake of whoever you are meeting (e.g. level of pressure), remembering to make eye contact and smile at the same time.

If you feel uncomfortable with this, it is worth practicing your handshake until you feel more comfortable with it. If you do suffer from sweaty palms, sometimes associated with interview nerves, a useful tip is to keep a cotton handkerchief in your pocket and discreetly wipe your palm just before shaking the interviewer's hand.

It is important that you are not seen to do this, as it is a very subordinate sign - showing you feel unworthy of the meeting. Never wipe your hand just after the handshake, as this implies that you felt dirty after touching the other person.

## ☆ **Recovering from a Poor First Impression**

The 'first impressions' reaction cuts both ways as you will also be meeting them for the first time. Whatever your true feelings, make sure that you react positively to them, smile warmly and ensure you maintain positive body language. Even if you think you have just met the interviewer from hell you must proceed with your main objective - to perform well at this interview.

You may be convinced that they have formed an unfavourable first impression of you. Ignore this thought. Professional interviewers and other managers are increasingly trained to overcome their initial reactions and to apply more scientific interview techniques.

Even if you have stumbled and made a weak first impression you can turn their opinion round, so keep working hard at making the right impression throughout the remainder of the interview.

### **Opening Conversation**

- Respond to conversational openers, like the common question about 'how was your journey?'
- Respond by making conversation but don't overdo it and avoid stressing any negatives, even if you had a terrible journey, as this is not a good way to start
- People generally like others who are capable of initiating conversation, so don't be afraid of asking your own polite questions during this meet and greet phase
- Remember, people like people who are similar to themselves. They like confidence, but not too much or it can be perceived as arrogance,

## ☆ **Degree of Formality**

You have now met the interviewer and, like it or not, your own first impressions are already forming. You are starting to judge their interview style but another powerful clue to this can come from the layout of the interview room itself. There are three basic layouts used by experienced interviewers:

**Across the table:** This is the classic negotiation style, eye to eye.

**Across the corner of the table:** This is a more informal, conversational colleague style layout

**Across open space:** The classic friend-to-friend style of open discussion

These three options range from formal to informal and are often a big clue as to the interview style: structured, semi-structured or unstructured. The more informal the setting the more the experienced interviewer can gain. Where the interview is held across open space the interviewer can read far more from your body language than they can when a desk is between you.

The more informal the setting the more attention you should pay to your non-verbal communication, whilst at the same time adopting a slightly more relaxed and informal style in the way you answer questions, although your key messages should be the same.



## ☆ **Getting Comfortable**

It is good practice not to sit down before being invited to. This is not only polite but also gives a nervous interviewer confidence by letting them direct things.

Ideally you should sit at a slight angle to the interviewer, as this is more relaxed than the eye-to-eye, head-on position. To show how bright and alert you are lean slightly forward in your chair. This is dealt with in more detail in the next section.

You can convey a positive message in the way you sit:-

- with the upper limbs the guideline is that the less a person moves their hands and arms, the more powerful they are - this supports the view that they are used to people listening to them and they therefore do not have to resort to gesticulation to get their point across
- the technical term for this is Low Peripheral Movement, or LPM. When being interviewed maintain LPM and you will make a more impressive impact with your interviewer.
- try to keep your hands lower than your elbows, rest them on the arms of the chair, your thighs or even make a low steeple with the fingers of both hands.
- everyday seating position, with legs crossed high-up is not suitable for the interview setting because in this intimate context it actually conveys a defensive attitude. Your legs need to convey confidence and there are two key positions that can communicate this - the low cross position and the athletic position.
- the athletic position is where one leg is brought under your chair so that only the toe of that shoe is in contact with the floor. The other leg is firmly planted on the floor, parallel with the direction of the chair, with the entire sole of that shoe on the floor. This is a powerful position, conveying a readiness for action.
- the athletic position is often not suited to female clothing and here the low cross position, where the legs are kept together and crossed at the ankles should be adopted.

The accepting of refreshments can be a tricky area. The best advice is to be comfortable; and do what feels best for you. So, if you are thirsty accept a drink but if you are very nervous bear in mind that any shakiness of the hand will be magnified when holding a cup. It might always be worthwhile to ask for a glass of water – so that if you get a dry mouth or need a few seconds thinking time you can take a sip – yet if you don't need to drink it, it is not a problem to leave it untouched.

#### 4. Body Language

Body language is a very important part of any communication. Your body language will be analysed by the interviewer; even if they are unaware of this at the conscious level.

A brilliantly prepared interview delivered in an interesting voice will fall well short of the mark if accompanied by negative, intrusive or hostile body language. This section explains aspects of body language communication as it applies in western society.

There are three main aspects of body language that you should consider: what to do with your eyes, what your facial expressions indicate and the positioning and movement of your body and limbs.

##### ☆ Interviewer's Body Language

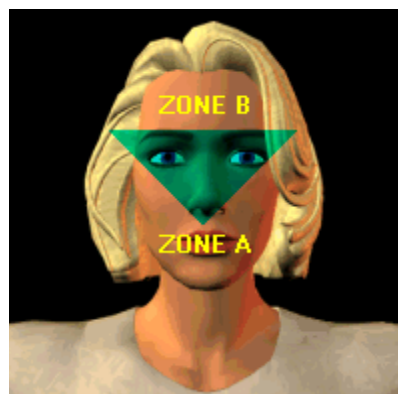
In any intimate communication there is a natural tendency to mirror the body position of the person you are talking to, and this behaviour tends to result in a more relaxed and agreeable atmosphere. You can help to put the interviewer at ease by being aware of this and making a positive but subtle effort to mirror their body language.

The concept of mirroring is based on the well-known human trait of like attracting like. People generally like people that appear to be similar to them. Therefore, by observing the interviewers body language and reflecting this back at them they are likely to feel more at ease and friendly towards you.

An individual's facial expression, tone of voice, body posture and movement often convey a world of detail about what they are thinking and feeling and how they are reacting to what you are saying.

The effective use and interpretation of body language communication will help you to identify subtle aspects of the interviewer's attitudes and reactions. This understanding and interpretation of body language is a key component of intelligent listening.

##### ☆ Using Eye Contact at Interview



- Think about where else you might be tempted to look at someone's face during a conversation?
- Which area of the face do you think would cause the most discomfort to the person being looked at?
- Looking at someone's face anywhere outside of the triangular target zone is likely to cause some degree of embarrassment.
- Zone A represents the intimate zone and by moving just a fraction below the base of the target triangle you will enter it. When this happens people typically react by feeling that the other person is staring at them, or that the observer looks shifty.
- Zone B represents a dominant zone and by looking at the forehead of another person you are likely to invoke a reaction that you appear to be arrogant, that you are staring straight through them or more commonly that you are talking down at them.

As well as understanding how to make positive eye contact it is also important to ensure that you do maintain this form of communication even if the interview does not appear to be going as well as you had hoped. If this is the case you will need all of the help you can muster to get the interview back on track and maintaining the correct amount of positive eye contact may help to do this.

Eye contact with the interviewer is an essential part of the interview process. Without it they will feel remote from you and are unlikely to relate to one another, or what you are saying in a meaningful way. Not many people realise how important eye contact is, or how sensitive people are to it. Eye contact should be a positive form of body language communication, but if it is not used correctly it can easily become negative.

### ☆ **Optimising Eye Contact at Interview**

Understanding where to look in order to make positive eye contact is only part of the story. You also need to know how and when to use this non-verbal communication. The amount of eye contact you make should differ fundamentally depending on whether you are in the role of speaker or listener.

It is in the role of listener that you should :-

- instigate more eye contact
- hold it for longer periods of time
- it supports your role as an attentive listener, whereas overusing eye contact when speaking may appear a demand for the interviewer to pay attention.

As a speaker :-

- holding eye contact initially for 5 to 10 seconds and after that using it in an intermittent way is ideal
  - this way you do not appear to be lecturing or hectoring and the listener does not feel that they are being challenged to a staring contest
  - it is normal for the listener to maintain eye contact for longer than the
-

speaker who will typically break off whilst thinking around the answer

Eye contact when used positively can be a very effective form of non-verbal communication. However, excessive or inappropriate eye contact will prevent you establishing a good relationship with your interviewer

## 5. Selling Yourself At Interview

An interview is best approached as a sales meeting, in which you have to communicate your benefits to the interviewer. At the same time you should avoid, or dilute, any negative aspects of your employment history. Your aim is to make as strong a case as you can for them offering you the position. In effect you are there to sell - *yourself!*

One of the keys to this is to ensure that you always remain positive. Good news tends to be accepted at face value, whereas bad news tends to make people sit up and pay attention. If you get the interviewer's attention in this way, they are likely to pursue this new line of enquiry aggressively. This would mean dwelling on bad news and facing awkward questions about something you really should not have brought up in the first place.

If you have some career skeletons in your closet, decide ahead of the interview how you can avoid giving too much information about these areas. Is it possible to avoid talking about these issues at the interview? You almost certainly will not have published negative information in your application form. Alternatively can you put a more positive interpretation on events? Stressing the lessons you learned and how you have put these to practical effect since?

### ☆ **Listen carefully, what is it that the Interviewer wants?**

You should by now realise that every question that is asked by an experienced interviewer has a purpose. It is important that you analyse the question and understand its purpose before answering.

This may sound like a tall order - performing this in real time before answering! Won't this lead to long pauses?

Your brain can process spoken words at about 600 words per minute; whereas the average person speaks at around 100 words per minute. Therefore, there really is a lot of spare capacity to process precisely what they are saying.

As the question is being asked, ask yourself:

- ☆ WHY am I being asked this question?
- ☆ WHAT is the area of concern to the interviewer?
- ☆ HOW can I lower their anxiety?

If you have followed the advice given earlier in this course you will have a complete armoury of information from which to select. Your task then becomes quite simple: choose the most relevant and positive information you have about yourself and give it to them.

☆ **And finally...**

You are at the interview on the strength of your application to date, but you need to score as high as possible with your answers and responses during the selection process.

In order to do this you need to convince the selection panel that you have the skills & qualities that they are assessing against that are stated in the person specification.

Remember: if you keep a positive mindset, prepare effectively and communicate in a friendly and professional way - this will help you to make a favourable impression and you are giving yourself the best opportunity to show your suitability for the opportunity.



## **INFORMATION INTERVIEWS**

### **Step 1**

#### **Start with the end in mind**

Start by identifying the information you require. List the questions you need answering – How is the specialty changing? Where are the opportunities? How can I get into it? What should I expect? Use the information interview prompts in **step 4** to help you make a full list of all the questions you want to explore.

### **Step 2**

#### **Find three people**

Use your support community and network to identify three people who can help you. You may find them from a variety of sources – from your previous roles, people your colleagues/friends recommend, from related internet sites.

Try to start with an early win by finding someone who you know is keen to help.

Try to seek out a range of views, from those who may be very influential and experienced, to those who may be much newer to the system.

### **Step 3**

#### **Arrange a meeting**










1. Introduce yourself (by phone, e-mail or face to face) and say why you've made contact
2. Establish a link by mentioning the people you know in common or better still the person who recommended you to them
3. Give some positive feedback, e.g. "You've been recommended by ... who says you're the ideal person to speak to because of your experience/interest in... ". Remember we all like to feel valued
4. Say you are carrying out **informational interviews** with some key people in the specialty and would really appreciate their time
5. Make it clear **why** you want the discussion and **how** it will help you – what do you want to achieve as a result of them offering you their time?
6. Ask for 10-15 minutes
7. Make sure you get to meet them in their chosen venue
8. Be yourself and don't be too pushy – you don't want to be seen as a salesperson
9. Be prepared for rejection – the person may not have time or the interest to speak with you – but you may be able to ask '*can you recommend anybody else I could speak to?*'
10. Be prepared for a chance conversation – carry your questions around with you!

#### **Golden Rules**

- Don't try to use the time as an impromptu way of getting feedback on your CV. If you would like CV feedback, make sure the person knows this in advance
- Stick to your structure and time limit
- Find a good way of recording the information that works for you – look for key themes on completion
- Let people know how you get on if they are interested in your progress; keep them informed if relevant

## Step 4 - Conducting the information interview

Once you've introduced yourself and why you're there, you might find the following structure useful.

Stage	Question	Ideas
	Thank you for seeing me.	Make a positive first impression, remember to smile and show how grateful you are for their offering their time.
	How did you get into this specialty?	Explore traditional entry routes and alternative ways of getting in. How are things changing now? E.g. Is the specialty becoming more community based?
	What are the key skills and personal qualities required for this specialty?	Notice if there are themes emerging; notice any stereotypes
	What excites you most about the job?	What are the best bits about the job?  Thinking about what they say  Does it : Use your prime skills? (the ones you LOVE using and are GOOD AT) Build on your passions? Link to what else you want to achieve in your life? Involve people who inspire you in a place that energises you and provides the right payoffs?
	What's not so good about the work?	Once again, test against the things that are important to you personally
	How do you see the specialty/sector changing over the next 3-5 years?	What challenges and problems do you foresee?  Here you are getting the person to look ahead at what is needed in the future.  They may well highlight problems as well as opportunities. Both will give you invaluable information on what skills and experience the specialty will value in the future
<b>x : y</b>	What is the current competition level for training?	Is the information biased, based on personal opinion, hearsay or fact? Are there differences regionally/nationally? Have you looked at the MMC website for competition ratios to compare?
	What kind of people will the specialty need in the future?	Many job descriptions look at the present position. This question will allow you to spot in more detail the critical skills, expertise and experience required for highly successful candidates of the future. It will give you a clear idea of what you need to be employable in that sector.
	Can you suggest two or three other people who could help?	You can tailor this question by identifying types of people, areas you need particular help with, or locations they are in e.g. "Can you recommend any Oncologists in the Merseyside area?"  Try to get contact details. If the person seems really keen, ask them to make contact them in advance for you.
<b>“ ... ”</b>	Any other questions????	What else does it prompt you to ask?
	Thanks very much for your time.	Follow up with some kind of thank you – something memorable so that the person knows you have appreciated them giving you their time



## Step 5

### What next...

Look for key themes in your data – what does it tell you?

What have you learned as a result?

How does what you have found out match up to your:

- Skills?
- Attributes?
- Personality?
- Interests?
- Abilities?
- What else you want from your work and life?

What other questions do you need to explore as a result?

In terms of your career development, what do you intend to **do** next as a result?  
(Make your actions SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time bound)

When will you do this by? (Putting a date on an action will make you much more likely to achieve it)





North Western Deanery Careers  
**Approaching CCT day**  
Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 2013

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