

NHS Career Management Guide

Guiding you along the way



People Promise



Finding your way

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Making an Impact with your Cover Letter and CV

CV Building

There is a helpful CV Builder on the Careers Resource Portal to help take you through a step by step process. [Check it out here.](#)

What to consider before you start writing your CV?

Read the job description and use keywords: the content of your CV should be relevant to the job you are applying for, not the job you last had. Focus on the key skills, experience and personal attributes listed and relate them to your own. It may be helpful to look at adverts of similar roles to the one you are applying for to understand the language being used, however always ensure you are focused on the job description. **TIP: Focus on impact and quantify where you can.**

Basic Structure of a CV.

Your CV should be well structured and clear. This will make it easier for a recruiter to review it quickly and ensure they don't overlook any relevant information. **TIP: Fundamental information relating to the job should be presented, don't make the reader search for it.**

Key Points

- + You need to quickly grab the attention of the reader (i.e. the layout needs to be professional; tidy with clear headings; relevant points clearly highlighted) and have relevant content to be selected for interview.
- + An interviewer will look at your CV with cynical eyes, so be careful not to overstate your claims.
- + Be specific when talking about your skills, experience and achievements and relate them to the role the employer needs to fill.



Try not to include too much information and keep it to a maximum of two to three pages.

Checklist

- ✓ Is your CV easy to read, with simple clear layout and efficient use of white space?
- ✓ How many pages?
- ✓ Are your aspirations clear from your CV?
- ✓ Does your CV focus on achievements and how you have impacted others including your organisation?
- ✓ Use bullet points to highlight accomplishments
- ✓ Are these achievements quantifiable?
- ✓ Is it clear the impact that you made in each achievement?
- ✓ How clear is the scale that you have worked at?
- ✓ Is your CV selling you for the role you're applying for?
- ✓ Proof read and ask someone you trust to review your CV.

Personal details

Your personal details should always be included on your CV. Providing the correct level of information shows professionalism.

TIP: Including an online professional profile, such as LinkedIn can be helpful to employers and recruiters.

Personal Profile/Statement

A personal profile is a short, summary of your CV, a bit like the “blurb” you read on the back of a book you might be tempted to buy. The profile should encapsulate you, so the reader has an idea of who you are before they read the rest of your CV. It’s an opportunity to highlight your best points and make the employer want to read on, keep it short and use positive language. Aim for between 4-6 lines. **TIP: Tailor it to the role and avoid generic buzzwords.**

Career / Employment History:

Detail your employment history, starting with your current or most recent. **TIP: Make sure that any experience you mention is relevant to the job you’re applying for and back up your skills with facts or statistics where possible.** Making your experience tangible by using statistics will allow the reader to understand the size and scale of your role or project. Reference both the role responsibilities

you have undertaken, and achievements gained, when highlighting achievements focus on the feature, action, benefit model to add structure and ensure you select the most relevant achievements for the role you’re applying for.

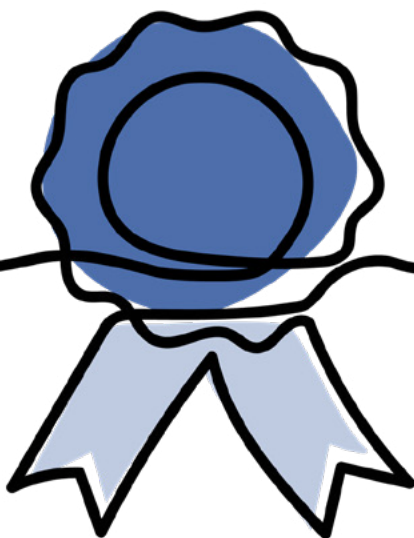
Education and Qualifications:

Give a summary of your educational and professional qualifications. **TIP: Include only the most relevant for the job and always start with your most recently gained educational qualification.**

Cover Letter

A cover letter is your chance to elaborate on your relevant skills and experience by highlighting your past accomplishments and explaining how they’re relevant to the position you’ve applied for.

Your cover letter needs to provide this information and leave the reader convinced that you are the right person for the role they have advertised. Your CV exists to progress you to interview and should represent an honest and authentic review of your achievements and experience for the role you are applying for, whilst also conveying your drive and determination to make an impactful first impression.





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- 1) Demonstrate your subject matter expertise
- 2) Demonstrate stakeholder influence and relationships
- 3) Demonstrate ability to manage multiple programmes (and always provide outcomes/metrics where you can).

Caroline Chipperfield
Director Leadership Development and Delivery

Building your LinkedIn Profile

Benefits of LinkedIn and how to build your Profile

Having a professional and informative LinkedIn page helps you manage your professional brand, keeping people updated on your career, who you are and also an insight into your values and interests.

www.linkedin.com

Once you have built your profile it will be visible to all LinkedIn users, however it's important to review the profile privacy preferences and settings, so you can control what appears on your profile and also what other people can see about your updates. [profile privacy preferences](#).

Benefits to having a profile on LinkedIn:-

- + Manage your professional brand, let people view your experience and qualifications and track your milestones i.e. new jobs, promotions)

- + See a range of job opportunities and search for roles – [find jobs on LinkedIn](#).
- + Build a range of networks across the NHS and the health and care sector to share best practise, hear about events and ask questions to other professionals in your sector.

References:

For further information please visit the LinkedIn website where you can find further tips and hints: <https://uk.linkedin.com/>

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Prepare, prepare, prepare!!! Do your research on the job and the organisation as well as its values and all of its metrics CQC, audit, Staff survey etc. Be your authentic self, smile and be positive.

Nicola McIntosh
Executive Director of People and Organisation Development,
Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust

Tips for creating a great LinkedIn profile

- + Add a **professional profile photo** – Ensure a professional profile photo is used, this will increase the credibility of your profile. Members with a profile photo on LinkedIn can get up to 21 times more profile views that members without a photo.
- + Your headline is created when you add your positions to your profile but you can re-write it to stand out and promote an area of expertise. You can **add various sections to your profile** to showcase your skills and expertise.
- + **Write a summary** - The 'About' section of your profile should express your mission, motivation, and skills to people who view your profile. Check out some **LinkedIn profile summaries that we love**.
- + Add all your relevant **work** and **education** experiences – You should keep the profile updated with all your professional experiences that align with your current career goals.
- + **Add relevant skills** – A list of relevant skills on your profile helps you showcase your abilities to other members, like your colleagues and recruiters. Once you add your skills, your connections can **endorse them**. If someone endorses your skills, it will increase the likelihood of you being discovered for opportunities related to the skills you possess.
- + **Request recommendations** from your connections - A recommendation is written to recognize or commend a connection, such as a colleague, business partner, or student. There's no limit to the number of recommendations you can request for. Once you **accept a recommendation** written by a connection, it becomes **visible to your network by default**.
- + Use your **profile strength meter** to gauge the strength of your profile.
- + There is further information available on **this course on LinkedIn Learning** where you can learn more about how to create a LinkedIn profile.



Top tips from LinkedIn/ NHS Jobs/Trac

Once you set yourself up with a LinkedIn profile you can easily search for jobs on LinkedIn via the homepage:



➤ Job search filters

Use the following filters on the job search results page to refine your results:

1. Location - You can specify a location for your job search by entering a location
2. Date Posted - By default, your job search results will show results from any time, but you can also choose to display jobs posted within the last 24 hours, the past week, and the past month.

➤ Saving Jobs of interest

When you search for a job on LinkedIn, you can save it at any time by clicking the Save button on the job details page.

To access your saved jobs:

Click Jobs at the top of your homepage - Click Saved Jobs above the search bar at the top of the page.

➤ Creating Job Alerts

You can create job alerts on LinkedIn to stay updated with new job postings that match your preferences. You can choose whether you want to receive these alerts on a daily or weekly basis through email, app notifications, or both.

➤ Search for a job on LinkedIn

1. At the top left of the job search results page, switch the Job alert toggle to On to create a job alert for your current search criteria.



2. In the Create search alert pop-up, select how often you'd like to receive alerts about new jobs on LinkedIn that fit those specific search parameters from the Receive alert dropdown.
3. Select how you'd like to get notified from the Get notified via dropdown.
4. Click Save.

➤ Apply for Jobs on LinkedIn

If you see a job that you're interested in as you search for jobs, you can easily apply for it on LinkedIn. Based on what the job poster chooses, you'll see an Easy Apply or Apply button.

Note: If you see the Apply button instead of the Easy Apply button, you'll be routed to that company's website or job board to continue the application process.

Once you apply for a job, you can't withdraw or modify your application submitted through LinkedIn. You'll need to directly contact the job poster through an InMail.

> NHS Jobs

Your [jobs by email](#) and [quick search](#) options are a good way to get started but if you want more focused results, the [advanced search](#) lets you search by job title, skills, location, salary, job type, staff group and employer (via the '[Employers list](#)').

You can narrow your search by using the refine your search options on the right-hand side of the search results page. This enables you to select more keywords, define or refine salary ranges or locations that will help you identify the closest matches to what you are looking for.

> Other hints and tips for searching

Imagine that the different search boxes are joined by an invisible 'and' so you will only get results that answer the criteria you have submitted.

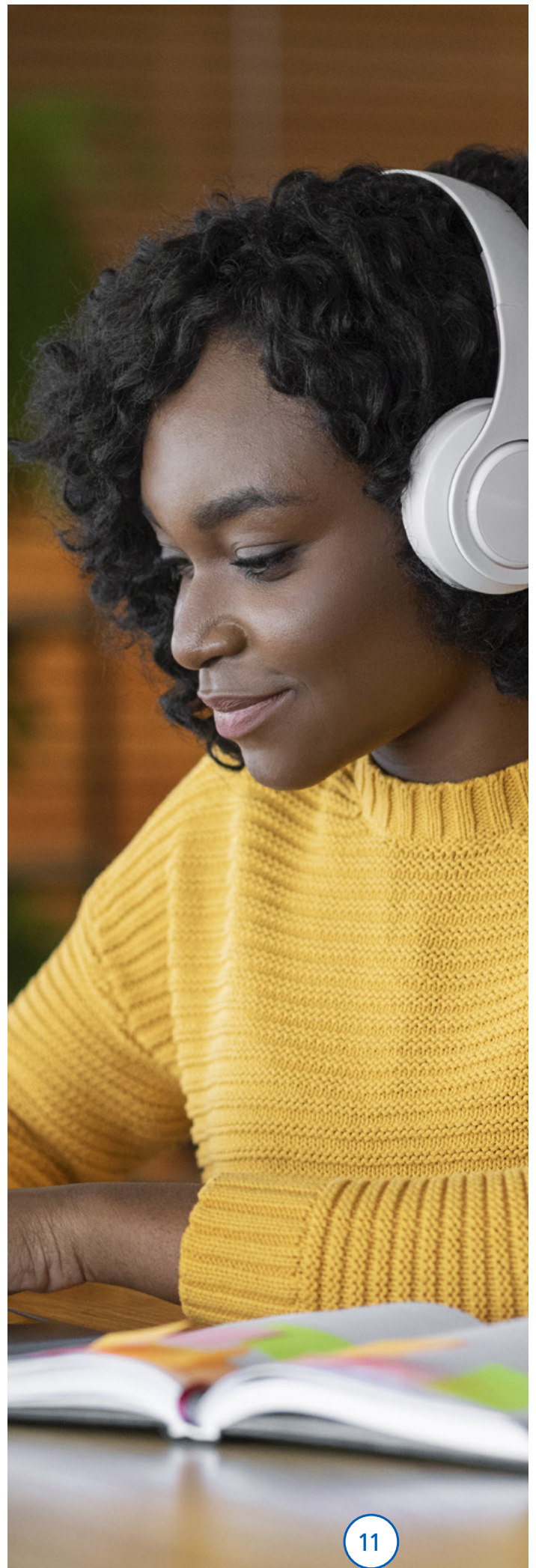
You can separate keywords with commas which basically function as an 'or'.

To search for an exact phrase, surround the keywords with quote marks".

If you do not want to specify too much, it is fine to leave some boxes blank. For example, you may want to use the staff group and salary options only.

Further information (Links)

- + For a step by step guide follow the link below: [Search for Jobs on LinkedIn | LinkedIn Help](#)
- + Narrow down your results using filters, keywords, and advanced search options - [Using Boolean Modifiers When Searching for Jobs on LinkedIn | LinkedIn Help](#)



Completing a Successful Application includes (NHS and Trac Jobs)

This overview has been designed to provide you with useful information and guidance on how best to approach completing a job application.

The application will require the completion of several role specific questions or a personal statement. Shortlisters as well as reviewing your relevant experience and qualifications will focus on the personal statement to confirm whether the applicant will be shortlisted for an interview against the essential and desirable criteria for the job.

Spend some time identifying what your key strengths are and examples in your current role and previous roles to show that you can meet the criteria for the job. You can identify these ahead of completing the application and use one solid example that will cover these as there will be a word limit on the personal statement.

When planning your personal statement Consider:

- + What is the main purpose of the role(s)?
- + Why is this role important to the organisation(s), the NHS and patients?
- + What are the key skills and experience required?

- + What personal qualities, values and behaviours are needed to make this role work most successfully and map your examples against the role requirements?

+ Top tip:

Ensure that you allow enough time to complete the application. It can take time to complete a quality personal statement and some roles may close early if they receive a high number of applications.

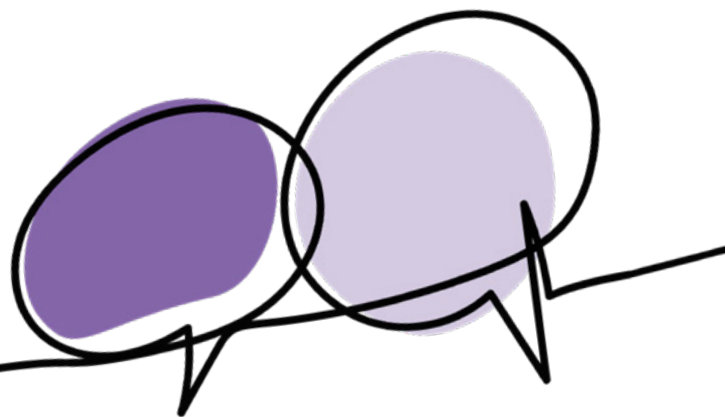
Further information (Links)

- + You can view further [help on completing the application form here.](#)
- + Practise and perfect your interview technique with the help of videos from leading industry professionals via [Be My Interviewer.](#)
- + For a more detailed overview on how to complete an application on NHS jobs please [click here.](#)



Once completed and before submitting consider the following pointers:

1. Try to put your application to one side for a while, overnight if possible, and then come back to it and review it with fresh eyes.
2. Is it brief, to the point and easy to read?
3. Ask a trusted friend or colleague for honest feedback – they may spot things you've missed or strengths you haven't recognised.
4. Present yourself professionally. Keep sentences and paragraphs concise.
5. Don't include irrelevant material that does not differentiate you or add to your narrative.
6. Remember: A spelling and grammar check is essential to create and maintain a positive first impression.
7. Cross-reference your application with the key skills, attributes and requirements of the role(s) you are applying for – have you adequately highlighted these?
8. Have you read and addressed all key criteria?
9. Don't be modest: Be honest and authentic but also confident about your experience, achievements and skills, readers will not have time to 'read between the lines' – make it easy for them to see how what you've done in the past demonstrates what you can deliver in the future.
10. Ensure you clearly articulate why you want the role (this will help to demonstrate your prior research and knowledge of the organisation).
11. Ensure you have highlighted not only technical skills and experience but also your values and leadership approach.



Next up:

Interviews

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As you progress through senior levels, I find there is less about technical competence, (that is assumed via application, position held, references etc) and interview panels are far more interested in you, leadership style, risk, governance and of course your own views and thinking on a range of matters!

Lisa Crichton-Jones
Executive Director of People and OD
Gateshead Health Foundation Trust



Interview and Presentation

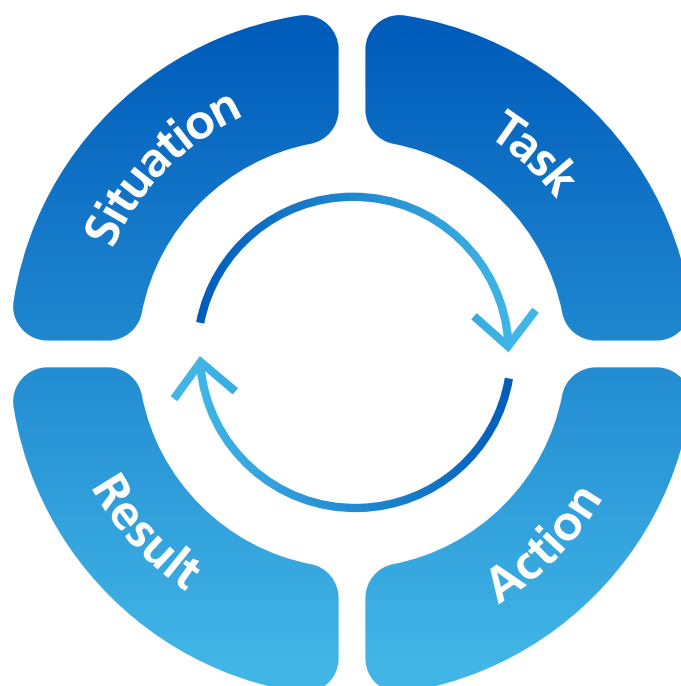
Hints and Tips

Before the interview:

1. Ensure you are aware of the organisation's key information, number of employees, strategic objectives, CQC reports and any USP etc.
2. Ensure you are aware of who is on the panel and their areas of expertise.
3. Consider the job description and requirements of the role you are applying for against your key values, skills, strengths, knowledge, and achievements.
4. Draft scenarios - think about the types of questions you may be asked based on the job description and construct your ideal scenario-based answers using a STAR model (see below for STAR model).
5. When preparing your scenario questions consider how you've added value to the organisation, system, patients, team, and others within a strategic and complex environment.
6. Consider examples that in the recent past which demonstrate how you meet the role criteria.
7. Ensure you've considered your vision for the role and the wider strategic context. You will need to be able to articulate clearly what your key priorities would be over the next 12 months and what impact you would hope to have if appointed.
8. Take your pre-prepared examples into the interview as a prompt.
9. Don't forget the practicalities – personal presentation, travel plans, parking, how you will get yourself in the right frame of mind and how you will handle any difficult questions?

STAR model:

Use this to prepare examples to demonstrate how you have succeeded before and will do it again.



On the day of the interview:

- + Remember, this is about you. Don't spend too much time setting up context – ask the interviewer if they have enough context and move on. What they want to know is who you are and what you will bring – spend the most time here.
- + Speak clearly, manage the pace of your response and what your body language might suggest.
- + Don't shy away from promoting yourself, use examples and leverage your brand and purpose.
- + Connect and build rapport with colleagues on the panel.
- + Demonstrate enthusiasm – show how you are genuinely interested in the role.
- + Ensure you actively listen and observe.
- + Avoid using jargon and set pieces – make the interview personal to you, showing who you are, what you did or would do in a situation and how you prefer to lead through others.
- + Demonstrate desirable leadership behaviours and attitudes.
- + If you are unclear about anything, ask for clarity.

 [Interview Tips With Amy Cuddy - YouTube](#)

Presentations

A presentation, whether to a large group of stakeholders or the interview panel, will often form part of your final panel process. Presentations are often done as a way to assess how you communicate as a leader, engage staff and stakeholders and how you cope under pressure.

When presenting always:

- + **Follow the Instructions** – Ensure you are clear on what you are expected to present.
- + **Prepare** – prepare and practice your presentation – do this with and without notes.
- + **Body Language** – Make sure you convey a positive image by using body language employers look for such as smiling, eye contact, looking at the person who asked the question when answering.
- + **Tonality** – Vary the tone of your voice to maintain the panels interest.

For helpful hints on presentations and confidence follow the below links:

 [TED Talk – The secret to public speaking](#)

 [Amy Cuddy - Tips for successful public speaking - Insights for Entrepreneurs](#)

Interviews and Leadership Competencies

Competency based interviews (CBIs) are also often known as structured or behavioural interviews. They generally consist of a number of targeted questions that require interviewees to describe a specific task or situation. CBIs work on the assumption that the best indication of an individual's future behaviour is their past behaviour.

Values based interviews (VBI) is an approach which selects employees on the basis that their individual values and behaviours align with the values of the NHS Constitution. It ensures that we recruit the right workforce not only with the right skills and in the right numbers, but with the right values to support effective team working and excellent patient care and experience.

Example interview Questions:

Tell us about a time you have led a large scale and complex change that delivered tangible results (What are the quantifiable numbers associated with this example).

In Health and Care, it is important that as leaders we focus on reducing health inequalities and increasing equality, diversity and inclusion. Give me an example of where you have demonstrated your commitment to improving equality, diversity and inclusion?

Can you give me an example of where you had to work across organisational boundaries with different stakeholders. What did you do and how did you go about building relationships?

What's the most significant and far-reaching organisation/system-wide strategy that you have led or implemented?

Tell me about a time you stayed true to your own values and demonstrated your integrity to others.

Video: Understanding the Core Competencies and Interview Guidance

This video articulates the main core leadership competencies and also provides more useful interview advice, including examples of how to structure interview answers using the STAR technique Link to the video: [here](#)

Suitability for the role will be assessed by asking questions about:

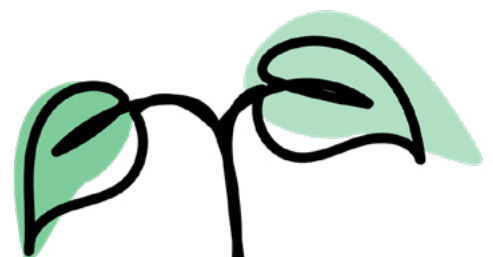
- + Past performance.
- + Learning from past behaviours.
- + Future adaptability to the post.
- + Knowledge and understanding of issues and challenges in relation to the post.
- + Values and behaviours.

'All roles will have their own set of competencies, its important you understand the competencies for the role you're applying for and take time to consider how you would evidence experience against each set of competencies'



Keep it simple. Rather than preparing answers to hundreds of potential questions, prepare memorable stories which demonstrate the qualities they are looking for. Using the STAR model can help focus on your skills and attributes rather than the complexities of the situation.

Fiona Rodden
Head of Talent, South East



Executive Interviews and Inclusive Leadership

Informal meeting with the Chief Executive

Prior to the final panel interview you may be invited to have a 1-2-1 meeting with the Chief Executive (assuming the appointment is an Executive Director role).

Stakeholder Engagement Sessions

The recruiting organisation may invite shortlisted candidates to attend an event where they have the opportunity to find out more about the role and organisation.

Site visits

You may be invited to visit the organisation's site accompanied by a potential future colleague, peer or member of the leadership team.

Presentation

For many panel interviews, candidates are asked to prepare a short presentation for the panel. The presentation is often on a topic that is specific to the challenges of the organisation, or that seeks to understand your likely approach to the role should you be successful.

+ Top tip:

If you are to make the presentation by PowerPoint, ensure the right equipment will be there to help you and technical support is on hand.

Psychometric assessments

You may be asked to undertake some sort of psychometric testing. They can take a variety of forms from ability tests

or personality profiles, through to in tray or situational exercises.

Assessment Centres

Assessment centres can be used for a variety of roles; these range in duration from a couple of hours to a full day. The assessments are designed around the values and the specific requirements of the role you are applying for. Assessment centres may use the following to assess your suitability to the role: situational judgement tests, group exercises, simulation exercise, verbal reasoning tests or numerical reasoning tests.

+ Top tip:

You may want to consider taking some practice psychometric/reasoning tests (available online) to familiarise yourself with the types of questions and the test structure.

"What would you do if..."

Having read a fictional scenario, typical of one an Executive Director would find themselves in, explain what you would do exploring:

- + What would you be thinking?
- + What would you want to know more about and why?
- + What action would you take?
- + What risks would you pay attention to?



Always have half a dozen pieces of work / experiences mapped out and fresh in your mind and be able to describe them for competency / scenario based questions; STAR; situation, task, action, review / reflection. As long as you recall and recount well, your experiences can be narrated and shaped for a variety of questions, 'tell me about a time you worked as a team?', 'tell me about a time you dealt with a difficult situation', 'tell me about a time you were faced with a difficult decision', 'tell me about a time you had to balance competing priorities'.

Lisa Crichton-Jones
Executive Director of People and OD
Gateshead Health Foundation Trust

Final Panel Interview

The panel interview itself is conducted by a range of senior stakeholders from within the organisation supported by one or more professional experts whose role it is to offer their view on each candidate's professional competence. Usually, each member of the panel will ask a question or cluster of questions on a particular topic of interest to them and of general relevance to the performance of the role.



Top tip:

Whilst each part of the process may be considered important usually the panel interview carries the most weight in the decision making process. The panel will usually decide if each shortlisted candidates considered "appointable".



Get in the zone. Everyone gets thrown in interviews, being judged makes people nervous. Consider what triggers you and what you think, feel or do in the moment before the moment before you lose it. Prepare tangible strategies to get your balance back, eg. having a sip of water, touching an object like your glasses or thumb. Practice your strategy in advance while you are calm and centred. In virtual interviews some find it helpful to put a photo of a person who regularly helps get you 'in the zone' near the webcam.

Fiona Rodden
Head of Talent, South East

Demonstrating your Inclusive Leadership

Compassionate and inclusive leadership builds connection across boundaries, ensuring that the voices of all are heard in the process of delivering and improving care. In order to nurture a culture of compassion, organisations require their leaders – as the carriers of culture – to embody compassion and inclusion in their leadership.

Where leaders model a commitment to high-quality and compassionate care, this impacts everything from clinical effectiveness and patient safety to staff health, wellbeing and engagement.

Inclusive cultures depend on inclusive leaders therefore you will need to ensure you showcase your knowledge and commitment to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agendas.

This may include:

- + The importance of allyship.
- + The importance of representation across the workforce.
- + Action and ownership of the agenda at all levels.
- + The importance of leadership accountability.





✓ Final checklist

- ✓ Do you fully understand the various parts of the assessment process?
- ✓ Do you have an elevator pitch?
- ✓ Do you have well prepared work/experience examples demonstrating your subject matter expertise that you can describe in detail for competency questions?
- ✓ Do you have tangible achievements and outcomes that are linked to the examples you provide that showcase impact you have had in specific areas?
- ✓ Have you carried out an organisational analysis? This may cover strengths, weaknesses, challenges, system related information, USP and any recent news articles.
- ✓ Have you researched your interview panel to develop a better understanding of their subject expertise and potential focus?
- ✓ Have you reviewed recent Board documents? This will help you to understand the context of the role and the challenges you will face (turnaround challenge, business as usual, process implementation).
- ✓ Have you rehearsed your presentation?
- ✓ If you are being interviewed virtually, have you checked the technology works on your computer?
- ✓ If you need a reasonable adjustment to be made for your interview, have you requested this?

Contact details

For further guidance regarding Talent Management and details of support offers available in your region please contact your regional talent team using the email documented below:

Regional NHSE/I Talent Team Contacts:

East of England: talent.eoe@england.nhs.uk

North West: talent.nw@england.nhs.uk

London: talent.london@england.nhs.uk

South East: talent.southeast@england.nhs.uk

Midlands: aspire.togethermidlands@nhs.net

South West: talent.sw@nhs.net

North East and Yorkshire:
talent.ney@england.nhs.uk

NHS IMAS Contact:

NHS IMAS provides interim management and consultancy support across the NHS for organisations requiring short or medium-term support and our pool members are given the opportunity to learn, develop and progress. They can offer their talent pool members a unique platform to access a variety of interim opportunities across all NHS organisations and specialities.

Contact: nhs.imas@nhs.net



NHS Careers Resource portal

The [Career Resources Portal](#) is an online tool for use by NHS Staff to help them step up in their career. The Careers Resources Portal is a collection of Career tools, planners, assessments, tests, e-learning, (career) management tools, CV builder, Interview info/learning and much more.

To access the portal, you must have an authorised account login which can be arranged via the Leadership Academy email address: talentcareerteam@leadershipacademy.nhs.uk



