

DECISIONS, EVIDENCE & ACTIONS

1 Learn how to evaluate your options

2 Explore how to make an action plan

3 Explore feedback and self-awareness



DECISIONS, EVIDENCE & ACTIONS

POST-16
CAREERS WEEK 2023

Today we'll be focusing on how to research the skills required for your future career pathway, how to evidence the skills you've gained, the importance of asking for feedback and being able to talk about your strengths.

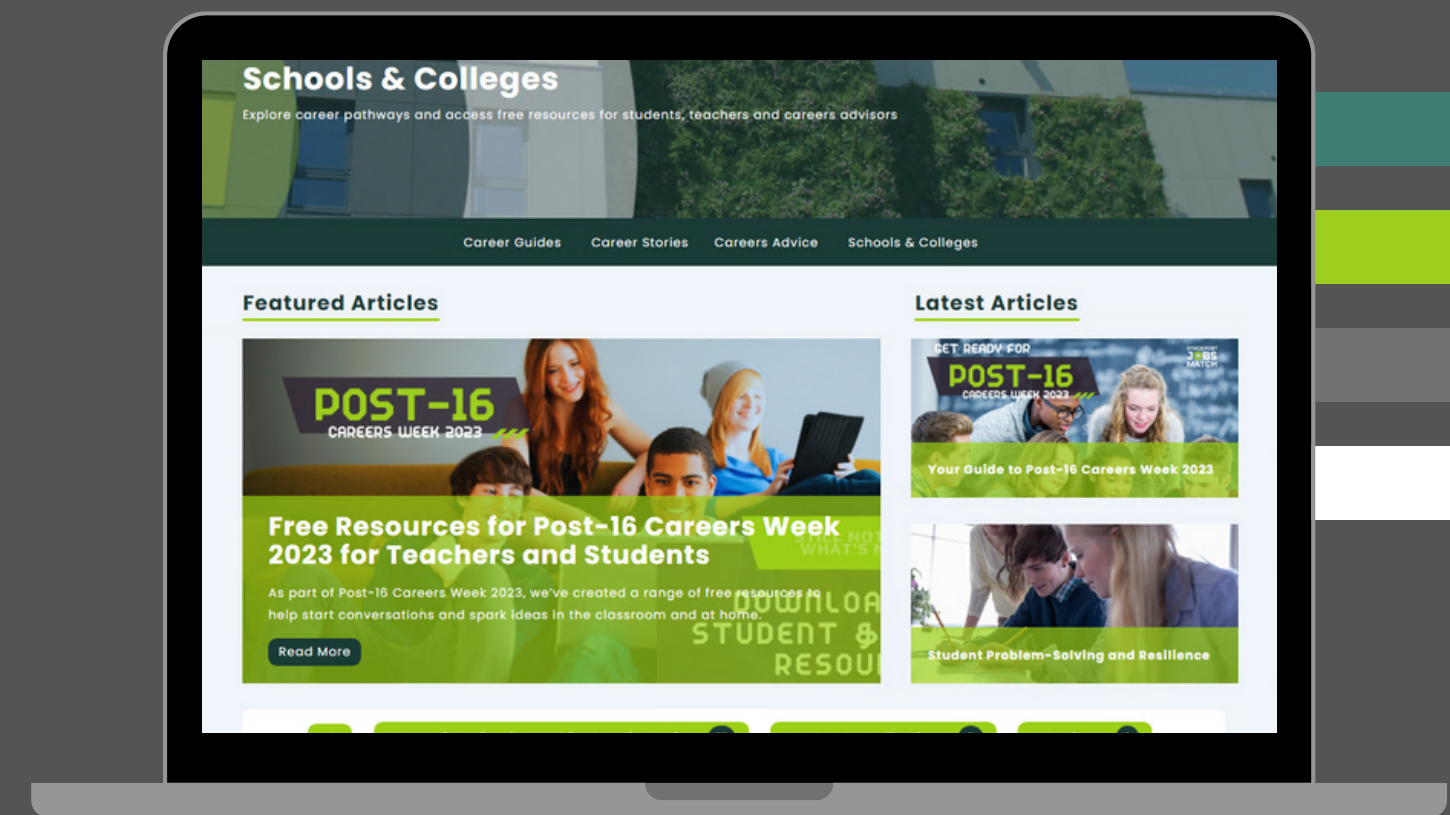
EXPLORING YOUR OPTIONS

In 60 seconds how many resources can you list which would help you gather information and advise on your Post-16 options?

Now take another minute to compare your lists as a class.

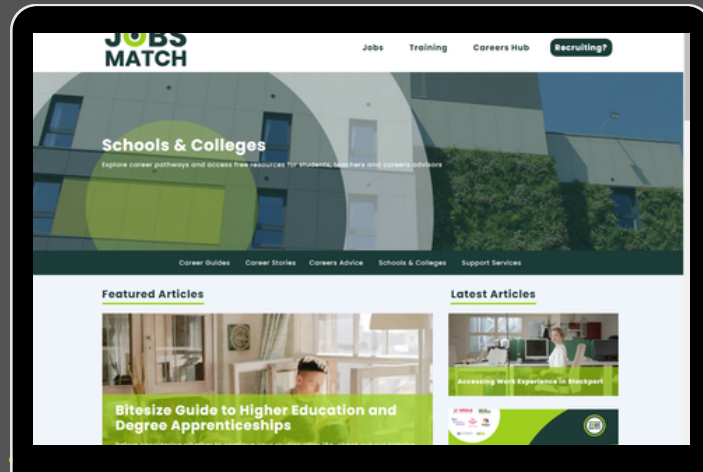
- How big is your list? Is this a surprise to you?
- Are there any ideas on there you hadn't considered?
- How much help do you think there is? How does this make you feel?
- Are all the resources on the list as important/useful as each other?
- Where would you start and why?

Take 5 minutes to write down the resources you are going to start your research with.



STOCKPORT
JOBS
MATCH

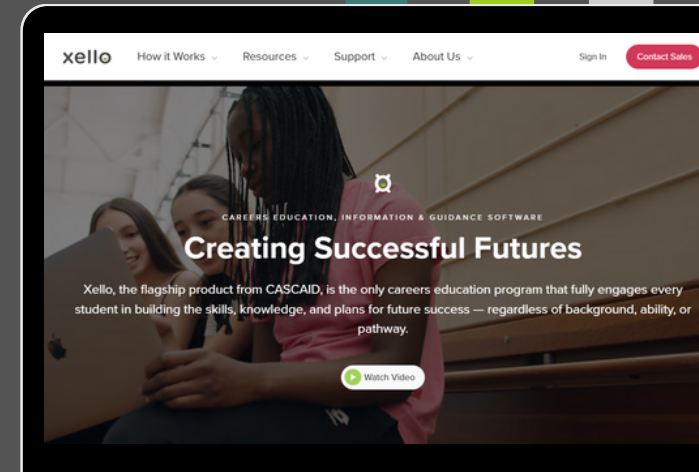
USEFUL WEBSITES & RESOURCES



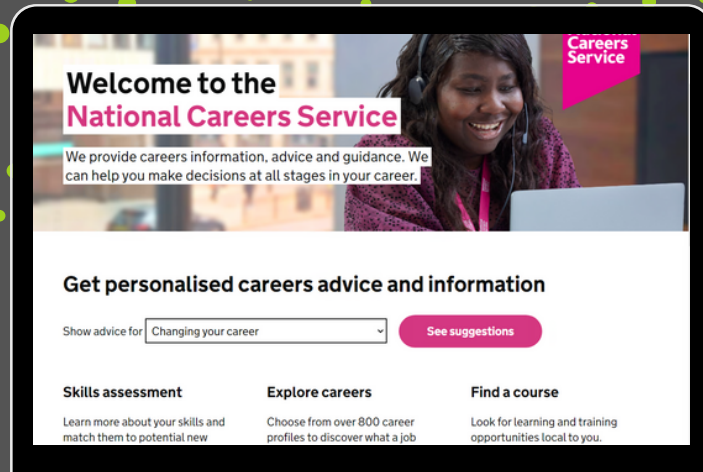
Stockport Jobs Match



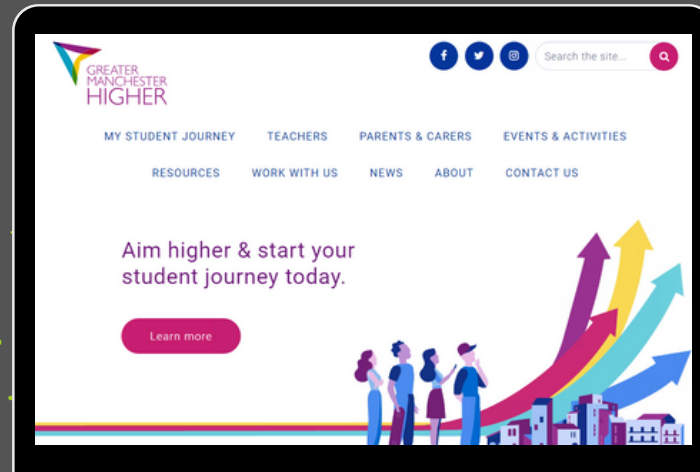
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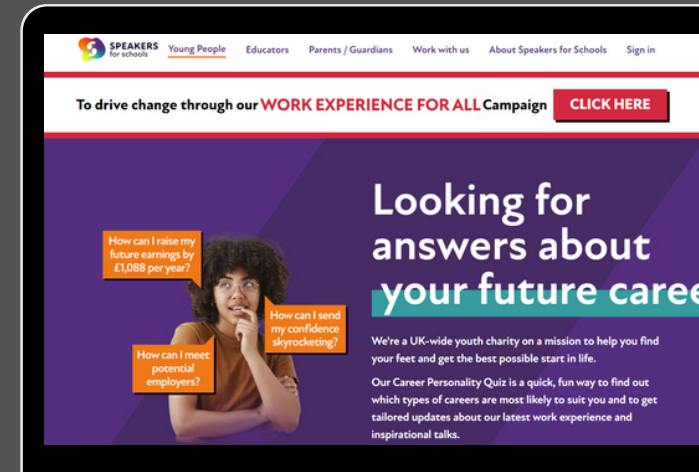
Xello



National Careers Service



GM Higher



Speakers for Schools

WHAT SKILLS DO I NEED?

Using the websites we've mentioned, you can research the different jobs and careers available to find out what hard and soft skills, experience and qualifications are required.

You can use job boards, like Indeed or Stockport Jobs Match, to view job adverts created by employers.

These contain 'person specifications' listing the essential and desirable skills a suitable candidate will need.

Find a job advert related to your future career. Can you find the 'person specification' and essential/desirable skills required?



WHAT DO I HAVE TO OFFER?

It can sometimes feel like you have very little to offer a future employer when you're just starting out, or that you'll struggle to find things to talk about in your application or interview at college for example. However, we gain skills in our everyday lives and are learning new things all the time.

Can you think of 5 skills you have to offer and how you demonstrate these inside or outside of education?

You may struggle to talk about what you're good at. Some people may be over-confident in their strengths, whilst others may not realise how good they are.

There are lots of people who could help you get a more realistic idea of your skills. Who do you think you could ask for feedback on things you do well?





KNOWING YOUR STRENGTHS

It's not enough to just say you have skills in a particular area. You will need to be able to describe your abilities to others in interviews (for college or university, apprenticeships or employment), as well as giving examples of when you have demonstrated them.

Hard Skills

- Hard skills, or technical skills, are required by all employers.
- Hard skills are taught by training and can be assessed to show how competent or advanced you are.
- Your qualifications from school will show employers how technically skilled you are in a range of subjects.
- Many people forget that they learn technical skills outside of school as well - think about your hobbies and achievements in extra curricular activities.

Soft Skills

- Soft skills, or transferable skills, are also required by employers.
- These skills are part of your personal attributes and are usually assessed through interviews or tasks an employer sets.
- To demonstrate your skill level, it's important to reflect on previous experiences and how you have dealt with them. Think about any responsibilities you have had or been given and why you were chosen.
- Feedback is also a really useful tool when exploring soft skills.



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GATHERING EVIDENCE

Sometimes it can be hard to talk about our own strengths and find ways to articulate what we're good at it. Who else could you ask about your strengths?

Take a moment to consider how you could gather evidence of your transferable skills or who/when you could ask for feedback on your performance? Make a list and discuss your ideas as a group.

- Are there any ideas on there you hadn't considered?
- How much help do you think this is? How does this make you feel?
- Are all the ideas on the list as important/useful as each other?
- Where would you start and why?
- Thinking about your own portfolio are there any gaps you could work on?
- How would you decide which gaps are the priority to work on?
- Where can you go for help on developing your skill portfolio?

Take 5 minutes to identify any personal skill gaps you might have and what you could do to work towards building skills in those areas.



“I think it’s very important to have a feedback loop, where you’re constantly thinking about what you’ve done and how you could be doing it better.”

Elon Musk

“Feedback is a gift. Ideas are the currency of our next success. Let people see you value both feedback and ideas.”

Jim Trinko and Les Wallace

DESCRIBING YOUR STRENGTHS

During an interview, you'll need to give examples to evidence your skills. A good method to answer the question and stick to the point is the "STAR Technique".

Why not practice with a friend or someone at home?



Situation: Identify and describe a situation which is relevant to the question. Think about an experience which will highlight the skills the employer wants.



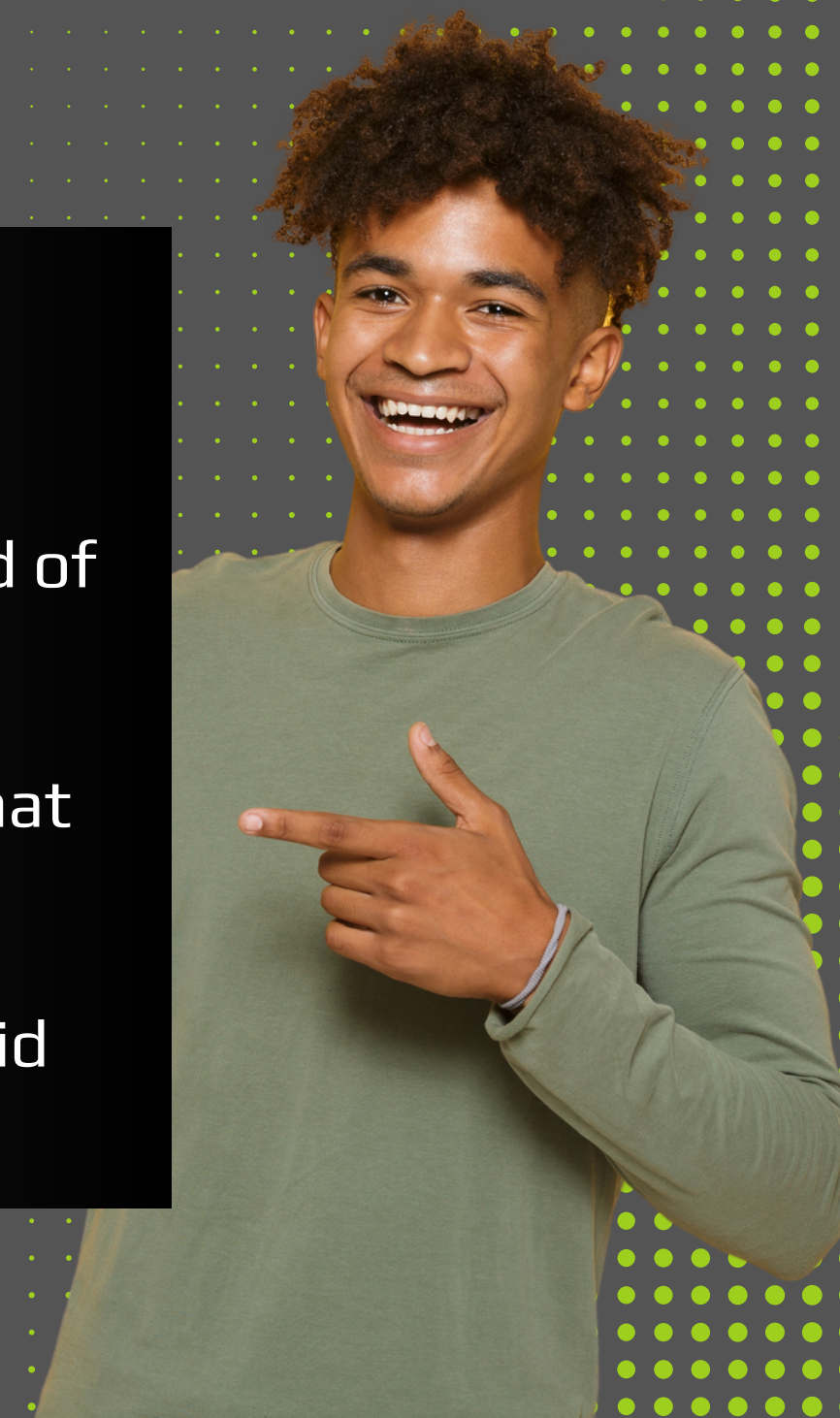
Task: This is where you describe your role in the situation, what was expected of you? What projects or objectives did you have?



Action: Next, talk through what you did. What were your responsibilities? What decisions did you make to resolve issues?







Result: Describe the outcome. What was the impact of your actions? What did you learn? How did you develop from this experience?



STAR EXAMPLE

Remember that you should view all interview questions as a chance to show why you would make a good hire and how you are suitable for the role. This is why preparing is key, know in advance what examples you'd like to be able to tell the employer about and weave these in to the interview when given the opportunity. Here's an example on how to use the STAR technique to answer the question:

"Describe a situation when you've had to show initiative."

-  **Situation:** At school, I was involved in a charity fundraising team to raise money for our leavers disco and hoodies. It felt like a big milestone to finish secondary school, so we all wanted a really great send-off!
-  **Task:** After the first term, I realised we were short on volunteers and needed to plan lots more fundraising activities to reach our target funds.
-  **Action:** I took the **initiative** to recruit additional volunteers from my friends and classmates. I made posters explaining the costs of all the different things we'd need for the hoodies and the leavers disco, and suggesting ways people could raise money or upcoming fundraisers they could support or get involved in.
-  **Result:** Because of this, we enlisted another 8 volunteers onto the fundraising team and organised 3 new activities before the end of term to raise money. Within a few months, we had exceeded our fundraising goal and were able to buy the hoodies and lots of extra decorations, food and goody bags for the event. It was a great night!

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SELF-AWARENESS

Did you know that employers aren't only interested in your successes and achievements? In fact, often, it's of more interest to an employer to learn about a time things didn't go to plan!

Take 60 seconds to think about why an employer might be interested in learning about the mistakes, failures and obstacles you've experienced.

Now take another couple of minutes to compare your thoughts as a class.

- Discuss why you think an employer would be interested.
- Do you think that all personal experiences are good to share? Why?
- Do you think it's a good idea to share your "mistakes/failures" in an interview?
- Why would an employer be interested in other people's feedback to you?
- How much help do you think this is? How does this make you feel?

Take some time to make a list of your own experiences. What did people say to you at the time? What did you learn from this? How did it change things for you?



“Never be afraid to fail. Failure is only a stepping stone to improvement. Never be overconfident because that will block your improvement.”

– Tony Jaa

“In a growth mindset, challenges are exciting rather than threatening. So rather than thinking, oh, I’m going to reveal my weaknesses, you say, wow, here’s a chance to grow.”

– Carol Dweck

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1 Visit stockport-jobsmatch.co.uk

2 Download 'Mountain Climber Sheet'

3 Watch 'Transferable Skills' videos

