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Career Confidence

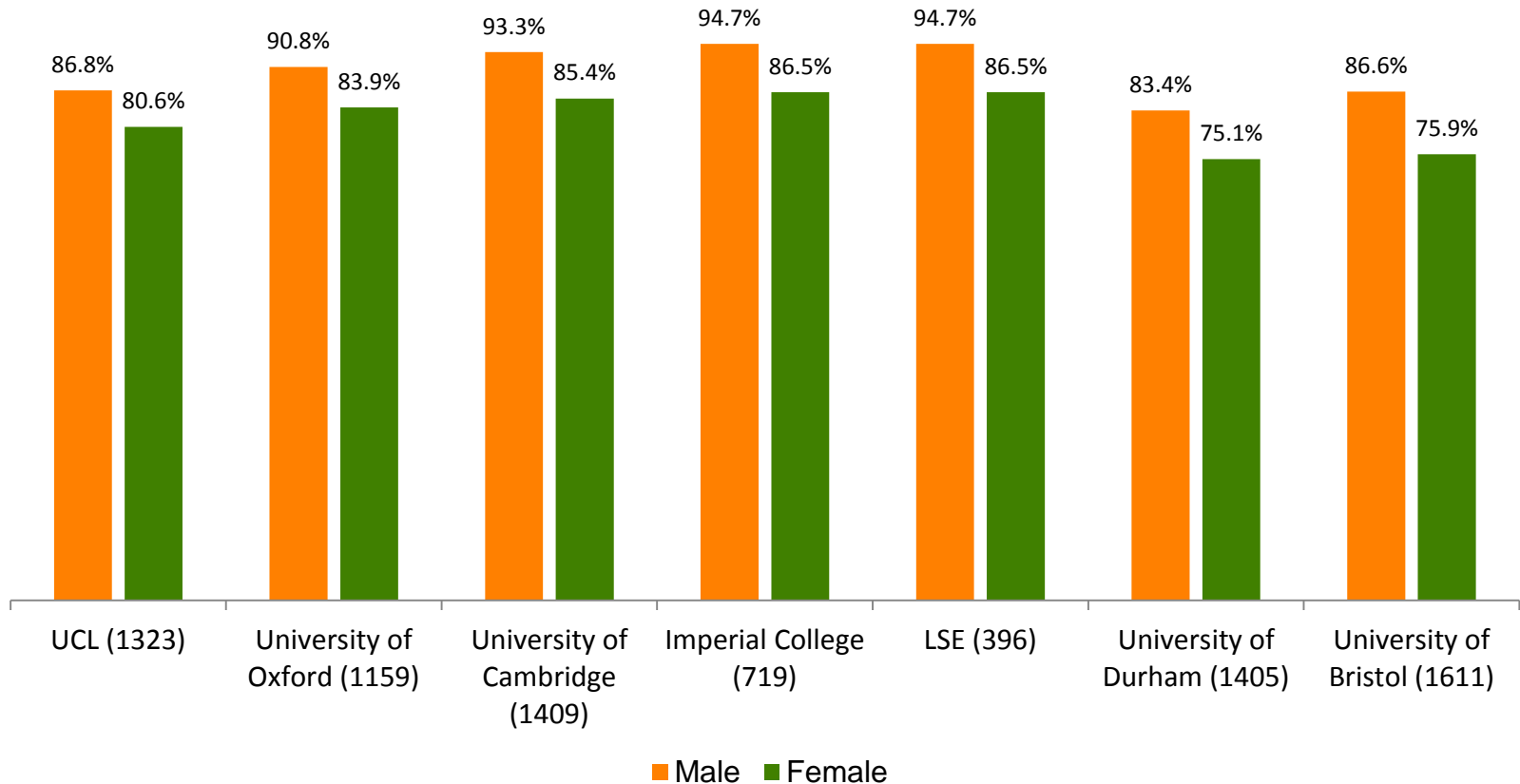
Marketing Yourself Effectively

Dr Abby Evans
Careers Adviser



A lower proportion of women leaving leading UK universities are in professional level work

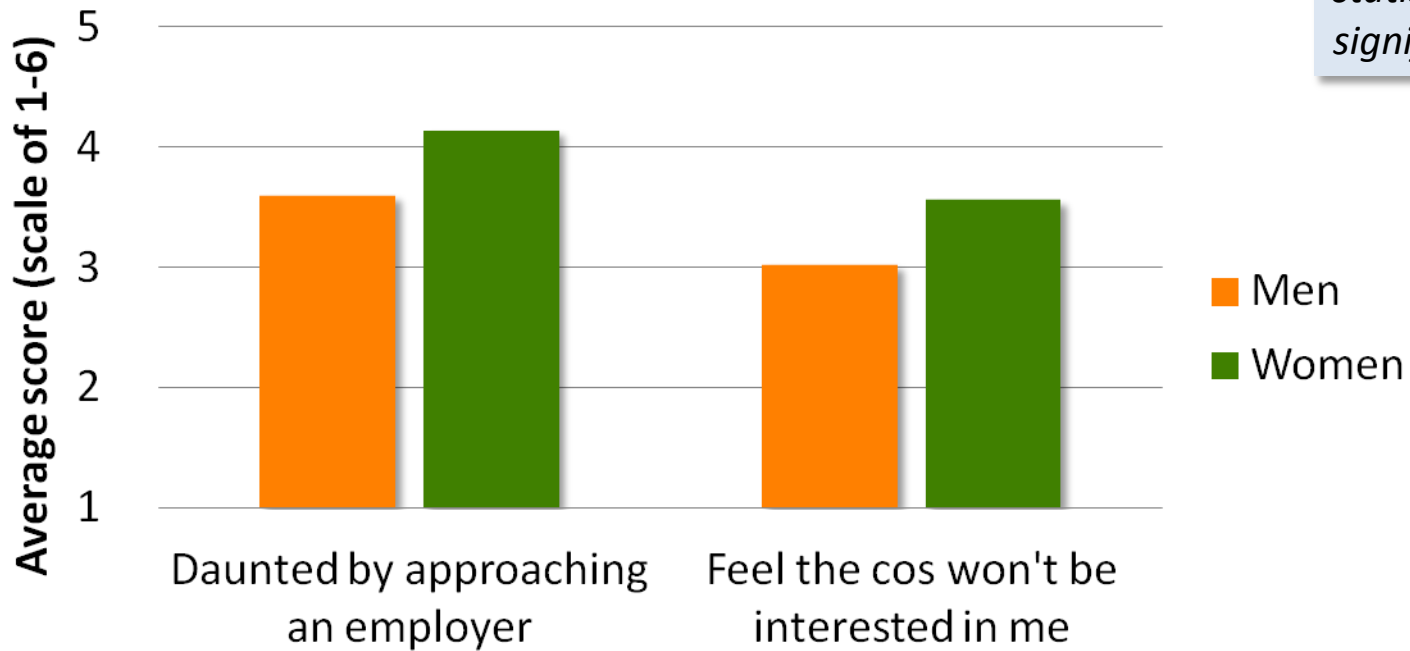
Proportion of employed graduates in a professional level job





Women are less confident both about approaching employers and recruiters' interest in them

Feelings about organisations who recruit at Oxford



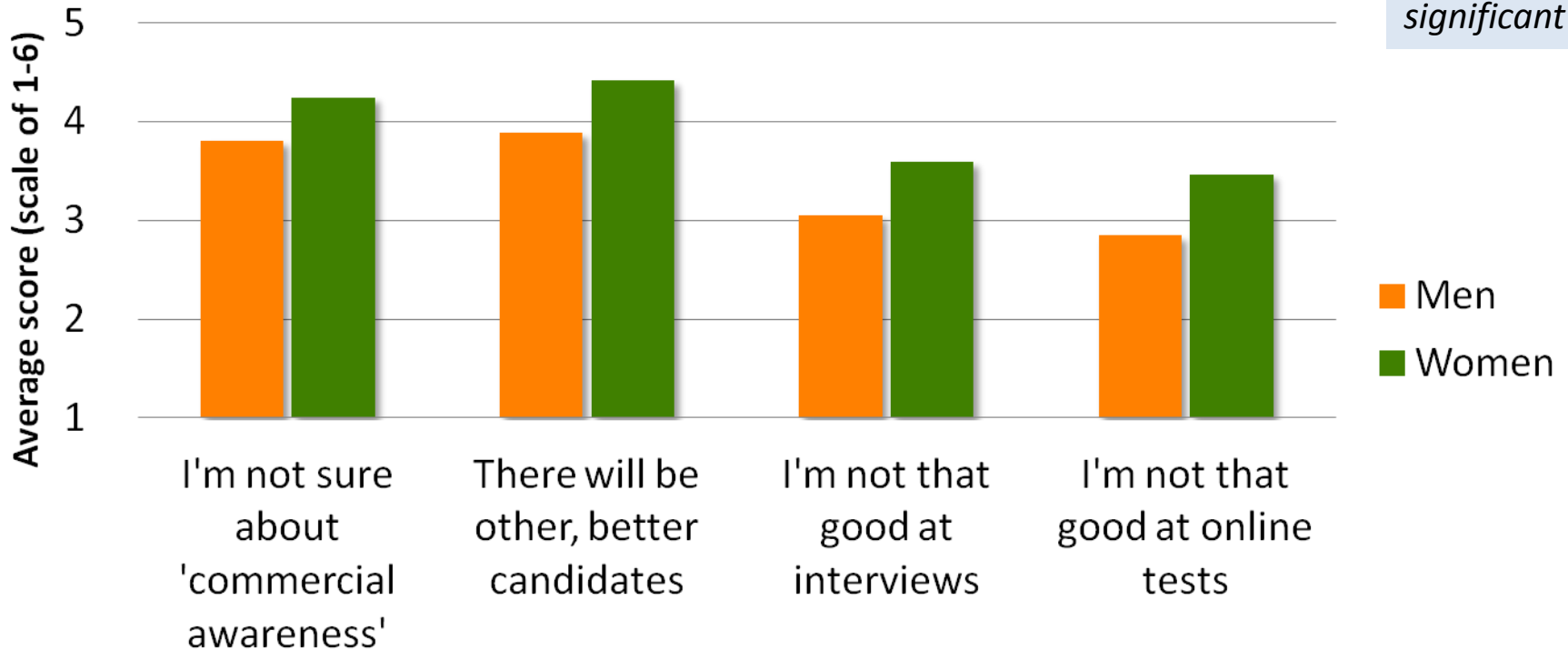
Differences shown are statistically significant



When considering applying, women feel less confident than men (equally in science and arts subjects)

Concerns when applying

Differences shown are statistically significant





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Consequences and Realities

- Only 11% of boardroom members are female in the FTSE 250
- Nearly half FTSE 250 companies do not have any women in the boardroom at all
- In Oxford:
 - 18% of Professors are women
 - 20% of senior Divisional officers are women
 - 13% of Departmental heads are women



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Today

- CVs
 - presenting the ‘positive you’ with impact
- Cover Letters
 - tailoring and conveying your aspirations confidently
- Application Forms
 - marketing your evidence clearly
- Interviews
 - preparing and building your coping strategies



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CVs

presenting with impact



You're a
recruiter.
You have 6
seconds.
What do you
pick up?

Curriculum Vitae of Robin Hunt

Addresses:

Balliol College 27 Adams Way
Oxford Milton Keynes
OX1 3BJ MK6 7YH
Tel. 07785 314529

Email: robin.hunt@balliol.ox.ac.uk

Date of birth: 12 September 1989

Nationality: British

Education:

St John's School, Milton Keynes (09/00- 07/07)

GCSEs

- Mathematics - A*
- English Language - A
- English Literature - A
- Science - A*A*
- French - B
- Geography - A*
- Sociology - A
- Design & Technology - A*

A levels

- Physics - A
- Mathematics - A
- Chemistry - A
- Geography - A

Balliol College, University of Oxford (10/07 - 06/10)

BA Hons Physics (expected result 2:1)

Work Experience

Milton Keynes Hospital	Work experience week	(06/05)
Pies R Us	General Assistant	(06/06 - 11/06)
Bass Brewery	Research Assistant	(06/08 - 09/08)
Fruit picking in France		(summer 2009)

Interests

Travel: mostly in Europe, with friends and with Orchestra
 Music: Grade 8 clarinet
 Member of Milton Keynes Youth Band
 National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain
 Balliol wind ensemble founding member
 Sport: Captain of school football team (over 16s)
 Member of college 2nd team at football.

Skills

IT competent
 Conversational French

Referees

Dr P Woods	Mrs S Greenhouse
Balliol College	St John's School
Oxford, OX1 3BJ	Milton Keynes, MK3 5TH



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Let's try that
again.
What do you
pick up this
time?

Robin Hunt

Balliol College, Oxford, OX1 3BJ (until 27 June)
3 Adams Way, Milton Keynes, MK6 7YH (from 27 June)
07785 314529 robin.hunt@balliol.ox.ac.uk

EDUCATION

- 2009-11 **BA Hons Physics (2:1) Oxford University (Balliol College)**
Twice winner of the Triardt (£2000) award for best Physicist.
- 2001-08 **St John's School Milton Keynes**
- A-levels: Mathematics (A), Physics (A), Chemistry (A), Geography (A)
 - GCSEs: 5 A*, 3 A, 1 B.

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- 2010 **Fruit Cropping operative, Haute Vienne, France**
- Planned and organised 2 months work and accommodation in France.
 - Operated fruit picking machinery and supervised daily packing of fruit.
 - Negotiated improved working conditions with local farmers.
- 2009 **Research Assistant Bass brewery**
- Researched in team to reduce excessive beer foaming in storage vats.
 - Co-presented solution to senior managers, that led to a change in process.
 - Developed good time management and organisational skills during this placement.
- 2008 **General Assistant, Pies R Us**
- Demonstrated good interpersonal skills, able to communicate professionally and effectively with the general public and other staff.
 - Promoted shift leader after 4 weeks.
 - Dealt appropriately with challenging situations during this 5 month role.
- 2007 **Data Entry Clerk, Milton Keynes Hospital**
- Developed administrative skills during a one week work experience.
 - Proof read and classified records to maintain accurate accounts.
 - Liaised with 12 hospital departments to compile complete datasheets.

INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Travel**
- Extensive travel through 8 European countries with orchestras.
 - Developed the interpersonal skills, understanding and adaptability for other cultures.
- Music (Clarinet Grade 8)**
- Founding member and Treasurer of Balliol wind ensemble; playing three major pieces a year.
 - Member National Youth Orchestra 2007-10.
 - Member of Milton Keynes Youth band 2004-09.
- Sport**
- Football – college 2nd XI, Captain School 1st XI.

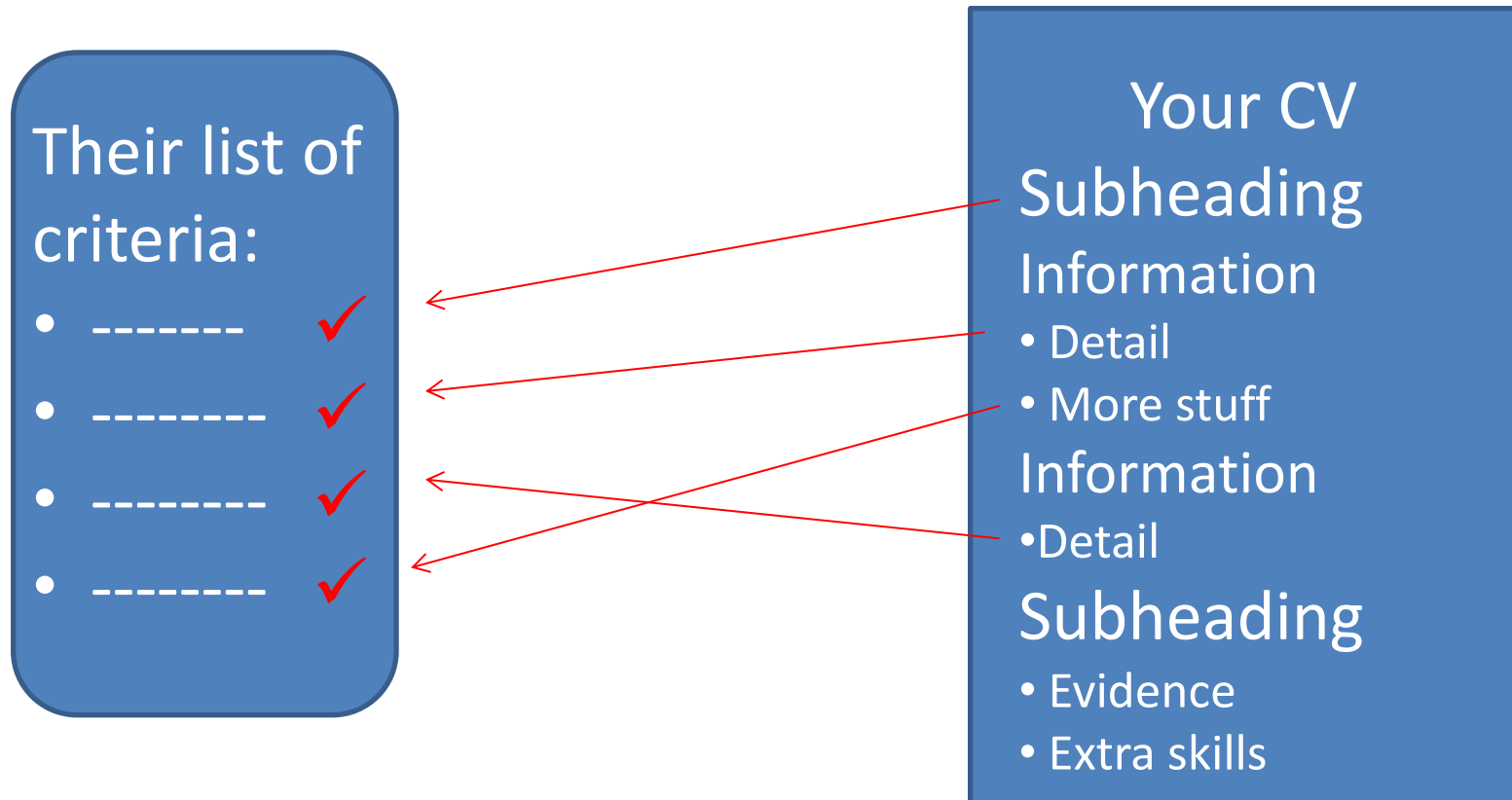
IT SKILLS: C++, programming.

LANGUAGES: French – conversational.

REFEREES: – on request.

Getting results

A CV is a process of displaying the evidence of your suitability for a job:





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5 top tips

for presenting the positive you
on your CV



1 Tailor every time

Selection criteria guide your tailoring

Also use:

- Job description
- Organisational values

Remove or re-order/de-emphasis things that don't fit these



2 Show your actions

Skills you developed

Gained deeper understanding of...

Developed my communication skills through...

Responsibilities you took on

Ensured that...

Represented the group at...

Achievements and results:

Exceeded my target, in raising...

Initiated new projects in...



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3 Be specific

Numbers add real power to a CV

Submitting eight 3,000 word essays each term

Accurate descriptions show your skills

Part of a team – did you make the tea?

Enjoy tennis – do you play?!

Size, scale, scope – sets a credible scene

Achieved weekly target (£150) in only two days

*Arranged attendance of three senior academics,
coordinating complex and changing diaries*



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4 Know your material

Check that in an interview you can:

Summarise each role

Explain the thinking behind each choice

Demonstrate all cited skills

Confirm all details

Narrate your experience to show how it's led you to this application



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5 Presentation

Check:

Tenses – past for anything... in the past

Grammar – avoid full sentences beginning with I

‘Scannability’ – the 10 second test

Proofreading – find a native speaker

Links – do they work?

Headings – use those that work for you

format– will it print ok? PDF/Word?



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Last tips

- Appropriate email address, checked regularly
- Use professional out of office settings
- Check file format (word? PDF?)
- Proof read, proof read, proof read!
- Use free style guides for spelling /grammar
- Double check your web footprint

How do you prepare a CV?

- Make a list of *all* “recent” things you have done: exams taken, work experience, activities and interests, exhibitions, awards, positions of responsibility, temporary jobs, voluntary work, travel, committee work, projects and dissertations....
- Select *relevant information for the reader*
- Organise it in a *relevant CV format*



Let's look at an example....

Pick a job!

ATKINS Graduate Development Programme - Energy, Nuclear

- An inquisitive mind and enjoying being curious to find out what really matters
- Enjoy working collaboratively with others to overcome conflict and build towards a common goal
- Creative and come up with new ideas to move things forward
- Decisive and enjoy making quick, confident, and clear decisions
- Pay attention to detail and relish producing high quality output, no matter what the pressures

or

Macmillan Science & Education Publishing (Physics)

- Editorial experience would be beneficial, but is not required.
- Commitment to providing gold-standard service to authors, EBMs, peer-reviewers and readers is a must.
- Excellent literary and interpersonal skills.
- Attention to detail in a fast-paced environment.
- A proactive and positive attitude.
- Top-notch time-management and prioritisation skills.

1. What are the key skills that you need to provide evidence for?

ATKINS Graduate Development Programme - Energy, Nuclear

- An **inquisitive** mind and enjoying being curious to find out what really matters
- Enjoy **working collaboratively** with others to **overcome conflict** and build towards a common goal
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- A **proactive** and positive attitude.
- Top-notch **time-management and prioritisation skills**.



2. Which of your experiences provides evidence for the required skills? Try to think of at least one scenario for each skill required and write it down.

3. Choose one relevant experience and write 2-4 bullet points about it to convey the evidence on your CV.

ATKINS Graduate Development Programme - Energy, Nuclear

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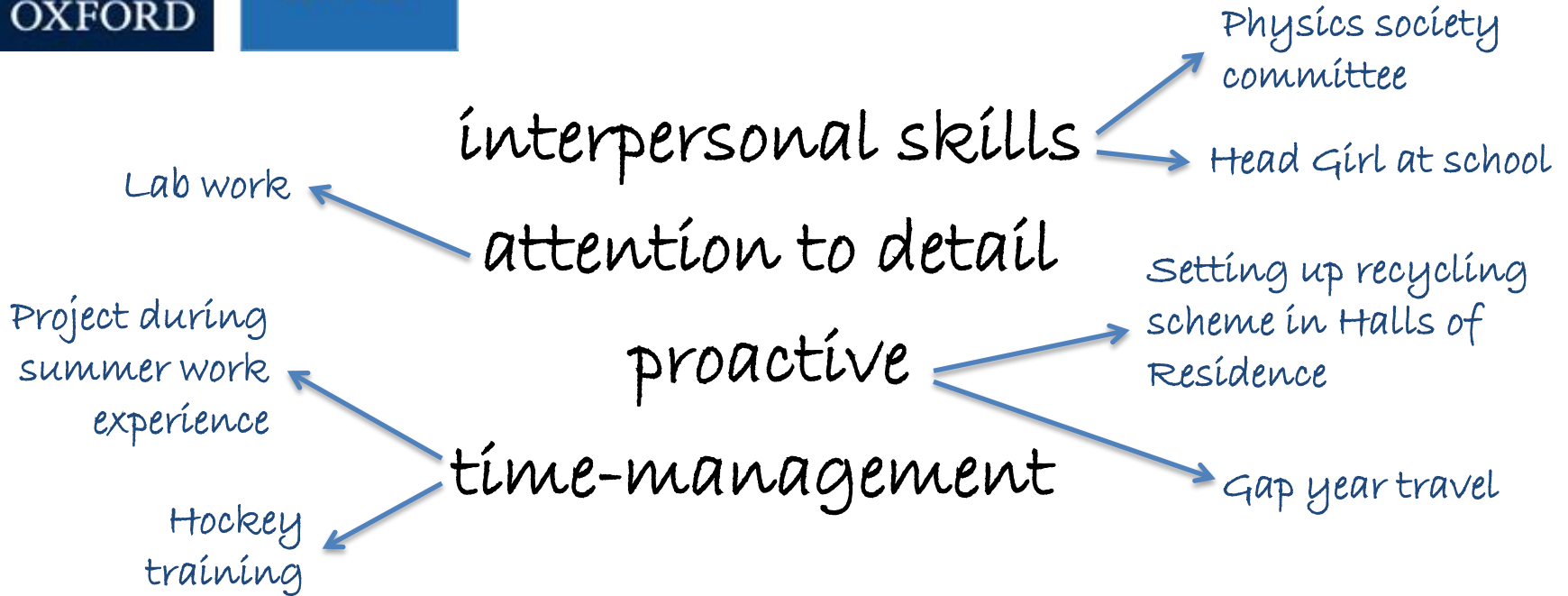
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Example



Accomplished Co-ordinated Encouraged Improved Organised Responsible Achieved Counsellor
 Engineered Increased Oversaw Saved Administered Created Enjoyed Initiated Performed Set up Advised
 Decided Ensured Instituted Planned Simplified Advocated Delivered Established Instructed Prepared
 Solved Analysed Demonstrated Evaluated Interviewed Presented Supervised Assembled Designed
 Examined Invented Prioritised Targeted Awarded Determined Expanded Launched Produced
 Transformed Authorised Developed Explained Led Promoted Budgeted Devised Facilitated Managed
 Raised Captained Directed Founded Marketed Ran Chaired Discovered Gained Maximised Recognised
 Coached Earned Generated Mediated Recommended Completed Edited Handled Negotiated Reconciled
 Conducted Employed Identified Obtained Recruited Enabled Implemented Operated Represented



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Subheadings

Subheadings are a tool to:

- Put information in the order that you want
- Set a first impression for the reader
- Help the reader navigate to sections of interest

Subheadings

What subheadings could you pick from?





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Enhancing your CV

- New roles in existing activities
- Take up new activities
- Volunteer
- Get creative
- Formalise your hobbies/interests



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To summarise...

- Focus on the recipient and what they want to know
- Allocate space according to importance
- Think about appearance/layout
- One or two full pages
- Send with covering letter
- Check for typos/consistent grammar/tenses
- Get someone else to read it



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And...

- Chronological order with most recent first
- In the UK, a photo is not required on your CV
- It is not necessary to include a personal / goal statement
- You can also remove referees from your CV
- Don't underestimate the importance of 'other' activities
- Stick to a simple style, avoid using logos, fancy fonts, wordart, etc
- Use bullet points, avoid large chunks of text



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Cover Letters

*tailoring and conveying
your aspirations*



CV is all about you – cover letter is all about them

How can your skills and experience help them to achieve their objectives / vision?

How are your aspirations aligned with their goals?

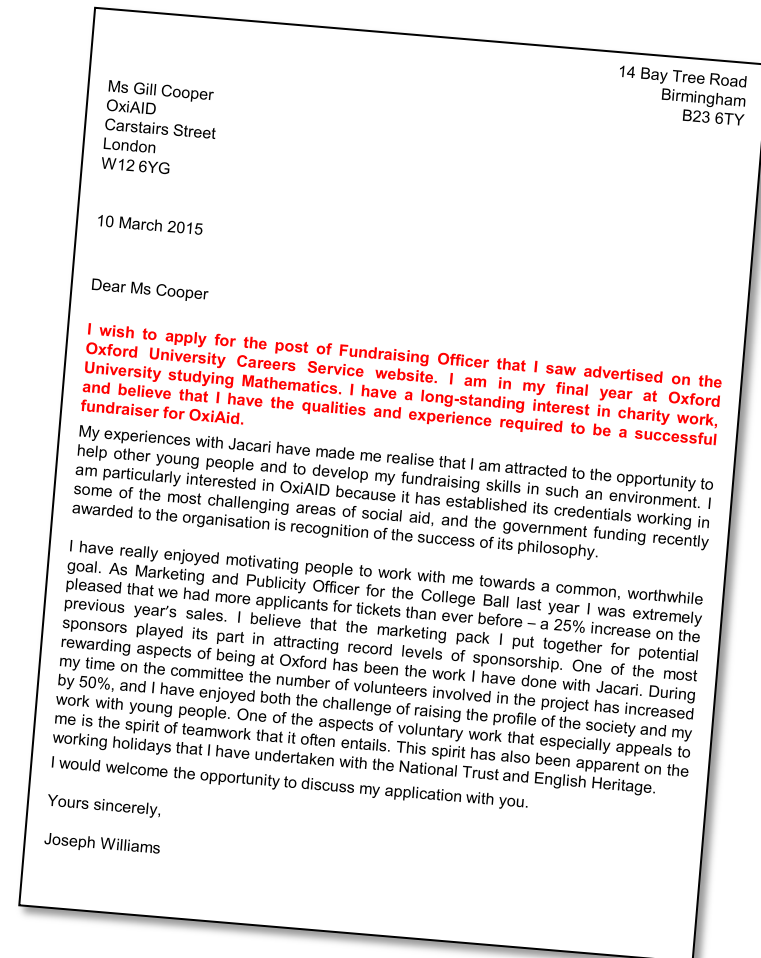
To convey this...

- Research their strategic objectives
- Mention specific company contacts if appropriate
- Research recent deals / quotes / policies...
- Research what the role entails
- Identify the specific competencies they are seeking for the role
- Highlight the link between your CV and their competencies



Introduction

- Quick simple lead-in sentence
- What you're applying for
- Some key context for them
- Your **unique selling points** – in brief!





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Paragraph 1

- Introduce yourself further
- Why this organisation?
- Why this role?
- Who have you met, what have you found out, and why is that relevant / interesting for you?

14 Bay Tree Road
Birmingham
B23 6TY

Ms Gill Cooper
OxiAID
Carstairs Street
London
W12 6YG

10 March 2015

Dear Ms Cooper

I wish to apply for the post of Fundraising Officer that I saw advertised on the Oxford University Careers Service website. I am in my final year at Oxford University studying Mathematics. I have a long-standing interest in charity work, and believe that I have the qualities and experience required to be a successful fundraiser for OxiAid.

My experiences with Jacari have made me realise that I am attracted to the opportunity to help other young people and to develop my fundraising skills in such an environment. I am particularly interested in OxiAID because it has established its credentials working in some of the most challenging areas of social aid, and the government funding recently awarded to the organisation is recognition of the success of its philosophy.

I have really enjoyed motivating people to work with me towards a common, worthwhile goal. As Marketing and Publicity Officer for the College Ball last year I was extremely pleased that we had more applicants for tickets than ever before – a 25% increase on the previous year's sales. I believe that the marketing pack I put together for potential sponsors played its part in attracting record levels of sponsorship. One of the most rewarding aspects of being at Oxford has been the work I have done with Jacari. During my time on the committee the number of volunteers involved in the project has increased by 50%, and I have enjoyed both the challenge of raising the profile of the society and my work with young people. One of the aspects of voluntary work that especially appeals to me is the spirit of teamwork that it often entails. This spirit has also been apparent on the working holidays that I have undertaken with the National Trust and English Heritage.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my application with you.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph Williams



Paragraph 2

- Reveal more detail
- Why you?
- More evidence about how your experience translates into a good choice for them
- “Last year, I led a project organising ..., where we ... and achieved ... My problem-solving skills and collaborative approach helped ensure that the team delivered the project successfully and on time...”

Ms Gill Cooper
OxiAID
Carstairs Street
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Yours sincerely,
Joseph Williams



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Summarise at the end

- It's your 'elevator' pitch
- You'll need it elsewhere too...
- "In conclusion, I feel that my direct experience, my knowledge of ..., combined with my proven enthusiasm for ..., would allow me to deliver significantly in this role."



Closing

- For formal applications:
 - “I look forward to hearing from you.”
 - “Thank you for your time in considering my application.”

- For speculative approaches:
 - “I hope you won’t mind if I call early next week...”
 - “I will give you a call in a few days/weeks once you have had a chance to review my CV/application.”



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Improving a cover letter – reflective questions

- Is the language clear and concise?
- Are the verbs active rather than passive: about you?
- Are you using your evidence effectively - ‘Show me, don’t tell me’?
- Is the letter 1 side, formal style (unless clear reason otherwise)?
- Is the letter tailored to the recipient?

Read it out loud and sleep on it



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Application Forms

marketing your evidence



Why do employers use application forms?

Similarly to CV & cover letters:

- To assess your motivation
- To assess your skills

And in addition:

- So applicants can be compared easily and fairly
- To assess specific attributes



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Answering standardised questions: STAR technique

- S** - Briefly describe the specific **situation** you were in – not a general description of what you have done in the past
- T** - Describe the **task** that you needed to accomplish. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand your role
- A** - Describe the **action** you took -keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did not the efforts of the team.
- R** – Describe the **result**. What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?



Action words for application forms:

Accomplished	Created	Ensured	Instructed	Prioritised
Achieved	Decided	Established	Interviewed	Promoted
Administered	Delivered	Evaluated	Invented	Raised
Advised	Demonstrated	Examined	Launched	Ran
Advocated	Designed	Expanded	Managed	Recognised
Analysed	Developed	Explained	Marketed	Recommended
Authorised	Devised	Facilitated	Maximised	Reconciled
Budgeted	Directed	Founded	Mediated	Recruited
Captained	Discovered	Gained	Negotiated	Represented
Chaired	Earned	Generated	Obtained	Responsible
Coached	Edited	Identified	Operated	Simplified
Communicated	Employed	Implemented	Organised	Supervised
Completed	Enabled	Improved	Oversaw	Targeted
Conducted	Edited	Increased	Planned	Transformed
Co-ordinated	Encouraged	Initiated	Prepared	
Counselled	Engineered	Instituted	Presented	



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Strategies for Application Forms

- Familiarise yourself with the particular application system before you start
- Give yourself plenty of time to fill in the application in advance of the deadline
- Be accurate; check spellings, grammar, word limits etc. Poor English is the main reason for application rejections
- Answer the question being asked – do not risk copying from previous applications



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Interviews

preparation ...

and confidence coping strategies



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What is the purpose of an interview?

- To establish you have the skills, motivation, knowledge and ability to do the job
- To ensure that you have an accurate picture of the job and the organisation

Different interview formats

- One-to-one
- Panel
- Telephone
- Virtual
- Competency-based
- Technical
- Case study





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How will you be assessed?

- Most commonly '**competency based**', focusing on EVIDENCE of your achievement.
- Recruiter will first understand the skills and motivation needed to do the job.
- They'll then identify questions which test this.
- You are marked on the quality of the EVIDENCE you provide.
- Also looking for evidence of your strong **motivation**.



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Practice question

“What is your greatest achievement?”

- Break into pairs
- One the interviewer, one the interviewee
- One minute each to answer

Feedback:

Was this difficult? Why/why not?



Visual impression





How important are first impressions?

% importance of different factors in early stages of an interview:

- Body language 55%
- Tone of voice 38%
- Words 7%



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Body language

DO

- Firm handshake
- Eye contact
- Smile!
- Open posture
- Relaxed, but alert
- Look neat & professional
- Adopt dress code
- Listen actively – ‘head nods’
- Sit in the right seat
- Go to the loo beforehand!

DON'T

- Limp/clammy handshake
- Bring in carrier bags/clutter
- Wear jeans
- Look down
- Cross arms
- Flop into chair
- Wave arms
- Stare out of window
- Shake with nerves
- Adopt a threatening posture



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Presenting yourself effectively

- Dress to suit company style
- Look professional/smart
- Co-ordinate colours and patterns
- Err on the conservative side
- Minimal jewellery
- Be comfortable
- Avoid club ties, badges or insignia



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Your attitude

- Make a strong first impression: smile, handshake, confident body language
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Answer the question!
- Be succinct, but avoid yes/no answers
- Be interested and enthusiastic
- Leave positively: thank interviewer



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7 Preparation Steps

1. Organisation research
2. Role research
3. Self-awareness
4. Your answers
5. Your questions
6. Practicalities
7. Interview skills for the day



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Interview Research

1. Organisation

- Goals and objectives
- Competitors and comparatives
- Structure of their organisation
- Major streams of work
- Change afoot
- Possibilities for improvement

2. Role

- Skills used
- Terminology
- Leaders in the area
- Techniques, software, tools
- Challenges for the *role*
- Ways to contribute more to the *role*



Interview research

You're applying for a marketing assistant at:



How can you research the organisation and the role?



Interview research

You're applying for a marketing assistant at:

Their website

University alumni

Job description

Information interviews

Professional associations

Competitors

Your awareness



Blogs

Twitter

LinkedIn

Trade publications

Journals

Their marketing output

How can you research the organisation and the role?



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3. Self-awareness

- Why do I want the job?
- What's my evidence that I'm a good candidate?
- What have I gained from the things on my CV?
- What was my best/worst decision, my greatest achievement etc.
- When did I...work in a team, solve a problem etc.
- What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- What are my goals?

4. Your answers

*“Tell me about a
time when...”*

*“Give me an
example of...”*



S situation

T target/task

A action

R result

Check they are:

Relevant, reasonably recent, diverse, detailed
enough, focus on evidence about **you**



Competency question practice



Describe a time when you had to solve a problem creatively.



Situation

When working as the social secretary for the college rowing team,

Task

I was tasked with increasing revenue from sponsors to address financial priorities.

Action

- ✓ Planned
- ✓ Strategised
- ✓ Researched
- ✓ Innovated
- ✓ Communicated
- ✓ Analysed risk
- ✓ Assessed ideas
- ✓ Made decisions
- ✓ Maintained focus

Result

The ----- attracted four new sponsors, leading to a 40% increase in revenue.



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5. Your questions

“Have you got any questions for us...?”

- Prepare a couple in advance
- Questions give away how much you know
- If you're stuck ask about: opinions, personal experience, future predictions
- Use their answers to help your decisions
- If you have had your questions answered, say so
- Don't ask too many if time has run out

6. Practicalities

- Consider travel, get there early
- Research who's interviewing you
- Think about appropriate dress
- What do you want to find out on the day?



7. Interview Skills



- 7% from WORDS
- 38% from VOICE TONES
- 55% from BODY LANGUAGE

Posture, eye contact

Emotional signals

Pace, intonation

SMILE! SMILE! SMILE!



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After the real thing...

- Review your performance
- Make a note of things to improve
- If unsuccessful, ask for their feedback
- Don't get discouraged – treat each interview as a chance to develop skills.
- Complete an interview feedback form for us to help future students!

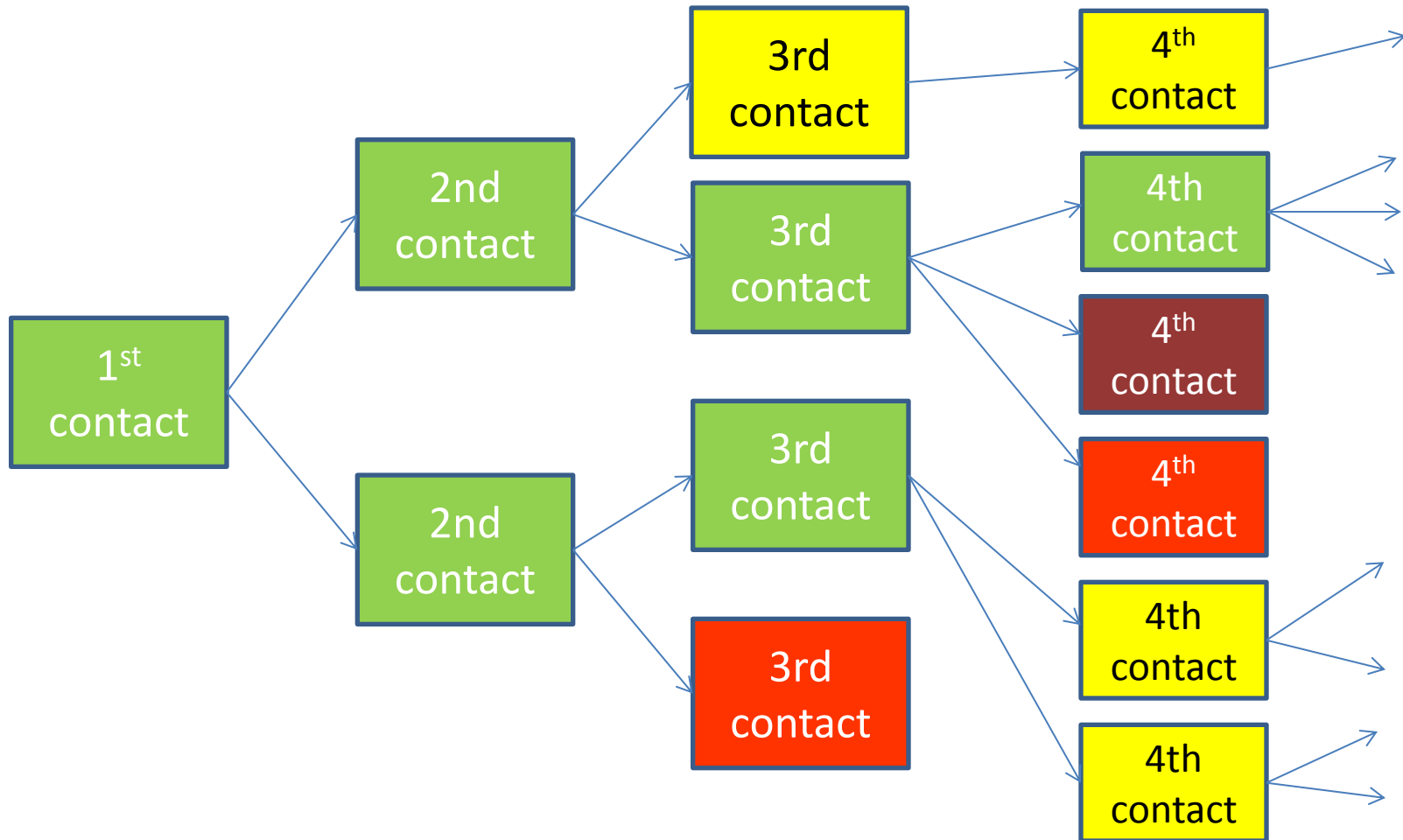


Making your own opportunity – network!

Getting contacts

- Identify who could give you contacts – start close – tutors, speakers, colleagues, alumni office, etc
- Go to them ‘knowing your stuff’ – what is it you actually *need or want to find out* and how can *they* assist?
- Face-to-face helps, phone is OK, and sometimes email is the only way...

Keep Networking...





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QUESTIONS

www.careers.ox.ac.uk

