

Nothing in this world can take the place of  
persistence.

Talent will not; nothing is more common than  
unsuccessful people with talent.

Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a  
proverb.

Persistence and determination alone are  
unstoppable

# Course Objectives

By the end of the event you will ...

- Have sufficient awareness of current legislation impacting Recruitment and Selection so that you recruit within the law
- Be aware of and understand London Borough of Tower Hamlets current Recruitment and Selection policies, procedures and practices, so that you can use them effectively
- Know what effective Recruitment and Selection looks / sounds / feels like
- Be able to contribute to the effective recruitment of the best candidate for a job

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[ Notes ]

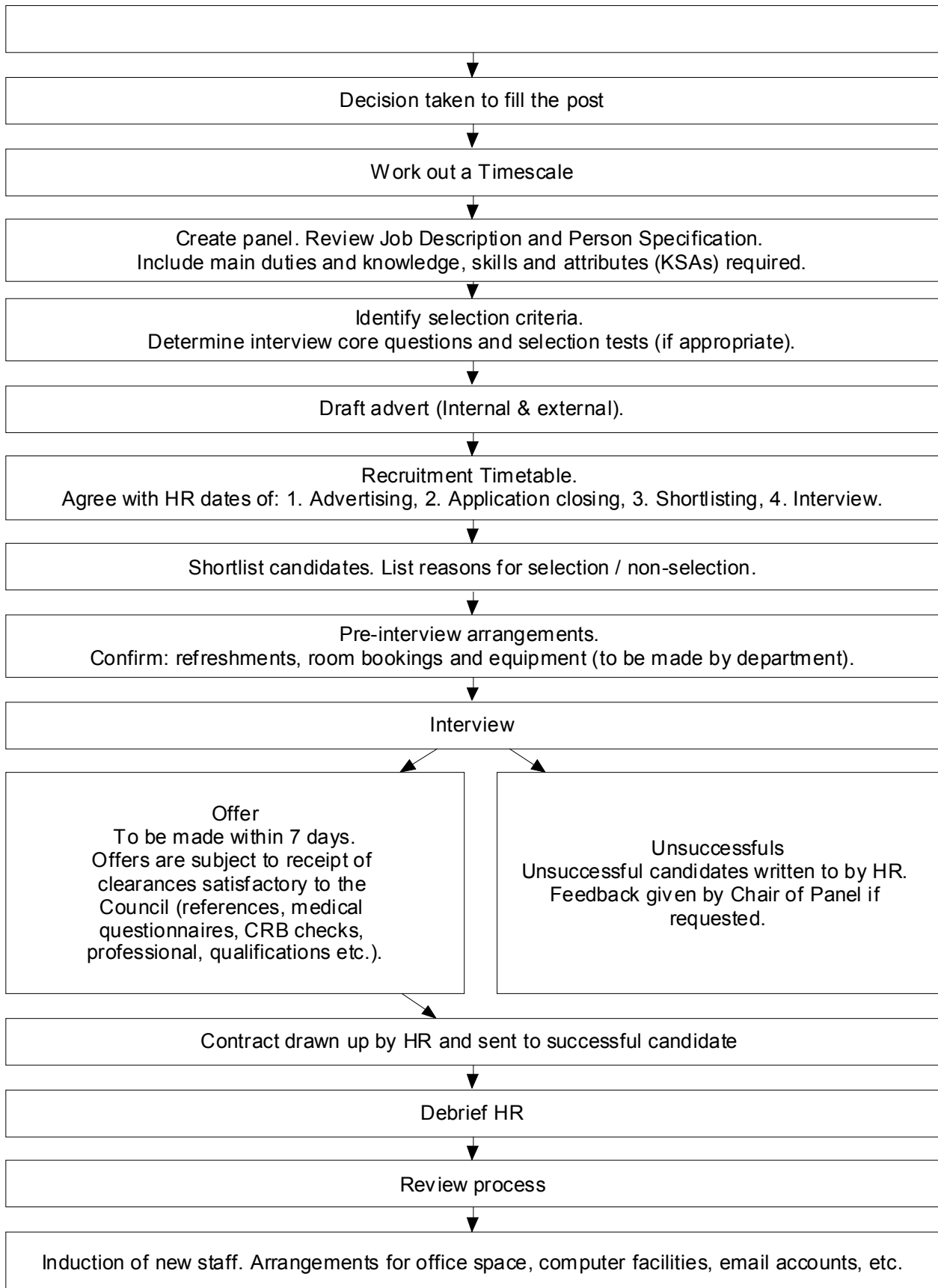
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# **PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION**

# The Recruitment and Selection Process



## **Exit Interviews and Monitoring**

1. Exit monitoring and interviews allow the Council to analyse why people leave, also to identify potential areas of discrimination.
2. They are carried out on a voluntary basis and in strict confidence, with either the leaver's Line Manager, a member of the Staffing Section or Borough Personnel and Management Officer representative.
3. Whilst they are not compulsory, exit interviews are considered to be best practice, and should be encouraged wherever possible.
4. A 'Leaver's Questionnaire' form is completed, detailing the reason(s) for leaving and the individual's description of cultural and ethnic origin.

### **The reasons for leaving are shown on the form as:**

5.
  - Salary
  - Hours of work
  - Physical working conditions (e.g. lighting, office accommodation)
  - Dissatisfaction with job
  - Relationship with 1) Colleagues or 2) Supervisors
  - Career progression
  - Travel difficulties
  - Domestic responsibility
  - Illness or accident
  - Housing difficulties
  - Pregnancy
  - Move from area
  - Retirement
  - Other (please specify)

### **The descriptions of cultural and ethnic origin are shown on the form as:**

6.
  - Asian – Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, Vietnamese
  - Black – Caribbean, African (Somali / Other African)
  - Mixed / Dual Heritage – White & Black Caribbean, White & Black African, White & Asian
  - Other Mixed background (specify)
  - White – English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Other (specify)
  - Other – Any other ethnic background (specify)

## **Decision Taken To Fill the Post**

1. It might sound like an obvious statement to make, but one of the early stages of the selection process is to define the position that is available.
2. When a vacancy occurs recruitment may be the most obvious way forwards, but other options such as job share or re-organisation of workloads may also be worth considering.
3. Indeed, such an occasion is an ideal opportunity to assess the most comprehensive, responsive, and appropriate way forwards, balancing need and current Council employment policies.

### **New Positions**

4. New positions particularly require additional thought, especially where objectives or targets are concerned, and job descriptions should always meet the S.M.A.R.T. test (i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound).

### **Existing Positions**

5. Even in the case of pre-defined roles, perhaps where the previous post-holder has moved on, or where growth indicates that additional human resources are necessary, it is still worth re-evaluating the position to establish whether the needs of the organisation have changed.
6. Making the right decision can pay dividends, yet letting people 'loose' in situations where the work is poorly defined can result in disaster, as time may be wasted, motivation may be low, and money may be spent unnecessarily.
7. So before you even think about the applicants, think about the role, which they will be required to fulfil. Only by doing this will you be able to define the candidate criteria accurately, and be able to move the process forwards with confidence.

### **Where a Post Will Be Offered**

8. Once it is determined that a post will be filled, two forms should be completed and agreed by all staff involved in the selection process. Note that these must be completed before the draft advertisement is prepared.
9. The forms are the Job Description, and Person Specification.

[illegible]

# The Interview Panel

1. Within London Borough of Tower Hamlets, selection interviews will always be conducted by a panel which typically is comprised of a minimum of three people, all of whom must have received formal recruitment & selection training.
2. The interview panel members could consist of:
  - a representative from HR (but not necessarily).
  - individuals who have an interest in the post that is being advertised.
  - ideally a mix of gender, age and ethnicity.

All interview panel members should take an active part in the interview process. All interview panel members have equal importance.

3. Briefly, the benefits of having an interview panel are that:
  - the interview panel can work together (asking questions and making notes)
  - The decisions arrived at will be more objective
  - Each interview panel member can 'score' candidates independently, making the process fairer.
4. This will also help the candidate to gain greater insight into the culture of the organisation.
5. The interview panel is responsible for short listing and interviewing candidates, and one of the interview panel must be nominated for the role of Chairing the Panel.

The Chair is responsible for

- coordinating the selection process.
- meeting and greeting Candidates.
- introducing the other panel members to the Candidate.
- explaining the structure of the interview.
- the timing of the interview
- assembling the scores from interview panel members
- reporting the outcome to HR

# Policy on Equality and Diversity

1. Below we have included 'Celebrating Diversity', the Council's policy statement on Equality and Diversity:

## **Why do we need a policy?**

2. We take pride in being one of the most culturally rich and diverse (varied) boroughs in the United Kingdom. This policy document sets out our commitment to creating an environment in which everyone in London Borough of Tower Hamlets can take a full part in the social, cultural and economic wealth of the borough. It also sets out our commitment to promoting equality and diversity among our residents and staff. Our equality and diversity policy links directly to some of our strategies and plans, in particular our strategic plan which sets out our priorities for action to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

## **What are our aims?**

3. We want to see a strong spirit of community and good race relations in London Borough of Tower Hamlets. We will put in place a range of actions to get rid of prejudice, discrimination and victimisation within the communities we serve and our workforce. We will develop and promote policies and systems which make sure that the borough's communities and our workforce are not discriminated against or bullied for any reason.

## **How will we deliver our commitment?**

4. In looking to the future we have formally adopted the Equality Standard for Local Government. This is a nationally-recognised framework which we will use to measure our progress in achieving equality and diversity on behalf of our community and workforce. We have reached the highest level of achievement possible (level 5) in 2006.
5. We have called this policy 'Celebrating diversity' in recognition of the value that people bring to our communities with their different ideas and contributions. It means making an ongoing commitment to make sure that our services meet the varied and complicated individual needs of people living in the borough. We will make sure that our employment practices (including recruiting, holding onto, training, developing, appraising, promoting staff, and retirement) are accessible to everyone and that we actively value and celebrate the wide variety of lifestyles and cultures within our borough.

**We welcome:**

- The Equal Pay Act 1970
  - The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
  - The Race Relations Act 1976
  - The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
  - The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
  - Sexual Orientation Regulations 2003
  - Religion or Belief Regulations 2003
  - The Human Rights Act 1998
  - The Age Discrimination Act 2006
6. Commitment is supported by a legal duty to provide all services and employment opportunities fairly, without discrimination, and to keep to all relevant codes of practice. We believe we have a strong moral and social duty to recognise that discrimination takes place and to do everything we can to challenge prejudice and discrimination and promote equality.
7. We are committed to providing high-quality services which everyone can get access to. Where appropriate, we will work through the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Partnership, with other organisations, to provide services which promote equal opportunities to all by:
- Building on our good practice
  - Consulting with and involving all sectors of our community on using this policy
  - Providing accessible information and ways people can comment on all our services
  - Carrying out equality impact assessments of new and existing policies and practices and services to make sure that they will not discriminate against anyone
  - Delivering services which are appropriate to the needs of the community
  - Removing barriers which deny people access to our services
  - Using our powers to make sure that organisations providing services on our behalf work in line with this policy, and
  - Promoting an environment which gives all residents an equal chance to learn, work and live free of discrimination and prejudice

8. We will put in place a range of actions in our Integrated Equalities Action Plan and Race Equality Scheme. These are aimed at tackling prejudice and celebrating diversity within our workforce by:
  - Developing a workforce which reflects the community at all levels
  - Making sure that all employees and councillors know the effects of this policy and provide appropriate training
  - Making sure that all employees (and the resident communities) know about their rights of protection from discrimination, harassment or bullying
  - Developing and promoting policies which give everyone equal access to employment and opportunities, and
  - Setting performance targets so we can measure our progress
9. With the help of feedback from our community groups, service users and employees, each year we will monitor, review and evaluate the effectiveness of our employment and service-delivery policies and our Equalities Action Plan. If our monitoring reveals any gaps in our policies, we will take action to deal with this.”
10. An integral part of the policy is taking steps to try to ensure that acts of discrimination either direct or indirect are prevented from taking place.
11. One way of doing this is in the selection procedure.
12. More recently a new Race Equality Scheme entitled ‘Improving Today – Shaping Tomorrow’ has also been introduced and this celebrates Diversity, and offers detail on both general and specific duties. The document has been circulated to all Managers, and is available on the Authority’s website or via the Corporate Equalities section.

# **L.B.T.H. Recruitment and Selection Framework – Key Points**

1. Service Heads and Managers are responsible for ensuring that:
  - They appoint the best staff to service the community and achieve the Council's core values and corporate aims.
  - Selection is based solely on merit.
  - Recruitment methods attract applicants from underrepresented sections of the community.
  - Advertising, shortlisting, interviews, selection tests, and decisions to appoint satisfy the Council's commitment to equal opportunities.
  - Managers support Council initiatives to offer jobs to local people and displaced staff.
  - Recruitment is monitored at all stages to ensure that the Council's equality targets and standards are met.
  - Managers comply with anti-discrimination legislation and the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy throughout the recruitment process with particular reference to the Sex Discrimination Act 1975\*, the Race Relations Act 1976\*, the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996\*, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995\*.
  - Managers provide "reasonable adjustments" to meet the needs of candidates with disabilities as required by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995\*.
2. Note that this is a summary of the framework document. For full details, please refer to the document itself.
3. Please refer to the provisions of the Acts for detail, and subsequent reforms to these (and other) Acts.

# The Job Description

1. The content of the Person Specification is defined over the coming pages, but first let us consider the Job Description.
2. The Job Description contains information about the job and should precisely detail duties and responsibilities.
3. It should state whether the job is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check, exempted under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 2001 or the subject of Genuine Occupation Qualification (GOQ) whereby there are certain exceptions under other acts.
4. Note that where exclusions apply, the reason(s) must be clearly stated. Note also that not all jobs on a single establishment need necessarily be classified under a GOQ and also that the need for a GOQ should be reviewed regularly, and at least each time a job is advertised.
5. Typically, a job description will include the following:
  - Job title
  - Grade
  - Purpose (essentially the scope of the job)
  - Key tasks / responsibilities
6. Terms and Conditions of employment are in the brochure “Working For Us” which is part of the Recruitment Pack. The Recruitment Pack also includes rate of pay, hours of work.
7. Remember, the more realistic the expectations of a new recruit, the more likely he or she will be to stay and meet your expectations.

## Checklist – The Job Description

1. A job description is essential, as it is this document (together with the Person Specification) that determines who is invited for interview, and indeed before this takes place, how any advertisement is worded.
2. For many positions, job descriptions exist already, but it is important to review how they reflect the position that is actually available, as in many organisations / departments, over time, circumstances change.
3. The job description should cover the points below accurately and succinctly.

Section	Include...
<b>Job Title</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A title that clearly conveys the nature of the work to be undertaken.</li> <li>• The department / directorate within the Council.</li> <li>• Grade (if applicable).</li> <li>• The permanency of the contract.</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose / Scope</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why does the job exist?</li> <li>• How would the organisation be affected if it didn't?</li> </ul> <p>(One or two sentences should suffice).</p>
<b>Key Tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detail about duties and responsibilities so that candidates will be able to see roughly how they will be spending their time.</li> <li>• An indication of the frequency with which particular tasks occur, and the proportion of time they are likely to take up.</li> <li>• Necessary skills and / or knowledge.</li> <li>• Details of standards against which performance will be assessed.</li> </ul>
<b>Environment</b>	Conditions such as travel, shifts, nights away from home, outdoor work, noisy / hazardous work etc.
<b>Equal Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The equal opportunities implications of the job itself should be indicated</li> </ul>

4. Additionally, the Job Description must state whether the job is exempted under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 2001 or the subject of Genuine Occupation Qualification (GOQ).

## Person Specification Categories

1. Those selected must be strictly based upon the requirements to perform the job and must not be unnecessarily restrictive or demanding.
2. If a test to assess skills and /or aptitudes is to be carried out at the time of interview, this must be stated in the person specification.
3. Note that not all listed categories have to be used. The following may be decided during the application, interview or test.

No.	Category	Example(s)
1	<b>Job Related Knowledge</b>	For example, qualifications, specific knowledge of method, technique, or regulations etc.
2	<b>Aptitude and Skills</b>	Aptitude: For example, good written / verbal communication, organising, planning etc. Skills: The ability to do something well.
3	<b>Experience</b>	For example, track record, work in a similar role elsewhere, paid or non-paid work experience etc.
4	<b>Education Achievements, Qualifications and Training</b>	Specify where necessary for posts.
5	<b>Circumstances</b>	For example, where work is on a residential basis. Nightwork.
6	<b>Physical</b>	Where applicable, specify the requirement and relate it to the relevant job activity.
7	<b>Equal Opportunities</b>	For example, an understanding of the required role in promoting equality in employment – service delivery etc.

## Defining the Essential Criteria

1. Having established exactly what the job entails, it is next necessary to define the criteria that suitable candidates should possess.
2. It is important to note that these criteria should relate only to skills and experience, and not to any other aspect of a person's application.
3. When recruiting staff, employers have legal and moral responsibilities regarding discrimination, and these must be fully adhered to at all times.
4. For example, The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and The Race Relations Act 1976 make it illegal to discriminate on grounds of sex, marital status, race, or ethnic origin. Unjustifiably specifying a requirement that is less likely to be met by members of a particular group can discriminate indirectly.
5. Completion of London Borough of Tower Hamlets' Person Specification form helps identify those criteria deemed essential, and ensures that every candidate is assessed against the same criteria.
- 6. Essential Criteria**
7. Depending upon the nature of the work, it may be that certain skills are essential.
8. For example, to apply for the position of a refuse collection driver, applicants would be expected to hold a class 2 driving licence.
9. Similarly, accountants would require certain minimum qualifications, and those wishing to work in jobs involving heavy lifting should have reasonable upper body strength.
10. Essential criteria are, in effect, the minimum formal qualifications or attributes that are necessary for the job in question to be undertaken safely, and to a satisfactory standard.

## Core Questions

1. The panel should meet before the interview to agree the questions that should be asked, and their substance should not vary according to the age, sex, ethnic origin or disability of the applicants.
2. The same 'core questions' should be asked of each candidate and must be documented (as should 'model' answers), though follow up questions will inevitably differ.
3. Furthermore, they should be phrased in a standard way and not make use of cultural idioms or metaphors that might put these applicants at a disadvantage.
  - Must be aligned to the Person Specification
  - Must be measured
  - Should be asked in the past tense where possible(to elicit evidence/experience)
  - Must not be discriminatory
  - Should not be too predictable
  - Remember to seek contrary evidence
  - Consideration should be given to using the 'question cycle'

## **Standard Application Pack**

1. Candidates are provided with a standard application pack that typically includes:
  - Brochure “Working for Us” which outlines Terms & Conditions, and guidance on how to complete the application form.
  - The CRB policy on the employment of ex-offenders and the nature of Disclosure (if applicable to the job).
  - Job Description.
  - Person Specification.
  - Advert Outlining the closing date,
  - Interview date,
  - Testing date(s) if applicable

For certain posts (e.g. where there is contact with children and young people) the pack content may vary.

## Matching Applicants to the Position

1. When a job is advertised as being vacant: whether by newspaper advertisement, notice board memorandum, recruitment agency, or otherwise; the potential applicants effectively match themselves to what they perceive the position to be.
2. Once the applications start coming in however, it is up to the employer to decide who to invite to interview.
3. In an ideal world, there would be just one application, and this would originate from an ideally suited candidate with the requisite experience, qualifications, and motivation to succeed, who could start on a convenient date, and who was entirely happy with the terms and conditions on offer.
4. The world, however, is not always ideal, and the likelihood is that there will be a number of applications, some of which are clearly not suitable, and others that might be!

### Shortlisting

5. Matching the pre-defined criteria with the applications is easier said than done, not least because people (quite naturally) play up their achievements and play down any shortcomings!
6. Most paperwork that is submitted prior to interview contains scant information other than academic achievements and personal details, and gives away little of the individual's character.
7. Indeed, in some organisations it is more likely that the mother's maiden name will be known rather than that person's motivation for applying for the job!
8. Fortunately, within London Borough of Tower Hamlets it is only criteria listed on the Person Specification that can be used for shortlisting. Such a policy ensures fairness and objectivity for all.
9. Candidates who are disabled must be shortlisted, provided that they meet the essential requirements on the Person Specification.
10. In exceptional cases where the shortlist is unmanageable (for example due to a large number of 'suitable' applications) managers may invite candidates in for a test, prior to the panel interview.

11. LBTH procedures stipulate that Shortlisting Panels must comprise at least three trained people, and, if possible, should reflect a mix of gender, age and ethnicity.
12. It is important that those on the panel are satisfied that their relationship with any candidate will not:
  - Improperly influence their decision, or
  - Give rise to suspicion about their motives.

### **How Many Do You Interview?**

13. You must interview everybody who meets the essential criteria.
14. If there is a large amount of qualifying applicants it might suggest that your Person Specification was not accurate enough. If this is the case, it would be a good idea to revisit the Person Specification in order to tighten up for future advertisements.
15. You could invite them in for a short test, as this has the effect of shortlisting the long list.
16. If there are still a lot of qualifying applicants, this will mean multiple interviewing days,
17. The recommended maximum number of interviews per day is six - interviewing can be a very time consuming process.
18. Normally this will allow a suitable person to be identified, and perhaps also identify a 'reserve' should the first choice not materialise for whatever reason.
19. Inviting only the 'right' people, means that you won't waste your time or theirs!

# Shortlisting

1. Once the closing date has passed, the interview panel must decide who, if anybody, to invite to interview and it is this process that is known as shortlisting.
2. Council policy is that the panel that will conduct the interviews undertake the shortlisting themselves, comparing the application forms with the essential criteria identified on the Person Specification.
3. The process is as follows:

Panel receives the completed application forms, a copy of the Job Description, Person Specification, and a supply of Shortlisting Assessment forms



The content of the application forms is compared with the criteria identified in the Person Specification, and a Shortlisting Assessment form is completed for each applicant.



Those most closely matching the criteria will be invited for interview. (Note that in every case, where a person with a disability meets all of the essential criteria, he / she is guaranteed an interview)



Unsuccessful applicants' forms are retained for a period of six months in case of complaints or grievance procedures

# **THE SELECTION INTERVIEW**

# The Interview Structure

1. Effective interviews should be structured, as such an approach allows for greater accuracy in information gathering, and clearer communication via honest and open two-way dialogue.
2. It is suggested that there should be four elements to the interview, with these being:

## **W.A.S.P.**

3. **Welcome:**
4. The welcome (or meet and greet) section might take approximately 10% of the available time, and allows for a rapport to develop between those present.
5. It should include a brief introduction of those present (where they are not known by the other party) and also outline the agenda, whether formal or informal.
6. **Acquire:**
7. This should comprise the bulk of the time (around 75% is usually appropriate), and involves a mix of effective questioning techniques and 'active' listening.
8. A written record should be kept in all cases.
9. **Supply:**
10. Approximately 10% of the meeting should be set aside for the supply of information, part of which might be in response to the other party's questions.
11. **Part:**
12. The final 5% of the meeting should include a 'thank you' for attending and also advise what the next stage will be. Timescales should be given (where possible), and the conclusion should be professional and 'up beat'.

## The Interview Environment

Issue	Pay Attention to...
<b>Location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can the building be easily found?</li> <li>• Is a map (or directions) available?</li> <li>• Is the room well signposted from Reception?</li> <li>• Is car parking available?</li> </ul>
<b>Greeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the Reception team aware of who is due to arrive and when?</li> <li>• Will somebody collect the candidate(s) from Reception?</li> </ul>
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the applicant been offered a drink?</li> <li>• Are they aware of where toilet facilities are located?</li> <li>• Is the policy re smoking clear?</li> <li>• Is there somewhere secure to leave a coat or deposit valuables?</li> </ul>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the location accessible to all?</li> <li>• Is there provision for an interpreter for speech/hearing impairments?</li> </ul>
<b>The Interview Room</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the room private?</li> <li>• Is the room quiet and relatively free from distractions?</li> <li>• Are you unlikely to be disturbed?</li> <li>• Have any telephone lines been diverted or unplugged?</li> <li>• Is the temperature comfortable?</li> <li>• Good lighting is important for ease of lip reading, if candidate is hearing impaired.</li> <li>• If the candidate has learning difficulties and is accompanied by a mentor or supporter, it is essential to talk to the candidate, not the mentor or supporter.</li> <li>• Is the furniture (particularly chairs) arranged in a non-confrontational way?</li> <li>• Is the candidate's chair facing direct sunlight? (if so, close the blinds / relocate)</li> </ul>
<b>Generally</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to use the candidate's name – it's friendlier!</li> <li>• At the end of the interview, thank the candidate for his / her time, and advise when he / she can expect to hear from you.</li> <li>• Bear in mind that candidates are likely to be nervous or apprehensive, and act accordingly.</li> </ul>

# Establishing an Interview Plan, Style and Approach

1. Preparation is crucial to ensuring interview success and to fail to plan is to plan to fail! Having decided upon the 'shortlist', re-read the application forms and decide exactly what you want to find out. This could be for example gaps in employment history, relevance of referees etc.
2. The interview panel will normally consist of the people who drew up the shortlist, and to ensure objectivity, the same people should be involved in the interview of all candidates for the job. (Typically, the panel will comprise of three officers). The composition of the panel should be representative (i.e. a mix of gender and ethnicity), and all should have received training in Recruitment and Selection practice.
3. There should be no relationship between any panel member and candidate that might improperly influence their decision-making, or give rise to suspicion about any panel member's motive(s). Where any doubt exists, the matter should be raised with the Directorate HR team.
4. It is important that each candidate is treated consistently, and the panel should:
  - Ask the same core questions of each candidate
  - Ensure that no discriminatory questions are asked
  - Ensure that there is no harassment
  - Ensure that there is no conduct that breaches the Council's Diversity policy
  - Ensure consistency in access to presentation materials and notes etc
  - Retain records of interviews and reasons for decisions for six months after an appointment is made
  - Have 'model answers' available by which to assess candidate responses
5. **The Atmosphere**
6. However many people are present, do aim to create an atmosphere conducive to establishing the necessary information.
7. The aims of the interview are threefold, specifically:
8. To assess the candidate's ability to do the job (based upon the information from the application form and comparison of this with the Person Specification),
9. To provide an opportunity for the candidate to make further enquiries concerning the position and the conditions of employment
10. To gain an insight into the candidate's personality and attitudes exhibited or expressed during the interview.

11. Avoid the nice / nasty approach as it may give mixed messages about your organisation. Also steer clear of trick questions, as these often just baffle and bewilder. But do make the interview process challenging in an open, positive manner.
12. Allow the candidates every chance to 'shine', but balance this opportunity with considered probing questions, to end up with an accurate and non-biased assessment of their suitability.

### **13. How to Prepare**

14. It is essential to prepare for interviews and to read all relevant documentation before shortlisting and interviewing candidates. The following list is given for guidance:
  - Code of Practice
  - Equal Opportunity Policy
  - Job Description
  - Person Specification
  - Advertisement
  - Application Forms
  - Shortlisting Form
  - Agreed interview questions or outline
15. An interview is a conversation with a purpose, and should have a structure that is the same for every candidate.
16. Specifically, the panel should arrange who will 'chair' proceedings, where (if at all) they will 'overlap' with their questioning, and so on.
17. Interview timings should be regularly spaced (so that nobody is advantaged / disadvantaged by having more or less time than others), and notes should be made either during the meeting or immediately afterwards. (Out of courtesy, advise the candidate at the beginning of the interview that notes are going to be taken, bearing in mind that the candidates have the right by law to see their own notes, under the Data Protection Act. These notes have to be legible and retained on file for a minimum of six months)
18. Of course it is also necessary to prepare the environment with a view to ensuring that it is conducive to open and honest conversation, and this is addressed elsewhere in these course notes.
19. At the end of the interview, candidates should leave feeling that the experience was positive overall, having gained knowledge of the job and the organisation, and having been treated fairly.
20. For their part, the panel should have achieved the three aims stated on the previous page, and ready to move forwards to the next stage.

# Questioning Skills

1. Contrary to popular belief it is the person who asks the questions (not the person who answers them) who controls the direction of the conversation, and as a rule, the direction should be set by the interviewer.
2. It is therefore essential that he / she knows which questions to ask and when, and outlined below are some of those which may be useful.

## Open Questions

3. Firstly, it is necessary to distinguish between open and closed questions.
4. All questions fall into one of these two categories, and the term 'open' is used to describe any question that provides information.
5. Such questions begin with one of just seven words, and these are 'who', 'what', 'where', 'when', 'which', 'why', and 'how'.

## Closed Questions

6. All other questions are termed 'closed', as they result in either a 'yes' or 'no' response. (Arguably, the response could also be 'maybe' or 'I don't know').
7. Closed questions therefore result in confirmation.

## Specific Question Types

8. In fact there are more than just two question types, but all are either open or closed (i.e. they are variants of those described above).
9. For example, leading questions:
10. These are closed questions that strongly suggest a certain answer. "So you think you might be interested in joining us?" or "You would agree that the package on offer here is better than your last company?" are examples.

11. Then there are specific questions.
12. Used to introduce a new topic or add detail to previous information given, these questions are open in nature. Examples include “Why do you think you would like this type of work?” or “At work what is the most difficult situation you have faced ?” A follow up question may be “What was your handling of that situation?”
13. Probing questions are used to ‘dig deeper’ for information, and by definition are open.
14. They may be used to seek contradictory evidence, uncover part-truths, or simply seek extra detail from somebody. “When precisely did this happen” or “Describe for me exactly what took place” are examples.
15. Reflective questions are used to bring a conversation back ‘on track’, and may also be introduced when summarising.
16. They may be open but are more usually closed, and include “You mentioned earlier that ...?” or “Did you say that you have to give four weeks notice?”
17. In order to be effective, the professional interviewer should use a mix of all of the above, skilfully establishing the facts, seeking contrary evidence, and moving the process forward.

## Question Types

Open	Closed
Who?	Are? Can?
What?	Is? If?
Where?	May? Do?
When?	Shall? Have?
Why?	Would? Could?
How?	Should? Might?

Question Type	Example
<b>Leading</b>	"Why would you be interested in joining us?" (strongly suggests answer)
<b>Specific</b>	"Could you give me an example of your Time Management skills?" (introduces topic / adds detail)
<b>Probing</b>	"Can you tell me the benefits of that?" (digs deeper)
<b>Reflective</b>	"Did you say that you have to give four weeks' notice?" (summarises / pulls 'on track')

### What's in a Word?

- Experience of ....
- Knowledge of.....
- Working knowledge of....
- Familiar with....
- Understanding of....
- Ability to....
- Proven ability to....
- Willingness to....
- ...or equivalent
- Good/excellent

## Interview Questions

1. The control of the interview should, for the most part, remain with the panel, and a structure should be agreed at the outset.
2. Good questioning is vital, and should allow candidates to talk freely, accepting the fact that occasional silences are natural and can actually help the applicant to formulate a worthwhile answer.
3. In each case, similar questions should be asked covering the same areas of the application.
4. Personal factors that the panel should avoid are:
  - Not to be influenced by first impressions. (An 'open mind' should be kept throughout the interview),
  - Not to construct a picture of the applicant and then try to confirm it throughout the interview,
  - Not to be so concerned with the candidates' behaviour at interview that you miss other evidence about their personality and attitudes.

# The Question Cycle

1.

## **Scene Setter**

- Question or Statement
- Need not be documented
- Cannot be scored

## **Past Performance**

- 'Core question'
- Must be documented
- Scored

## **Follow-Up Question(s)**

- Probing question(s)
- To clarify information
- Scored

2. With a clear Person Specification, a criteria-based strategy, it is relatively easy to decide upon the questions to ask. Just how to phrase them however is quite another matter!
3. This is where the Question Cycle is useful.
4. The Question Cycle uses 'open' questions in order to 'set the scene', investigate past performance, elicit evidence via 'what ifs', and seek further detail, and can be used many times over in the same interview.
5. Examples are shown below:

Question Type	Purpose	Examples
<b>Scene Setting</b>	Implied	"I see that you have been working as an Administrator. What were your main duties?" or "I'd like to talk to you about Health & Safety. You say you developed the policy at your last company. What did that involve?"
<b>Past Performance</b>	Seek evidence of how the candidate has approached specific tasks	"I expect you came across some difficult people at Reception. How did you handle unexpected problems?" or "That sounds interesting. How did you go about researching the legal detail you needed?"
<b>'What if...'</b>	Used to ascertain how the candidate might perform in the future	"Suppose you were faced with a similar situation again. What would you do differently?" or If you were required to address a range of Health & Safety issues within the workplace, how would you go about prioritising them?"
<b>More Detail</b>	To probe for further information where the response was unclear	"Could you give me a little more detail as to how exactly you would calm the customer down?" or "Are there situations where you would use a different approach?" or "How did this make you feel?" or "Why go to such lengths?"

## Questions to Avoid

2. The purpose of questioning at interview is to seek information that will help the panel to come to make a fair and objective assessment of each candidate.
3. With this in mind, certain 'core' questions should be the same for everybody, with subsequent / follow-up questions being prompted by candidates' responses.
4. Certain question types are unhelpful though, and these include the following:

### 5. Potentially Discriminatory Questions

6. Do not ask questions about ...
  - Marital status
  - Ethnic / National Origins
  - Nationality
  - Disability (if not relevant to performance of job)
  - Occupation of Spouse / Partner
  - Number of Children
  - Family Intentions
  - Domestic Arrangements
  - Religion
  - Sexual Orientation
  - Trade Union Activities
  - Political Beliefs
  - Complaints or Allegations of Discrimination

...unless they are absolutely relevant to the job.

7. Jobs requiring special working arrangements (e.g. shifts / weekend working) must set this out clearly in the Person Specification.

### Multiple Questions

8. Multiple questions are difficult to interpret correctly (as they comprise a choice of subject matter) and consequently make a reply awkward.
9. An example is "I'd like you to give me an example of a personal achievement within the last year: Perhaps a success at work, or maybe something that you learned in theory and then put into practise, it could be at home if you like; Anyway, something out of the ordinary."
10. To avoid such confusion, ask one question at a time.

### **Detailed Questions about People's Private Lives**

11. In most cases these are both risky and unnecessary. Focus on whether each candidate is available for and competent to do the job, at the times when the job is to be done.

### **Too Many Questions about the Same Subject**

12. Whilst it is perfectly acceptable to ask detailed questions about something that is work-related, avoid asking too many questions about topics that are not, as it can give the 'wrong' message.
13. Avoid multiple questions about, for example, health. If the candidate does have a medical problem: that does not automatically rule him / her out. Unless you are a Doctor you cannot hope to make an assessment, and may be acting in a discriminatory manner if your questioning implies prejudicial behaviour.
14. Similarly, asking whether a candidate "saw the match on Saturday" does not necessarily mean that they are a fan, and to spend the next few minutes discussing each move in detail might bore, confuse, or make them feel uncomfortable.

### **Hypothetical Questions**

15. The approach with hypothetical questions should be to proceed with caution.
16. It is usually safer to focus on what a candidate did in a certain situation than to ask what they might do, because often what they think they would do and what would actually happen are two different things.

### **Tests**

17. Sometimes it would be more appropriate to test a competency than to simply discuss it. For example, presentation skills and aspects of numeracy might be more effectively assessed by asking for a sample or written test respectively. Remember, if a test to assess skills and / or aptitudes is to be carried out at the time of interview, this must be stated in the person specification.
18. Provided that the method(s) of assessing each candidate are reasonable and are the same, fairness and accuracy should prevail.

### **Remember**

19. Questions are only valid when they reflect the job itself.
20. Most questions will be determined by your Person Specification and others should already have been answered by an appropriate advertisement and well-designed application form.

## **Taking and Responding to Questions from the Interviewee**

1. Most applicants will have questions that they want answered, and the professional interviewer will both allow time for, and invite these.
2. Very often, the basis of the question will highlight concerns and priorities, and frequently they can open up a new area that requires investigation.
3. Whilst questions are often left until the end of the meeting, many feel it prudent to allow questions 'as they come', feeling that it may offer an indication of how organised one is.
4. For example, somebody asking about long-term sickness benefits may just be being thorough. On the other hand however, this may hide the fact that they were absent from a previous position for a lengthy period of time, and want to ensure that, should this reoccur, that they are fully protected.
5. Similarly, questions about promotion opportunities may signify enthusiasm, and a long-term view being taken. Alternatively, it may offer a clue that the person quickly becomes bored, and if this is the case, it should be investigated more thoroughly.
6. Whatever the question, the interviewer should both answer factually, and establish the reason behind the topic being raised in the first place.
7. This is especially true when the question doesn't link immediately with facts documented on the application form.
8. The questions themselves can be quite illuminating. For example, watch and listen carefully for those who appear to be more interested in what they will get out of a job than what they put into it.

### **Remember**

9. An effective interview is more than just a series of questions and answers.
10. Unless both parties are listening carefully and weighing up what they are hearing, it will be a futile exercise.

# Listening Skills

1. Financially, recruiting personnel is a costly exercise, and people are often offered jobs after spending a relatively short period of time in an interview situation.
2. It is therefore imperative that the best possible use is made of the 'slot' available, and effective questioning and listening skills are essential.
3. Research suggests that, on average, we only 'take in' approximately one third of what we hear, and that of this, approximately half is not interpreted in exactly the way that it was intended. Put another way, this means that as little as approximately 15% of what is said may actually 'register' correctly!
4. In fact one of the advantages of panel interviews is that panel members can work as a team, allowing, for example, two interviewers to listen, reflect and make notes whilst the third develops a line of questioning. It is essential that the interviewers retain good eye contact with the candidate.
5. Indeed the Commission for Racial Equality and The Equal Opportunities Commission both recommend the use of small panels (two to three people) for recruitment interviews, as it allows an assessment based upon firm evidence rather than prejudice caused by 'selective listening'.

## Prove That You Are Listening

6. Professional interviewers tend to allow (and encourage) the candidate to do much of the talking.
7. Such an approach enables the interviewees to be themselves, and offers those conducting the interview the opportunity to 'take in' what is being said.
8. But few candidates will be fully 'drawn' unless the environment is conducive and the person / people listening add some encouragement.

## Active Listening

9. Listening 'actively' means encouraging the other person to talk (without interrupting) by demonstrating interest and making 'encouraging noises'.
10. Visual techniques include maintaining regular eye contact, perhaps nodding one's head, and demonstrating 'open' body language, whilst verbal skills include comments such as "I see", "really", and "uh huh" etc.

## **Hidden Messages**

11. It is important, of course, to listen not only to what is being said (i.e. the words), but also to how it is being conveyed.
12. Whilst it would be wrong to be unnecessarily suspicious, it is wise to investigate areas where there might be a deeper, perhaps 'hidden' message.
13. For example, leaving a former job due to a "minor difference of opinion with a Manager" may be no cause for concern, but the comment should be noted and investigated further.

## **Barriers to Listening**

14. We all 'half-listen' on occasions. Perhaps you read a newspaper, drive, or cook whilst listening to the radio, and in these situations this is perfectly acceptable.
15. Selection interviews require real concentration and awareness though, and the quality of listening needs to be much higher than that which gets us through most days.
16. There are, however, a number of 'barriers' to effective listening, and these include:
  - Noise (telephones, machinery, or other conversations etc)
  - Visual distractions ('happenings' inside or outside, sunshine etc)
  - Physical distractions (tiredness, ill health or even an uncomfortable chair etc)
  - Mental distractions (thoughts in the interviewer's own head such as unfinished work, personal or business problems etc)
  - Candidate distractions (they look familiar but you can't 'place' them, or maybe they don't look or sound as you had expected them to, etc)
17. There are also more subtle barriers too:
  - Lack of interest (perhaps you have already seen a dozen candidates, a couple of whom seemed 'ideal')
  - Anticipation (you think you know what is coming next, and effective 'switch off')
  - Stereotyping (this is both dangerous and potentially discriminatory)
  - Premature decision-making (maybe the candidate said something earlier that put you off, making it difficult to gather a balanced picture)

## Aids to Listening

1. Fortunately, there are also some aids to listening, the most effective of which being to have a genuine interest. If you really do want to know what the candidate has to offer, you will find it much easier to concentrate on what he / she is saying.
2. Additionally, preparation is essential. Adequate preparation allows you to be more alert to situations, in the main because you know what the 'game plan' is and what you are looking for.
3. The environment: Arranging the location (and perhaps the furniture) with listening in mind can make the communication process very much more effective.
4. Maintaining the focus also aids listening. Regular summaries, homing in on specifics, and asking questions in a logical order all help the interviewer(s) to obtain the information necessary to make an informed, fair and objective choice.
5. Make notes, and utilise the list of pre-prepared questions. Both techniques allow the process to 'flow' more naturally, reducing the likelihood of 'rambling', and avoiding a loss of concentration whilst the interviewer is wondering "what shall I say next?" or "have we covered this already?"
6. Finally, don't be too ambitious with timings or the number of candidates that can effectively be interviewed. Where time is 'tight', the clock might become a distraction, and where large numbers of applicants are to be seen in a short period of time, fatigue, boredom, stress, or confusion could adversely affect the selection process this is why 6 to 7 candidates per day is recommended.
7. Of course it is not enough simply to listen. The skill must be combined with effective questioning techniques in order to maximise the quality of information and be able to make an informed decision, and this is covered in a later section.

## Building Rapport

1. The majority of people feel uncomfortable about attending interviews, especially where they are meeting with more than one person.
2. The pressure is on. Maybe this represents what they perceive as a 'once only' opportunity and to be unsuccessful is tantamount to disaster.
3. Given such pressure, many don't perform at their best, and almost all are unnatural.
4. From an interviewer's perspective this is not good news. After all, what is the point in meeting with somebody if the person you meet at interview bears little relation to the one you ultimately employ?
5. So it is in everybody's interest to put candidates at their ease, as by relaxing them, they are more likely to act 'in character'.

### Meet and Greet

6. The early stages of the meeting are particularly important.
7. Try to keep to time, and if you cannot, keep the person informed.
8. If they must be kept waiting, ensure that the waiting area is comfortable and reasonably private.
9. If they are wearing one, offer to take their coat, and let them know where the facilities are.
10. Make sure drinking water is available.
11. Use their name, and when they enter, ask how they wish to be addressed (e.g. Do you prefer David or Dave, Jacqueline or Jackie etc).
12. Introduce yourself and the panel, giving both names and job titles, and if it is unclear, explain your 'fit' within the organisation.
13. Ask about their journey, whether they found you easily etc. Starting with a few pleasantries before the formal proceedings begin can 'set the scene' for the tone of the rest of the meeting.
14. And smile! A smile is the little curve that puts everything straight! Offering one can help build rapport and relax the applicant.

### **During the Meeting**

15. During the meeting, let the candidate talk as much as they want to.
16. Often this can tell you a great deal about their personality (in terms of confidence) and level of knowledge (in their choice of words etc).
17. Avoid correcting the applicant, but do ask probing questions where you suspect flaws in their dialogue. (See 'Questioning Techniques').

### **On Departure**

18. At the end of the meeting always thank them for coming, and let them know what the next stage will be.
19. A verbal offer of employment is legally binding. Any offer should be worded "recommended for appointment subject to satisfactory clearances".
20. Remember, people behave most naturally in comfortable surroundings, so to see the 'real' person, help them to feel comfortable!

## **Taking Accurate Notes**

1. It is often the case that a day (or days) will be set aside for conducting interviews, and thus it is likely that the interviewer or panel will meet with several hopeful applicants.
2. Most people's recollection of detail is, at best, sketchy, so notes should be made both during the meeting, and after the candidate has left (but before the next one enters). Only by keeping up to date is an accurate and fair record of events possible, and only by being methodical in one's approach, is the best decision likely to be made.

### **How to Make Notes**

3. That said, it is not necessary to write everything down! Details that are on the application form need not be duplicated (though there may be additions or amendments to make), and not everything need be recorded in long hand.
4. Some interviewers choose to use a pro-forma type document as a prompt to ensure that all pertinent issues have been covered, and add comments to this. Others write on copies of the application, whilst some simply prefer a blank piece of paper.

### **What to Record?**

5. As already stated, duplication is unnecessary, but new facts are necessary. Perhaps note how confident or nervous the person is at interview. Maybe record their attitude towards overtime or additional study.
6. In short, note anything that will help you to objectively make an informed choice, bearing in mind that the information should be clear to you some time later.
7. Note that London Borough of Tower Hamlets' panel members should complete assessments separately, and will be required to complete an assessment form and provide evidence to support their view(s). The assessment will also provide a record of the interview that will be required in the event of a complaint about the appointment via the Grievance Procedure at an Employment Tribunal, the EOC or CRE.
8. Also note that since the introduction of the Data Protection Act 1998, candidates can request sight of their recruitment paperwork. Therefore, it is essential that you complete all Recruitment and Selection paperwork accurately and comprehensively.

## **Ensuring Objectivity in Your Rating of Candidates**

1. Objectivity is vital when assessing potential new employees, the professional interviewer must remain focused and detached.
2. It is all too easy to fall into the 'trap' of favouring one person over another, simply because you like them, because they went to the same college as you, or because it is felt that they are more needy than the next candidate. So, remain focused on the essential person criteria, and the key tasks of the work, thereby avoiding discriminating in any way whatsoever.
3. Whilst first impressions do count, avoid 'snap judgements', forms of bias, and stereotyping in any way.
4. Within London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the evidence contained on assessment forms must be carefully evaluated by the panel as a whole. Individual members should discuss their assessments with other panel members in order to determine their final assessment.

### **Discrimination**

5. Employers have both a moral and legal obligation to treat every applicant fairly, and to fail to act fairly can result in serious consequences.
6. There must be no discrimination regarding gender, ethnicity, religion, orientation, age, disability etc, and every applicant must be judged solely upon their ability and suitability to undertake the work effectively.
7. See also the pages entitled 'London Borough of Tower Hamlets Recruitment & Selection Framework – Key Points'.

### **Other Selection Options**

8. Some employers prefer to run selection events, either before the panel interview or on the day of the interview, whereby a number of candidates take part in a group activity to assess their 'fit' for the vacant position, and where this is the case, candidates should be informed before they arrive.
9. You are strongly advised to speak with your Directorate HR section, regarding test options and their relevance to your vacancy when writing the person specification.

# **POST INTERVIEW**

## **Post Interview**

1. Within London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the evidence contained on assessment forms must be carefully evaluated by the panel as a whole. Individual members should discuss their assessments with other panel members in order to determine their final assessment.
2. The final decision of the panel must be conveyed to all shortlisted candidates as soon as possible, and in any event within three weeks. All candidates must be treated in the same way.
3. Unsuccessful internal candidates should receive written confirmation of the decision together with an invitation to meet an appropriate panel member for feedback.
4. The reasons for non-selection of any candidates (internal or external) should be filed and retained for at least six months in case of complaints etc.

### **The Offer**

5. Never make an offer at interview stage. Instead, tell people when you will be in touch and keep to this time frame.
6. Not making an immediate offer allows for a more considered approach, even when one interviewee might seem to be 'head and shoulders' above the rest. Jumping to conclusions is dangerous, and panel members should use only their objective assessments after discussion together.
7. A decision to offer a post must be based only on the merits of the candidates as judged by:
  - The content of the Application Form
  - Performance at interview
  - The outcome of any other appraisal techniques (e.g. tests / presentations etc)
8. Offers of employment are always made in writing, and are subject to:
  - Satisfactory references
  - Medical clearance
  - CRB check
  - Proof of entitlement to work in the UK
  - Proof of Qualifications
9. Candidates are informed not to resign from their present post until all clearances are received and a formal appointment letter is sent.

## **Withdrawing an Offer of Employment**

1. Very infrequently you may need to withdraw an offer of employment. This may be because of:
  - Unsatisfactory references
  - Failure to meet medical requirements
  - Non-eligibility to work in the UK
  - Information misrepresented by the candidate
  - Information revealed from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)
2. Your Directorate HR team will advise, taking any necessary legal advice before withdrawing the offer, which must be confirmed in writing to the candidate.
3. If an offer of appointment is withdrawn, the interview panel may consider the reserve candidate, if the selection criteria have been met.

### **If in Doubt**

4. Tempting though it is, remember that you do not have to make an offer.
5. If there are no suitable applicants, be prepared to recommence the whole process, beginning with your advertisement. Whilst it may be expensive, it is significantly less costly than employing the 'wrong' person!

## Measures to Combat Fraud

1. Regrettably, it is inevitable that the Council will periodically receive applications from unacceptable and fraudulent candidates, and Managers must satisfy themselves that the information given is authentic, consistent, and honest.
2. Accordingly, the recruiting Manager must check and satisfy themselves about information regarding the applicant's:
  - Application form
  - Work history
  - Qualifications
  - Personal files (where the candidate is a former employee of the Council)
  - Evidence presented at interview
  - References
  - CRB checks
  - Proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK.
3. Furthermore, they must (in conjunction with Directorate HR):
  - Take up at least two references before employment starts, one of which must normally be from a previous employer
  - Satisfy themselves that referees are appropriate to give references
  - Send requests for references to the employee's Manager (after obtaining consent from the individual) rather than the person named on the application form
  - Seek to clear up any inconsistencies by speaking direct to the referee to satisfy themselves that the reference is not from a bogus organisation
  - Satisfy themselves that the candidate has the right to work in the UK
  - Record evidence of the employee's right to work that satisfies the legal requirements
  - Satisfy themselves that the candidate's criminal record does not render him / her unfit for the job
  - Ensure that a pre-employment medical check is completed before employment commences
  - Where posts have substantial access to children, ensure that relevant registers for disqualified individuals are checked and all CRB checks are enforced.
  - Anyone applying to work in Children's Residential should be subject to a "Warner" type interview and pre-interview references should be sought. In these circumstances seek advice from HR.

# The Law

1. The following Acts of Parliament provide the legislative background for the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and recruitment and selection procedures:
  - The Race Relations Act 1976\*
  - The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
  - The Sex Discrimination Act 1975\* and 1986\* (as amended)
  - Sexual Orientation Regulations 2003
  - Religion and Belief regulations 2003
  - The Disabled Persons Act 1944 and 1958
  - The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
  - The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
  - The Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992
  - The Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993
  - The Asylum and Immigration Act 1996
  - The Equal Pay Act 1970
  - Section 71 (Race Relations Act 1976) Local Authorities: General Statutory Duty
2. In relation to those Acts marked \*, a Genuine Occupation Qualification (GOQ) may apply.

## What Does The Law Say?

3. The Acts above make it illegal to discriminate on grounds of colour, gender, race, nationality, ethnic or natural origin, marital status, or spent convictions (unless a job is specifically excluded). The Council's policy also covers the sexual orientation, religion and belief and age of people.

## Positive Action

4. The aim of Positive Action is to make Equal Opportunities a reality. It encourages applications from underrepresented groups and provides training to enable people in such groups to acquire skills enabling them to compete on equal terms.
5. Positive Action should be integrated into the recruitment process to ensure that members of disadvantaged groups who are underrepresented in the Authority are given the maximum opportunity of applying for jobs. Discrimination at the point of selection however is not permissible.

### DISCLAIMER

This page provides the briefest summary of some of the legislation pertinent to recruitment and selection, and should not be taken as complete. Delegates should always seek advice as to current legislation.

# **READING MATERIAL**

## The Exit Questionnaire - Guidance

1. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather valuable information in order to recruit and retain valued staff.
2. The questionnaire consists of a number of tick boxes and open style questions, which you should complete. There is also space on the questionnaire for additional comments you may wish to make. If there is not enough space on the questionnaire, please continue your answer on a separate sheet and attach it securely to the questionnaire.
3. If there are any questions which you prefer not to answer, please ignore these and answer those you feel are appropriate.
4. The following guidelines may be useful when completing this form.
5. **Job satisfaction** – you should try to think about the extent to which your job has been rewarding and how this has enabled you to use your skills and knowledge fully.
6. **Reason for Exit** – please indicate why you have decided to leave. If there is only one reason please tick the relevant box. However, if there are several reasons, please rank them in order of importance to you, number 1 being the most important.
7. **Career development** – this could include any opportunities you may have had to develop skills/knowledge related to your job and/or to progress within your career e.g. project related work.
8. **Any form of treatment that you feel has put you at a disadvantage** – this can include racist or sexist jokes, displaying offensive or obscene posters, making fun of someone's appearance, speech, age, life style, religions, beliefs, sexuality, or disability.

1. **PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**
2. Dear
3. **Re: Exit Monitoring Questionnaire**
4. I understand that your employment with the Council is shortly due to cease/has recently ceased and your last day of service [will be][was] [insert date]. I will arrange for your P45 to be sent to your home address in due course. Your manager will discuss the arrangements for handing over any Council property before the end of your employment.
5. I have attached a confidential Exit Questionnaire, which you should complete and return to Human Resources in the envelope provided. The information you provide will help the Council to improve workforce planning and the recruitment and retention of staff.
6. If you would like to attend an exit interview to discuss this questionnaire or to discuss any other issue regarding your departure you should ask your line manager to arrange a meeting. Alternatively, if you would prefer to have an exit interview with a different manager from your Directorate or with a representative from Human Resources, please contact, *[insert name]*.
7. Please be assured that the questionnaire will not be placed on your file. The information provided in the Exit Questionnaire will be collated and analysed by Human Resources and reported (without specific reference to you) to the Directorate Management Team and a copy sent to Human Resources Strategy for monitoring purposes. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.
8. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the work you have carried out whilst you have been employed by the Council and to offer good wishes for the future.
9. Yours sincerely
10. [Name]
11. [Position]
12. [Directorate] Human Resources

# Confidential Exit Procedure Questionnaire

## DECLARATION

The information provided will assist the London Borough of Tower Hamlets in improving workforce planning and the recruitment and retention of staff. In addition, it will help us comply with our statutory duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to monitor why people are leaving the organisation.

The information will be collated and analysed by the Human Resources Section and reported (without specific reference to you) to the Directorate Management Team and a copy sent to Human Resources Strategy Team for monitoring purposes. The information provided will be treated as confidential. If, however, the information provided reveals facts which require further investigation by the Council (e.g. allegations of discrimination) the Council will investigate the matter and will endeavour to treat the information provided as confidential. This information will only be used for the purposes specified.

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets complies with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Employees are encouraged to be frank and honest in their feedback.**

**NAME OF LEAVER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTORATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **MANAGER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**GRADE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **LAST DAY OF SERVICE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LENGTH OF SERVICE WITH L.B.T.H.:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LENGTH OF SERVICE WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Tower Hamlets is a good place to work

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

### 2. How motivated did you feel in your job?

Very motivated ☐ Fairly motivated ☐  
Not very motivated ☐ Not at all motivated ☐

### 3. What have you liked most about your job?

Operational work ☐  
Public contact ☐  
Strategic work ☐  
Policy and research work ☐

Other factors: \_\_\_\_\_

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**4. Have any of the following factors influenced your decision to leave?**

Level of pay	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family commitments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poor management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Travel to work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poor work environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moving out of the area	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promotion opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor relationships with colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change of career	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grievance/Harassment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volume of work	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of affordable local housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Other reasons (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**5. How would you describe your career development whilst at Tower Hamlets?**

Poor ☐ Satisfactory ☐ Good ☐ Very good ☐

**6. Are there any areas within your department or the Council that you think could be improved?**

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**7. Any other comments?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Continue on a separate sheet, if necessary.**

## Monitoring Information

Male ☐ Female ☐

**What is your ethnic group?** Choose one section from A to E, and then tick the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background.

### (a) Asian

- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Vietnamese
- ☐ Other Asian Background  
(please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### (b) Black

- ☐ Caribbean
- ☐ African
- ☐ Somali
- ☐ Other African
- ☐ Other Black background  
(Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### (c) White

- ☐ English
- ☐ Scottish
- ☐ Welsh
- ☐ Irish
- ☐ Other White background  
(please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### (d) Mixed/Dual Heritage

- ☐ White & Black Caribbean
- ☐ White & Black African
- ☐ White & Asian
- ☐ Other Mixed background  
(Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### (e) Other

- ☐ Any other ethnic background (Please Specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 a person is considered to have a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a sustained and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities:

Yes ☐ No ☐

### Age Category

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Or alternatively, the following age banding

0-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	44-52	<input type="checkbox"/>
20-25	<input type="checkbox"/>	53-59	<input type="checkbox"/>
26-34	<input type="checkbox"/>	60-64	<input type="checkbox"/>
35-43	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

### Religion/Belief

What is your religious belief?

Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/>
Christian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sikh	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/>	No Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Other religious belief \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

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

## Writing the Advertisement

1. Within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the decision to advertise externally may depend upon the current position regarding the Council's commitment in relation to a workforce that reflects the community.
2. Advertisements are placed via the Central Recruitment Team, and dependant upon job requirements, grade of post, and the need to attract certain sections of the community, may be placed in local, ethnic, trade or professional publications.
3. "East End Life" will be used to advertise all jobs.
4. The Council also has a commitment to use the Pink Paper and certain ethnic publications on a rotational basis, as well as other media to actively encourage the application of community groups. Examples include job clubs and community advertising (e.g. church, temples, mosques, GP surgeries, post offices etc). 'Open days' and presentations to various associations, clubs and local radio are also considered.
5. If you need advice on where to place an advert, contact the Recruitment Team.

### **Make it Appealing**

6. In order to attract people, your advertisement must 'stand out' from the rest.
7. This does not mean that it must be enormous in size (and cost), multi-coloured, or carry bold statements, but it should appeal to the type of person who might be suitable.
8. The layout will follow the Council's corporate house style (HR will do this) and all advertisements will be drafted using the Job Description and Person Specification. Shortlist and proposed interview dates are usually stated in the advertisement, as is the 24-hour answering service number of the department.
9. The Recruitment Team will produce an applicant's pack containing relevant information, and the stated closing date should allow a reasonable 'window' of time for the distribution, completion, and return of application forms. The position is usually advertised for two weeks unless you wish to advertise for a longer length of time. Typically, packs are dispatched within forty eight hours of interest in a position being registered.

### **Applicants can also register on-line**

10. Remember that the purpose of the advertisement is to generate responses from which you can ultimately choose a suitable employee, so pay attention to the following ...

## **Honesty**

11. Honesty. If the text suggests something that is simply untrue or practically impossible to achieve, the likelihood is that you will be either 'swamped' with applications (most of whom will end up being disappointed), or that nobody will respond.
12. Indeed, to mislead may be unlawful, as would be the case if the text indicated that the vacancy was open to one sex or race, and no Genuine Occupational Qualification (GOC) applied.
13. Inaccuracy or exaggeration effectively wastes both time and money, so instead adopt an alternative approach.

## **'Sell' the Job**

14. Be positive. Stress what is available to the post-holder in terms of job satisfaction, potential for advancement, and remuneration, but do keep it realistic.

## **Consider Your Language**

15. Bear in mind that the text may be seen as a reflection of your organisation and what the job actually involves, so pay particular attention to your choice of words, and how these could be interpreted by the reader(s).
16. So ask yourself, if you were seeking employment in the field where a vacancy exists, what would appeal to you?

# Spent convictions and the rehabilitation of offenders

## Rehabilitation Period per Sentence

Length and type of reprimand	Expiry of offence	
Prison for more than two and a half years	Never	
Prison for more than six months but less than two and a half years	10 years	
Prison for six months or less	7 years	
Fine	5 years	
Dismissal with disgrace from Her Majesty's service	10 years	
Dismissal from Her Majesty's service	7 years	
Detention in respect of conviction in service disciplinary proceedings	5 years	
Borstal	7 years	
Detention for over six months but less than two and a half years	5 years	
Detention for six months or less	3 years	
Probation	5 years	
Hospital order under Mental Health Act 1983	5 years	Whichever is longer
Hospital order under Mental Health Act 1983 after order ceases to have effect	2 years	
Absolute discharge	6 months	
Conditional discharge, probation order, binding over, care order, supervision order after conviction	1 year	Whichever is longer
Conditional discharge, probation order, binding over, care order, supervision order after the order ends	1 year	
Disqualification	The period of disqualification	

**Note:** These periods are reduced by half if the offender was under eighteen at the date of conviction.

2. The following sentences can never become spent:
  - A sentence of imprisonment, youth custody detention in a young offender institution or corrective training, for a term of more than two and a half years.
  - A sentence of imprisonment for life.
  - A sentence of preventive detention.
  - Detention during Her Majesty's pleasure or for life.
3. If you are convicted during the rehabilitation period of an offence which can only be tried by a magistrates' court, the new sentence will carry its own rehabilitation period and will not affect the earlier one. If the second offence is more serious and you receive a sentence covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, the earlier conviction will become spent only when the later one becomes spent. If a person is given a sentence which can never become spent, this also prevents an earlier unspent conviction from becoming spent.
4. It should be noted that it is the length of the sentence imposed by the court which is relevant and not, for example, the length of time actually served in prison. A sentence counts in the same way whether you are actually sent to prison or the sentence is suspended.
5. Where a person receives two or more prison sentences in the course of the same court case, the rehabilitation period depends on whether the sentences are ordered to take effect concurrently - at the same time - or consecutively - one after another. As an example of what is meant by this, if two six-month sentences are concurrent, the offences are treated separately, giving each conviction a rehabilitation period of seven years. However, if the sentence is consecutive, they are treated as a single term of twelve months, with a rehabilitation period of ten years.

## Further Reading: The Importance of HATS Repetition

**H**ear  
**A**ct  
**T**hink  
**S**ee

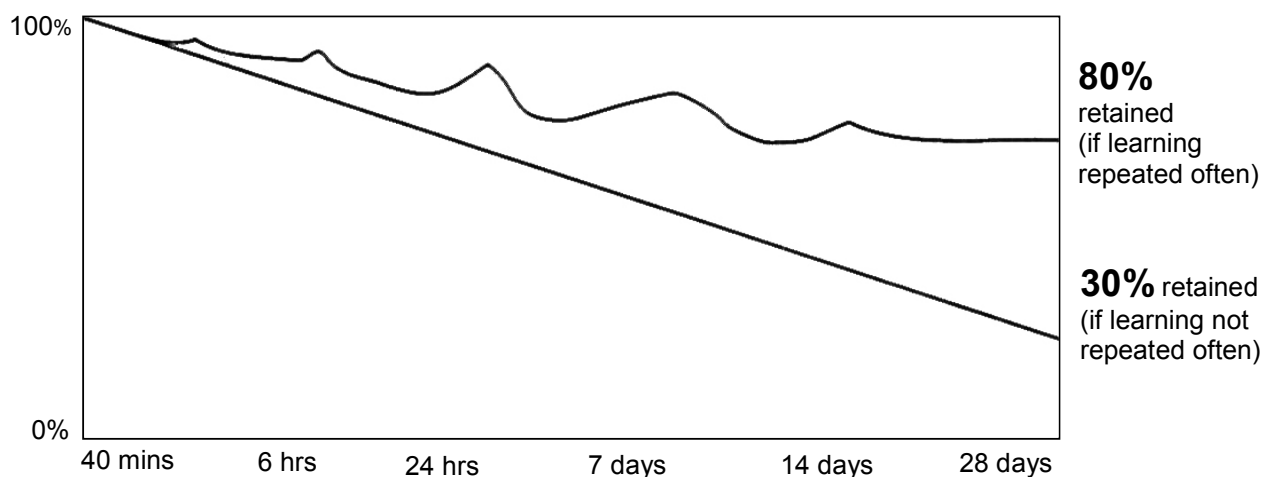
The diagram below illustrates the importance of repetition in the learning process. Repetition is what strengthens your long term-memory.

By returning to the learning material daily (even for just a few minutes each day), you can increase the amount of information retained by 50%.

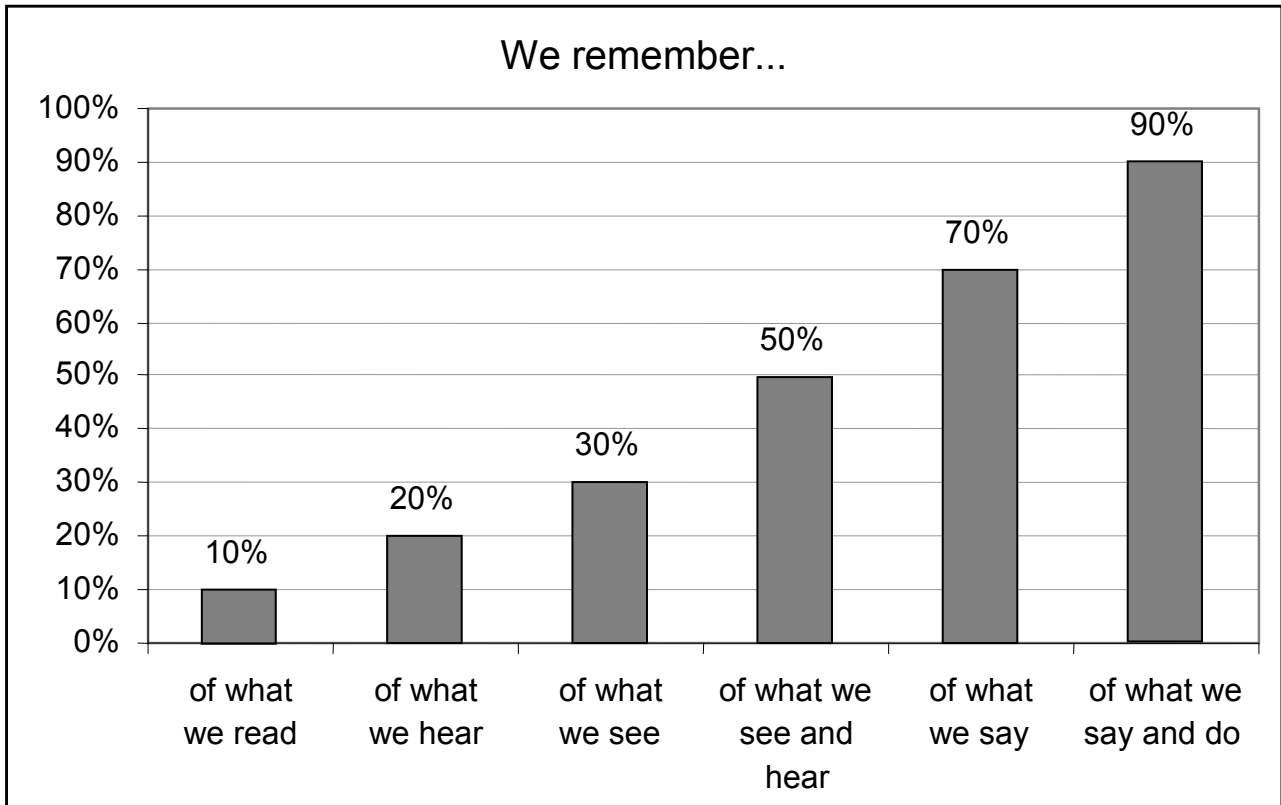
If you do not return to it within a few weeks, you will have to start the whole process again.

The HATS system, combined with a regular review of the learning materials, will substantially increase the amount of information that passes into the long-term memory.

### Memory Retention Using HATS Repetition



## Further Reading: How We Remember...



# Further Reading: Epilepsy Action

We are often asked about the word 'brainstorming' and whether its use is acceptable. Our view is that it depends upon the context: if the word is being used to describe a meeting where participants are suggesting ideas, then its use is not offensive to people with epilepsy. [...]

Yours sincerely

Jo Clayton

Email Helpline

Epilepsy Action

Tel: +44 (0)113 210 8800

Fax: +44 (0)113 391 0300

[www.epilepsy.org.uk](http://www.epilepsy.org.uk)

# **APPENDIX**

[ Notes ]

# Personal Action Plan

Name: ..... Date: .....

What aspects of this programme have made the greatest impact on you?  
(Spend some time thinking about your experiences and jotting down your thoughts)

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What would you like to change / do differently / do more or less of, as a result of attending this programme? (Spend some time recording broad action areas)

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Now translate the above into specific measurable activities, including:  
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?      HOW WILL I DO IT?      BY WHEN?

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Finally, look again at the actions you have defined above. What are you hoping each will achieve? In other words, what are your objectives?

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[ Notes ]

# Personal Action Plan

Name: ..... Date: .....

What aspects of this programme have made the greatest impact on you?  
(Spend some time thinking about your experiences and jotting down your thoughts)

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[ Notes ]

[ Notes ]

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