

# Getting ahead of the competition for years 10 and 11

## CVs, Cover Letters and Personal Statements

(Session 1 –slides 1-6, session 2 –slides 7- 10)

# Getting ahead of the competition

## After year 11 what is next?

- Sixth form for A levels
- College
- Apprenticeship
- Full time employment
- Volunteering

## Getting noticed

- The plans you have are more than likely going to be the same as 1000s of other 16+ young people in your position
- So what makes you different?
- Why should people take you on?
- How are you going to stand out from the rest?

# Getting ahead of the competition

- Getting noticed all boils down to the following areas, which ones do you consider you are strong in and which need more attention?
- CV and Cover Letter
- Qualifications
- Employability skills
- Experience
- Research
- Passion, desire and commitment for the opportunity
- No one will give you a break if you do not have proven or potential skills, are under qualified for the position, have not done your research, produce a poor CV/application or show a lack of motivation for the available opportunity.

# Getting ahead of the competition

- **Cover Letter/Personal Statement**

A cover letter is your opening pitch: it's 500 or so words which are neat, to the point and written in a style that makes your personality jump off the page. This is the first thing employers see, before they open your attached CV in your email.

It can be a separate document also attached with your CV (make sure it's in a format most people can open on their computer, like a Word document or PDF) or you can make the body of your email your cover letter.

Imagine you had a pile of 200 CVs on your desk, and you're busy with your job too – you would want to read a cover letter that builds an instant picture of someone friendly and professional, who you can see in the job role.

If they like the cover letter, they'll want to open up your CV. A good cover letter is firm but friendly, shows you're not wasting their time, and shows you feel you would be a great match for what the employer is looking for.

# Getting ahead of the competition

- **Cover letters or Personal Statements**
- **DO**
- Hook the reader's attention by adopting a polite, professional and positive tone
- Keep it short, precise and within the recommended length. It's important to be concise and to the point otherwise you'll sound muddled and lose the attention of your potential employer.
- Include a brief overview of your career history. Where have you worked previously? What did you learn from the experience you have had?
- Highlight key areas of expertise. What do you excel at? What can you bring to the company?
- Include key skills. How do your skills match up the job description? What sets you apart from other applicants?
- Indicate the type of role you are seeking. Why does the role you're applying for appeal to you?
- Avoid clichés. Filling your personal statement with clichés makes your application impersonal and dull, and can also sound cringeworthy.
- Use the language of the job description. This show that you have read the job description thoroughly and have a comprehensive understanding of what the role requires.

# Getting ahead of the competition

## What is a CV?

- <https://youtu.be/oE43dX3D96o>
- 2.18 mins

## What does it look like?

- <https://youtu.be/oq4hyvEyzRg>
- 1.47 mins

# Getting ahead of the competition

- **1. Personal data:** This is as simple as your name, date of birth, address, contact number, email address etc. Some organisations might even ask for your driving license or passport details. Don't make any of this section up, and don't have an email address that's something ridiculous – it's often the first thing employers see if you email in a CV.
- **2. Proof:** This is where you explain any qualifications and achievements you have that prove you know (or can do) something relevant to the job role. This means showing your knowledge and training – it can include a driving license, GCSEs, A Levels, degrees, apprenticeships, diplomas, HNCs, HNDs, DBS checks, music or drama certificates.

# Getting ahead of the competition

- **3.Experience:** Your time in a working environment, where you proved you've put the education and training ingredients into practice. Show you can, for example, work under pressure, adapt to situations, work with different people, communicate ideas, have basic tech knowledge, problem solving, using initiative.
- The experience part's the bit most people find hardest to write as it isn't just listing a grade or the name of a qualification; it's crucial you mention your experiences. Anyone can show they passed an exam and got a grade, but stories build an image of you in an employer's mind.



# Getting ahead of the competition

- **4.References:** Employers like to know what other people think of you. These 'others' are people you've shown any of the three above to: knowledge, training and experience. If you've spent time with other people developing any of those, that means they've seen you in action, seen how you learn and develop, seen your personality and attitude, and your behaviour when in certain situations.
- Your referee could be: a previous teacher or tutor, a previous employer including a boss or manager, a mentor, or a person who has organised work experience or a placement for you. It could even be a customer or client you have worked with on a number of occasions.

## Getting ahead of the competition

- CVs, Personal statements and Cover letters will get you in the door for a job interview, however, what else do employers want? (video)
- IF YOU HAVE NOT STARTED THINKING ABOUT YOUR CAREER PATHWAY, CV or COVER LETTER MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO SEE NERYS (Our fantastic Careers Wales advisor) WHO IS LOCATED NEXT TO THE INCLUSION DEAPRTMENT
- Nerys will give you sound advice on all you need to know about your next steps plus tips and advice on 'GETTING AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION'.
- Good luck

- <https://youtu.be/b-rIXEU-DN4>
- 2 mins