

Workshop 1

Facilitator Pack

The role of the facilitator

What a facilitator does is plan, guide and manage a group event to ensure that the group's objectives are met effectively, with clear thinking and good participation.

This facilitator pack is designed to support the facilitator to effectively deliver a group workshop. You should read the information and supporting tips about how this workshop can be effectively delivered.

Importance of environment

People are positively impressed by tidiness, not because they like tidiness but because it often indicates control and fitness for purpose. These messages are the reverse for untidiness.

Always attempt to view your environment and set up prior to claimants arriving. This will create the organised and professional image of the workshop.

As professionals our claimants expect us to be well organised and able to focus on them while we're coaching.

Whether this means moving a computer or a desk to prevent it becoming a barrier between you and the claimant, this should be done in advance of any workshop getting underway.

Throughout the duration of the event you have a duty of care and responsibility to each claimant. It is vital that you make yourself familiar with the health and safety procedures in your location. In the event of any alarm or need to evacuate you must ensure that all claimants are aware of what action to take and that you are able to safely and securely ensure their safety.

Professional dress

Research has shown that coaches who use formal business attire in interactions with claimants increase the desired results. This may be down to the principle of 'authority'. Professional dress increases the perception of being an expert and consequently a credible source of guidance. It has been shown that people are more likely to follow the instructions of an expert.

Any sign of stains, scuffs, un-tucked shirts or mismatched clothes can make a long-lasting negative impression.

Make Eye contact

Eye contact acknowledges the claimant as an individual and signals honesty. This behavior makes any coaching interaction more productive and acknowledges the other person's presence, implying that the conversation is personal to them.

In a group environment it is vital to establish and maintain a level of eye contact with all claimants to retain their attention and keep them engaged in the topics you are discussing.

Smile

When entering a new environment or meeting people for the first time, to some extent subconsciously we're always on the look out for danger!

When meeting people for the first time the quickest way to signal to another person that there is no danger or it is "safe" is to smile.

It's something we already do, consciously or subconsciously. Smiling sincerely the first time you meet someone is a fast, powerful and effective signal that can cut through apprehension.

A smile tells the other person that we're open and approachable - very appropriate when first meeting a claimant.

Body language

Be aware of your own body language. Using your own body language can be an effective way to control the dynamic of the room. It can also help claimants to feel at ease and encourage discussion if you display open and approachable body language. If you display negative body language then claimants are far less likely to respond to you positively or engage with what you are saying. If you don't look interested in what you are delivering why would a claimant?

Stop talking and be patient

When asking somebody else to talk or share their thoughts it is vital that you listen to what they are saying, don't interrupt, talk over them or finish their sentences for them. When the person has finished talking you may need to clarify to ensure you have received their message accurately or involve other members of the group to expand on what has been said but you must always give the person time to speak where you have asked them to.

A pause, even a long pause, does not necessarily mean that the speaker has finished. Be patient and let the speaker continue in their own time, sometimes it takes time to formulate what to say and how to say it. Never interrupt or finish a sentence for someone.

Prepare Yourself to Listen

Relax and put other things out of mind. The human mind is easily distracted by other thoughts – what's for lunch, what time do I need to leave to catch my train, is it going to rain – try to put other thoughts out of mind and concentrate on the messages that are being communicated.

Put the claimant at ease

This can be supported by the positive first impression you will have made with the claimant. Remember how important it is to smile and create the right environment. These things will help the claimant to feel at ease and therefore more relaxed and willing to speak. Remember their needs and concerns. A 'verbal nod' or similar gestures can be used to encourage them to continue. Maintain eye contact but don't stare – show you are listening and understanding what is being said.

Pay attention to the room – what can you see?

Are claimants listening to what you are saying? To determine this there are a number of techniques and things to be aware of. These include:

Verbal and non-verbal cues – a claimant is not required to speak in order to be engaged in a discussion. Be aware of non-verbal cues which could be in the form of a nod or taking notes. If so these are clear signs of engagement that the claimant is paying attention and wants to retain what you are sharing.

Is there anything distracting the group? This can be considered when you initially set up your environment. If you have a room with posters or visual aids, ask yourself, are these distracting the group more than supporting? If you can see out of the room is there anything outside which could distract? For example - heavy traffic or public pathways.

As well as your own body language you should also be aware of the claimant's body language. Is the claimant maintaining eye contact with you? Are they sat upright rather than slouched? Are questions being asked? Body language is also a good indication of participation a claimant displaying positive body language is more likely to actively participate when asked to than a claimant displaying negative body language.

Setting the scene

Introductions

Introduce yourself to the group and explain your role as facilitator.

Domestics

Ensure claimants are aware of toilet location, drinks facilities, no smoking policy etc...

Timings

Confirm that the timing for this workshop is 90 minutes but does require claimants to undertake and complete a number of activities following the workshop.

Ground Rules

Ground rules are an important part of any group workshop. They form an agreement between the facilitator and claimants about the behaviours and rules that can be expected from each other.

It is suggested that you pre-prepare a flip chart which, once agreed, by all claimants can be displayed in the room as a visual reminder of the commitment by all to abide by the ground rules.

Suggested ground rules are shown below:

- Participate and contribute to the workshop
- One person speaks at a time
- Listen to what other people are saying
- Respect the opinions and input of others

As well as the suggested ground rules you may also wish to ask the group if anybody has any other ground rules they would like to be included. If a claimant suggests any further ground rules you should facilitate to seek agreement from all being mindful of the 90 minutes allocated to complete the workshop. When you are finished you should ensure the group agree and are willing to abide by these ground rules.

Make sure you get the claimants to actually say "Yes" out loud. It makes a difference and is a positive acceptance of the ground rules.

Generic workshop objectives

- The aims of the workshops are to provide a structured and broad range of work focused activities in order to help claimants prepare and successfully secure a positive employment outcome

Group workshop 1 activities

As the workshop progresses claimants may be surprised by the amount of work required following the workshop but this amount is not unreasonable. Don't apologise for level of

activity, this is reasonable and will ensure that if completed to a high standard will help claimant to be a successful independent jobseeker.

CV and Covering letter

Having a high quality CV which clearly articulates skills, experience and qualifications is an essential attribute for successful claimants.

In order to maximise prospects for getting into work each CV & Covering letter should be personalised to specific employers/ job vacancies. Therefore it is essential that all CVs are fully tailored to each job vacancy.

It is essential that claimants are able to create and amend their own CVs. Additionally claimants need to understand why certain elements of a CV are required.

For this activity there are some key objectives:

- Claimants to have an up to date high quality CV, which they have created themselves.
- Claimants are confident in creating and amending CV's and are able to do this in response to specific opportunities.
- Claimants have researched a range of tips and techniques available on the internet, and have a clear view of what a 'good' CV looks like.

Introduce and promote activity



Issue handout UC442 'CV and Covering Letter' to each claimant and facilitate discussion around the activity using the information below.

Claimants should be made aware of the importance of having a high quality CV. Issue handout 'My CV and Covering Letter' to each claimant and facilitate a discussion around the activity using the information below.

The importance of tailoring a CV to each specific vacancy should be made clear; in order to tailor a CV to a specific vacancy each application should take at least 30 minutes.

Claimants do not have to use the 'National Careers Service CV builder' – however should be encouraged to use this as it will help them produce high quality CV's

How to complete

Claimants are required to review the external websites and content prior to completing the activity. The suggested websites on the front page should be ticked once reviewed.

Once this information has been reviewed claimants should then create a CV based on the information and best practice they have reviewed.

Once the CV has been produced claimants should identify 3 suitable people who can provide feedback.

Review and feedback

Once this activity is completed you should review the CV to ensure it is a high quality CV. The factors to consider are:

- Presentation – is the CV well presented with no spelling or grammar mistakes?
- Profile – does this personal profile act as a sales document for the rest of the CV? Does it positively promote the claimant? Does the profile quickly grab the attention of the reader?

The profile should be approximately 100 – 150 words long.

Once complete you should recap and again ensure understanding not just of the activity but also that claimants know what is expected of them in order to fully complete this activity.

My Application Forms

The purpose of the My Application Forms activity is to prepare claimants to succeed in the job application process through preparing answers for questions asked in application forms or at an interview.



Issue handout UC441 'My Application Forms' to each claimant and facilitate discussion around the activity using the information below.

A large part of nearly all recruitment processes ask candidates to answer questions allowing them to demonstrate their ability and or experience to perform a role. Claimants whose answers do not demonstrate, either, ability, potential or experience to perform an aspect of a role are unlikely to persuade an employer to progress their application. Because

of this, the ability to answer employer's questions in a way that is both clear and effective at demonstrating ability, potential or experience is key to giving any applicant the best chance.

The "My Application Forms" activity is designed to introduce this core skill by offering an opportunity to prepare answers to employers' questions, or as an opportunity to increase an existing skill. It is vital for successful Job Seeking that all claimants are making progress in their efforts to improve this skill.

Questions from employers require specific examples of what a candidate has done, or how they would act in a given situation. Employers prefer clear statements of action the candidate took that lead to a result. Answers to these types of questions will often be based on experience and facts. This type of question is referred to as 'competency based'.

To achieve this, facilitate a discussion using the questions below by asking the group to share their responses:

- How do you prepare answers to potential questions from employers for application forms or before interview"?
- Do you have answers to application form or interview questions saved already?
- Do you use a method to structure your answers"?

For claimants who state that they do not have examples or answers prepared or saved you should promote this activity as a way of being prepared for in advance of a job application.

For claimants who respond that they are well prepared and have quality examples or answers prepared this activity is a good way of not only demonstrating their readiness but also have their information reviewed and receive feedback.

Introducing the activity

Refer claimants to the UC*** My Application Forms (page 2) where they will see specific questions they are required to answer in order to complete this activity. This is a good moment to emphasise the benefits of application form / interview question preparation so that the claimant understands that this is key to compiling a quality application.

Some claimants have great skills and experience to do a job, don't get the interview because they didn't clearly explain what their actions were on the application form.

Explain to claimants that although this activity is titled 'My Application Forms' this information can also be used to answer questions in job interviews too. Practicing and rehearsing these examples, investing time preparing will increase confidence, improve their chances at interview and save claimants a lot of effort over the next few weeks.

How to STAR an application or interview answer

Depending on responses you may wish to demonstrate the **Situation Task Action Results** method for claimants to compile their application or interview responses.

Break it down, paying attention to non-verbal body language and ask questions as you progress to check understanding.

- S** Describe the **Situation** in one or two sentences - the industry or company you're working for and broadly what your job role was.
- T** Describe the **Task** - what it was you were doing or being asked to do.
- A** Describe what you did - your **Actions**. This is the most important part of the answer this is your chance to tell the employer what you did, your actions how you got from the start of the task to completing it. Because of that it will be the largest part of your answer.

A good way to help break down a process is to split it into chunks that describe one part of the whole task writing them down as bullet points. This helps to make it clear in our own mind what we did, the order we did it in and it helps us to remember better in future.

Remember that effective answers are about what the claimant did not what anyone else did. If the bullet pointed action does not begin with the word "I" the claimant should ask them self if it is relevant to the answer?

- R** Describe the **Result** - simply what the result was, what happened because of the claimant actions.

Once complete you should recap and again ensure understanding not just of the activity but also that claimants know what is expected of them in order to fully complete this activity.

My Interview Skills

This activity is designed to help the claimant consider how they answer typical interview questions and contains four categories of question.



Issue handout UC434 'My Interview Skills' to each claimant and facilitate discussion around the activity using the information below.

Each claimant is required to select at least one question from each category and attempt to write two or three sentences in response to the chosen question(s).

The handout also contains a pre-interview checklist which can be used by the claimant to ensure they are fully prepared for any interview. The checklist comprises:

- Appropriate clothing
- Research interview techniques
- Research on the organisation and department
- Review your original application
- Confirm details for the interview

To complete this activity the claimant is required to select and answer at least one question from each section. The pre-interview checklist is a tool which should be retained by the claimant to be used as part of any future interview preparation.

Once complete you should recap and again ensure understanding not just of the activity but also that claimants know what is expected of them in order to fully complete this activity.

My Internet work search

Research has shown that claimants who conduct work search online get into work 25% faster than those who don't. Most advertised vacancies are listed on the internet, therefore if claimants do not use the internet to look for work they are reducing their prospects for getting back into work.



Issue handout UC433 'My Internet Work Search' to each claimant and facilitate discussion around the activity using the information below.

For this activity there are some key objectives:

- Claimants can access and are capable of using the internet to conduct internet work search
- Claimants are registered with a wide range of job search websites

Introduce and promote activity

Claimants should understand the importance of using a wide variety of work search websites on a regular basis (the goal should be at least daily, ideally twice daily).

Claimants should be clear that using the internet should be a key part of their job search and they should be aiming to internet work search daily.

How to complete

Claimants are required to research work search websites and identify the most appropriate and relevant ones for their work search goals.

Once identified claimants are required to register, complete their profile and upload a CV (where required).

Claimants should then complete a work search on each website, recording the details of 3 vacancies for each website (which they have or will apply for).

This will help ensure that each website selected is appropriate and will provide the claimant with future opportunities.

If the claimant feels for any reason that they are unable to identify 3 suitable jobs from each website you should instruct the claimant to continue to identify additional suitable websites and job adverts in time for the next interview.

The purpose of this activity is to ensure that the claimant makes the best use of internet work search websites as part of their regular job search.

The claimant should understand that searching and applying for vacancies on the internet is a key part of their work search and should be done every day.

It is advisable that claimants work search throughout the day where possible in order to ensure that they are viewing all the latest opportunities.

Once complete you should recap and again ensure understanding not just of the activity but also that claimants know what is expected of them in order to fully complete this activity.

My References

The cost of recruiting the wrong person is estimated to cost an employer approximately 25% of the basic salary of the 'miss-hire'.

This is a significant amount of money especially for smaller employers; as a result of this employers will take a number of precautions to reduce the risk. This could include requiring a work trial, recruiting internally or asking for personal recommendations from current employees.




Issue handout UC439 'My References' to each claimant and facilitate discussion around the activity using the information below.

For external candidates the best way to reduce the perceived risk to an employer is by having high-quality and trusted references.

The purpose of this activity is to ensure that claimants have references which will give them the best chances of being securing work.

Claimants are required to identify a minimum of two high quality references; there is a hierarchy of references, so claimants should be encouraged to identify references of the highest quality.

You may wish to display the scale below in order to demonstrate how different references over different periods of time may be perceived.

	Quality	
Ideal opportunity for success	5	Reference from previous employment, work experience/ internship or volunteering at the specific employer.
	4	Reference from previous employer , sector specific trade body or current employee of the employer (0 – 9 months)
	3	Reference from work experience , volunteering or part-time/ Full-time education and training (0 - 9 months)
	2	Reference from previous employer , sector specific trade body or current employee of the employer (older than 9 months)
	1	Reference from work experience , volunteering or part-time/ Full-time education and training (older than 9 months)
	0/1	Not typically sufficient: friends (with no professional relationship to industry sector) or family

Use the questions below to facilitate a discussion with claimants around why references are an essential part of a successful job application.

Why are references so important to employers?

Consider your references against the scale (if displayed) if not consider your references and think are they recent? How much can an employer learn about you from your references?

If you were an employer how would you view your references?

Do you believe you could you improve your chances of being successful buy supplying alternative references?

No References or Bad References

If claimants have been dismissed from their previous jobs or do not have any positive references then this needs to be addressed as a priority.

Personal recommendations obtained through volunteering or work experience are the good ways to do this to gain positive references. Additionally claimants should be encouraged to network with people they have previously worked with to seek out personal recommendations. For LinkedIn users they should ask their personal network to endorse their skills where appropriate.

A claimant could also ask for a written reference. Some employers / managers will write a written recommendation which the employee can use. This is a great way to 'screen out' potentially bad references.

When providing references it is important that the claimant is honest. Sometimes it is best to explain a situation and explain the reasons why you have no references or a bad reference.

Once complete you should recap and again ensure understanding not just of the activity but also that claimants know what is expected of them in order to fully complete this activity.

Once all activities have been issued you should check claimants understand what has been explained to them during the course of this workshop together with what is expected of them following in order to complete the activities you have set them.

You should advise the claimant that their coach will discuss the workshop, their participation, their understanding of what is expected together with what they can expect to happen next.

Finally you should bring the workshop to a conclusion by thanking claimants for attending and ensure that they hand back any visitors passes and leave the building safely.