

WHAT EMPLOYERS ARE REALLY LOOKING FOR...

When applying for an apprenticeship, employers are not just looking at grades or experience. They are looking for your potential to grow and succeed in the role.

Checklist of what employers want to see:

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|  Motivation and genuine interest in the apprenticeship and industry |  Problem-solving ability and logical thinking |
|  Reliability (good attendance, punctuality, and commitment) |  Teamwork and ability to work with others |
|  Willingness to learn and develop new skills |  Basic understanding of the role or industry |
|  Clear communication skills (written and spoken) |  Positive attitude, resilience, and ability to handle feedback |

The apprenticeship recruitment process is designed to find potential, not perfection. Being yourself, preparing well, and understanding what employers are really looking for will help you put forward your best application.

TOP TIPS FROM EMPLOYERS

1. EVEN CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS (CEOS) START SOMEWHERE

Every professional career begins with a first step, and apprenticeships are often that step. Many CEOs, managers, and skilled professionals started in entry-level roles where they were learning on the job.

What they want to see is not perfection, but:

- Willingness to learn
- Reliability and effort
- A positive attitude when things are unfamiliar

You don't need to already "know everything" - you need to show you can learn.

2. WORK IS DIFFERENT TO COLLEGE

College and school often focus on completing set tasks with flexibility and guidance. Work is different.

In the workplace, employers expect:

- Punctuality every day, not just when convenient
- Consistency in effort, even on routine tasks
- Initiative - asking "What can I do next?" rather than waiting to be told
- Professional communication (clear, polite, and appropriate)

Understanding this shift early helps you stand out immediately.

3. KEEP THE PHONE AWAY

One of the simplest but most common issues employers notice is phone use.

During interviews, assessments, or workplace experience:

- **Keep your phone out of sight**
- **Do not check messages or notifications**
- **Focus fully on the task or conversation**

It signals respect, attention, and professionalism - qualities employers value highly in apprentices (and indeed all roles!)

4. INTERVIEW BODY LANGUAGE

How you behave in an interview often matters as much as what you say.

STRONG BODY LANGUAGE INCLUDES:

- **Good posture (sitting upright, not slouched)**
- **Eye contact (natural, not staring)**
- **A firm but polite handshake (if appropriate)**
- **Nodding to show understanding**
- **Smiling appropriately to show engagement**



AVOID:

- **Looking at the floor or around the room**
- **Fidgeting or slouching**
- **Folding arms defensively**

5. SOCIAL MEDIA CHECK – WHAT EMPLOYERS SEE

Most employers will check social media profiles before making a decision. Even if you are not directly connected to them, public content can still be visible.

They may look at:

- **Public posts, comments, and images**
- **Your tone of communication**
- **How you present yourself online**
- **Any content involving inappropriate language, negativity, or risky behaviour**

Even older posts can matter. It is worth reviewing your accounts and asking:

- ***Would I be comfortable with a potential employer seeing this?***
- ***Does this reflect how I want to be perceived professionally?***

