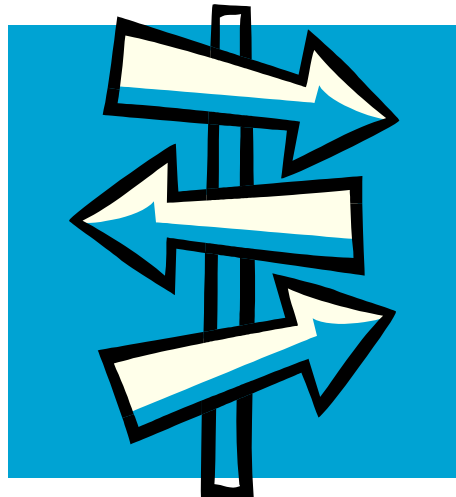


PREPARING FOR A CAREER CHANGE SELF-HELP PACK

For adults who are thinking about making a change of career

Produced by the IAG Gateway at Connexions West of England
Adapted from 'Windmills' career materials

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www.nextstepwest.org.uk

INTRODUCTION

WORKSHEETS AND SUMMARY SHEETS

This pack is designed as an interactive resource which will provide you with valuable insights about yourself and your situation. It is made up of a series of worksheets which will help you explore your existing skills and experience as well as understand your ambitions and motivation. It will also help you to start thinking about what you need to do to move yourself forward.

1. Your life experience
2. Your paid/unpaid work
3. Your qualifications – mind map and table format
4. What do you want from a job?
5. Your personal ingredients for success
6. Your working environment
7. Summary sheets

Helpful hints for completing these worksheets:

1. You can choose whether to complete all or some of the worksheets.
2. You are encouraged to put the answers from each worksheet you complete onto the summary sheet.
3. Each worksheet contains a completed example and a blank template for you to use.
4. You may need to make several photocopies of each template depending on your previous experience.
5. Allow about 30 minutes for each exercise.

1. YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCE

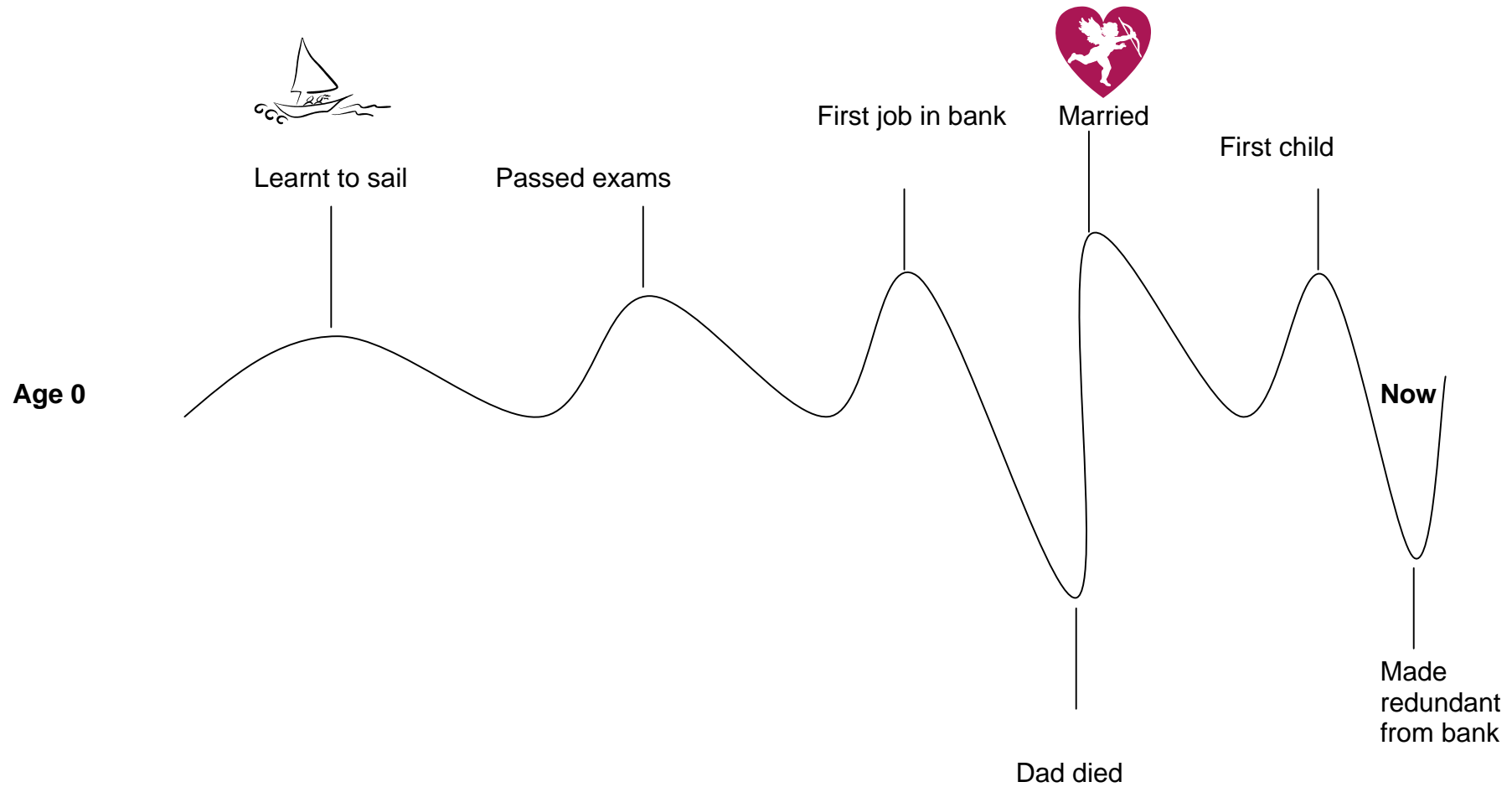
The purpose of this worksheet is to help you:

- Remember what you have done.
- Build on positive experiences.

To make the best use of this worksheet:

- First look at the example provided.
- Use the 'your life experience' worksheet to record all the significant moments of your life. Include what you are comfortable with, personal, educational and work related.
- Use colours, pictures or symbols to represent your memories
- Transfer the main learning points onto the summary sheet.

YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCE (EXAMPLE)



YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCE

Age 0

Now

2. YOUR PAID AND UNPAID WORK

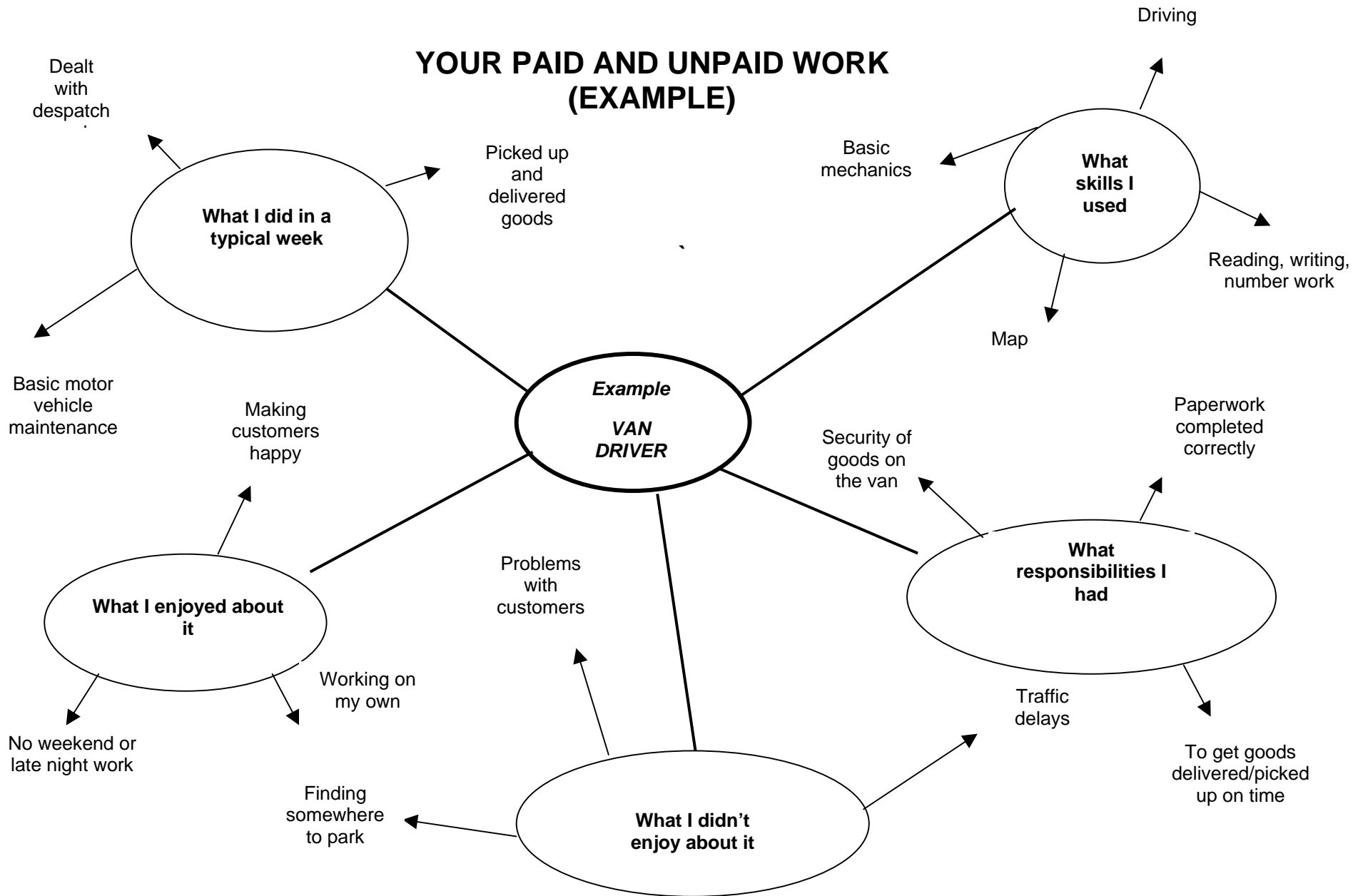
The purpose of this worksheet is to help you:

- Identify for a period of paid or unpaid work what you did; what skills you used; what responsibilities you had; what you liked and didn't like about it.
- Build up a clear picture of the skills you already have.

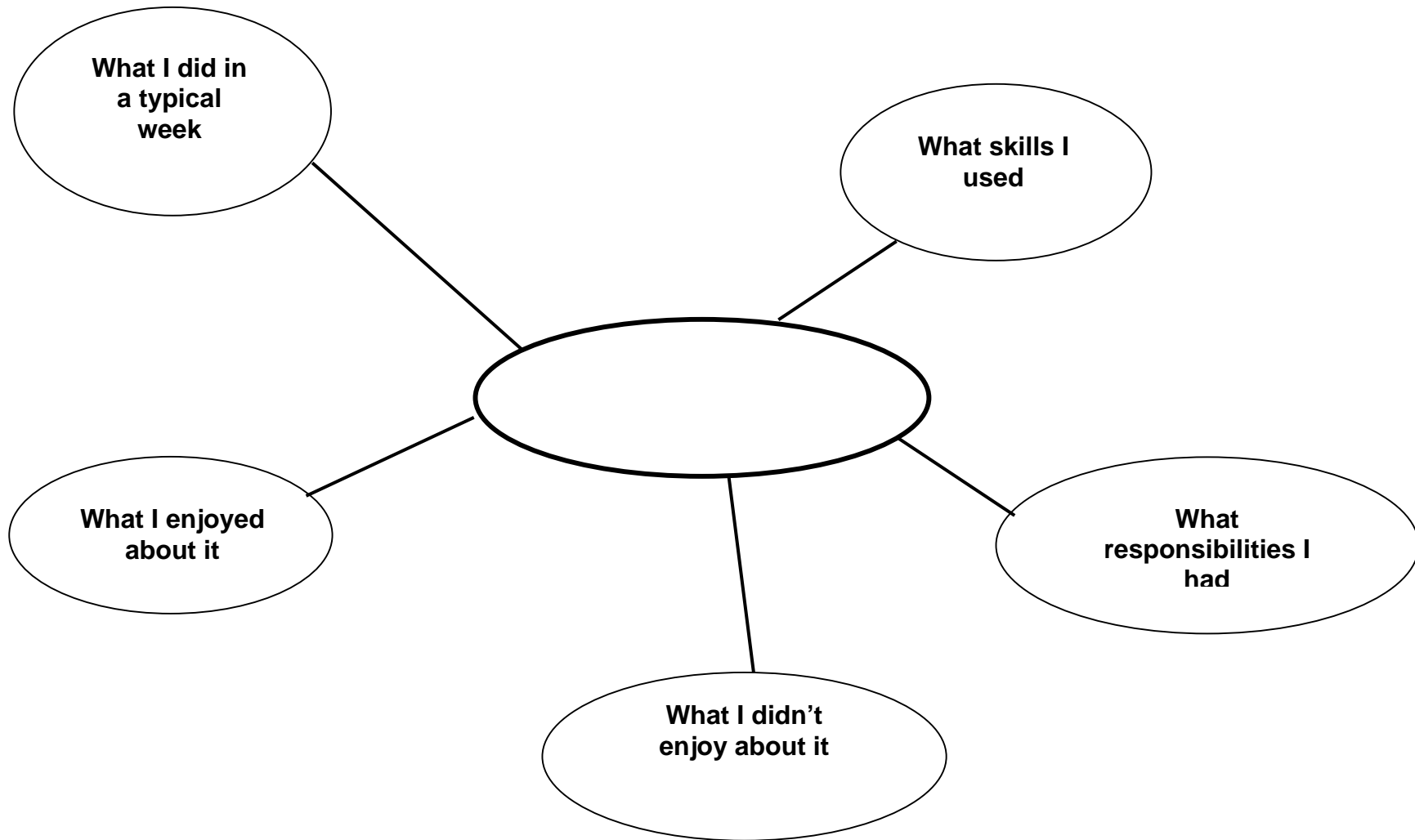
To make the best use of this worksheet:

- First look at the example provided.
- Start by clearly identifying a period of paid or unpaid work. Unpaid work includes housework and childcare. Put this in the centre of the diagram.
- Complete the boxes adding as many arrows as you need. Add more boxes if you want to.
- Don't leave anything out – it's important to build a complete picture.
- You may want to repeat the exercise for different periods of paid or unpaid work so that you can build up a better picture of your skills and the things you enjoy doing.
- Transfer your skills, responsibilities and what you enjoyed to the summary sheet.

YOUR PAID AND UNPAID WORK (EXAMPLE)



YOUR PAID AND UNPAID WORK



3. YOUR QUALIFICATIONS

Choose either the mind map or table format, whichever suits you best.

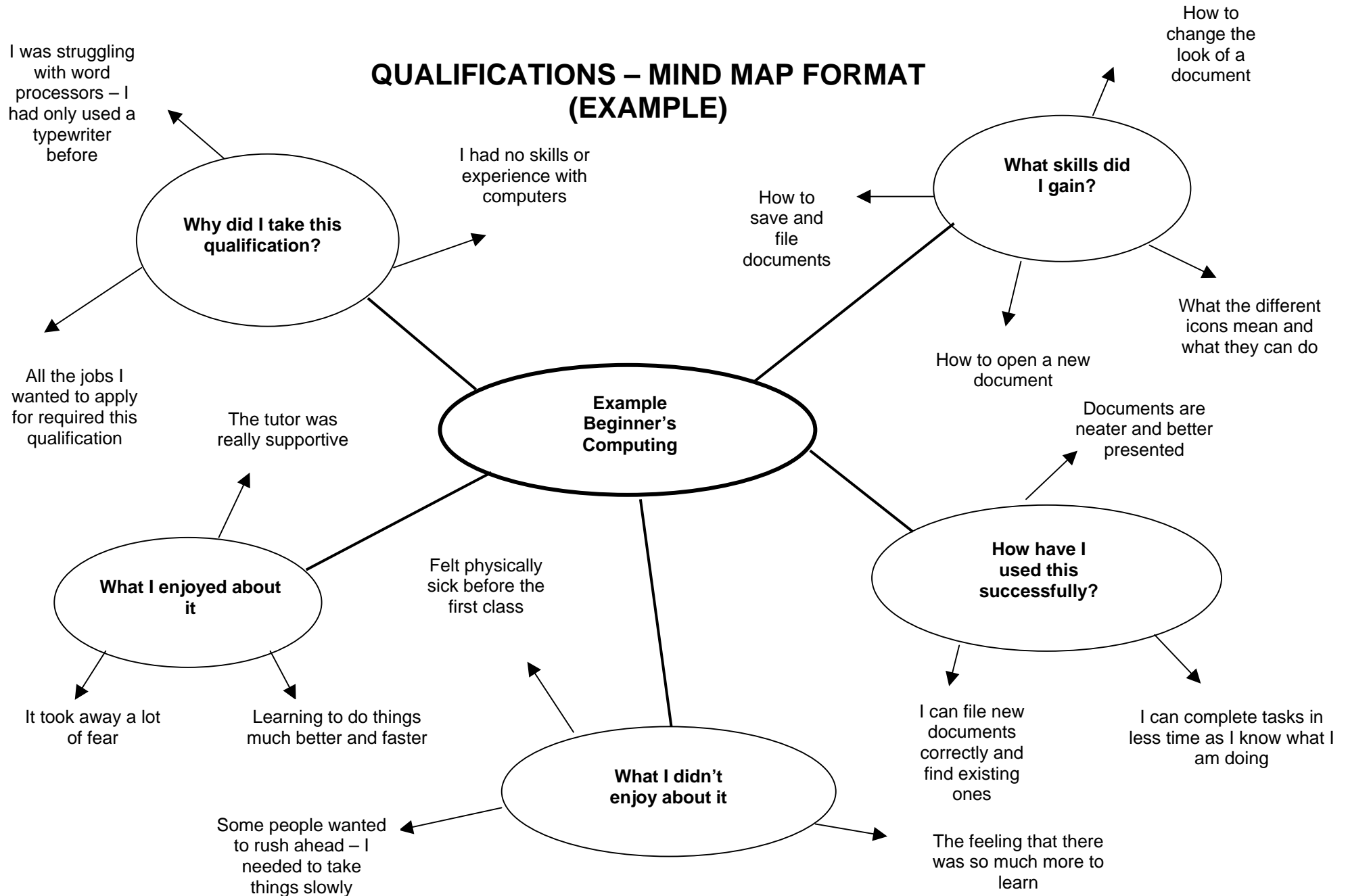
The purpose of this worksheet is to help you:

- Identify what you gained by taking a qualification.
- Build up a clear picture of the skills you have gained by taking qualifications.

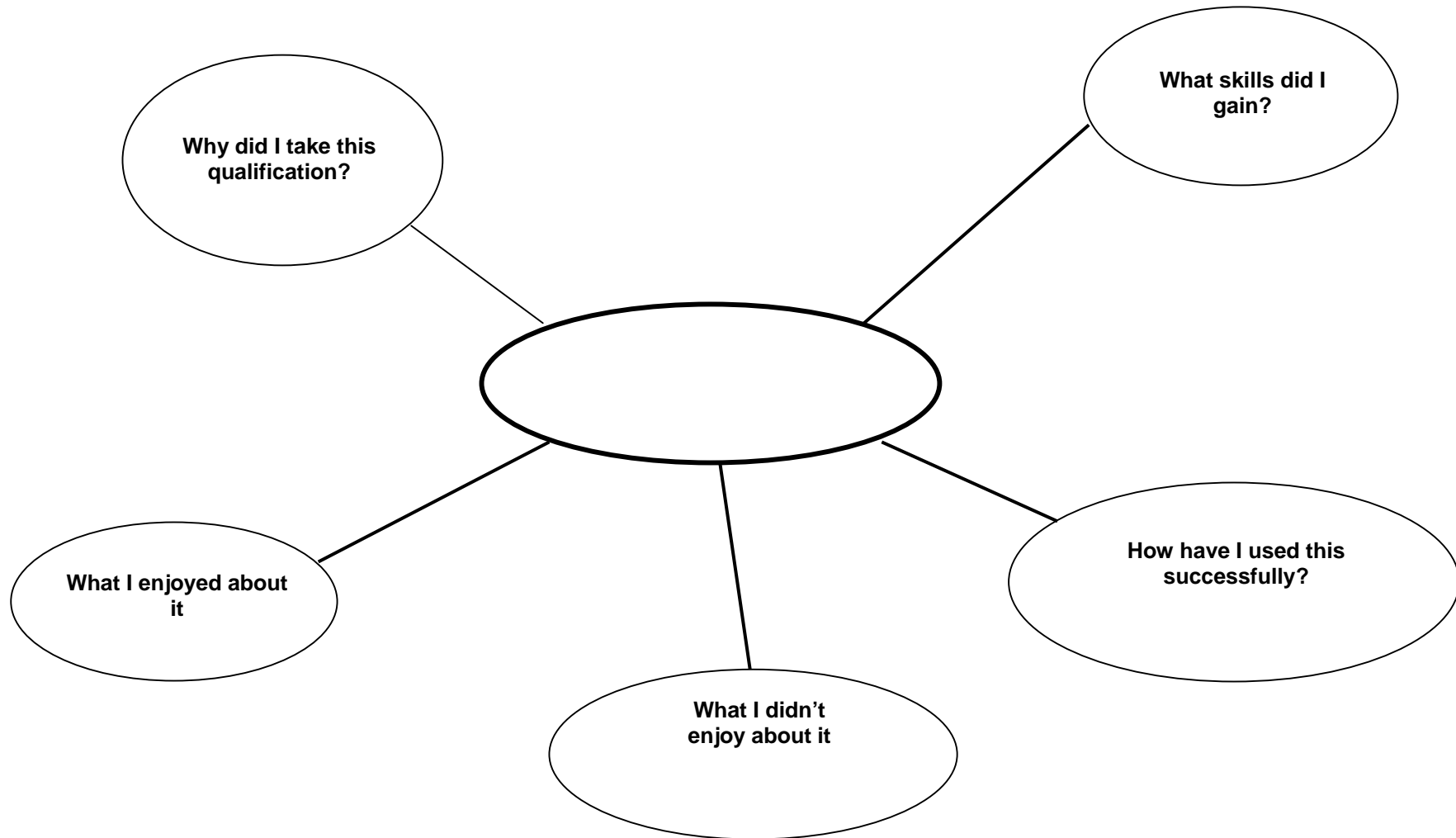
To make the best use of this worksheet:

- First look at the example provided.
- Use a fresh worksheet for each qualification.
- Put each qualification in the centre of the diagram. Complete the boxes using as many arrows as you need. Add boxes if you want to.
- Don't leave anything out – it's important to build a complete picture.
- Transfer your skills, what you enjoyed and how you have successfully used your qualifications to the summary sheet.

QUALIFICATIONS – MIND MAP FORMAT (EXAMPLE)



QUALIFICATIONS – MIND MAP FORMAT



QUALIFICATIONS – TABLE FORMAT (EXAMPLE)

Qualification	Why did I take this qualification?	What skills did I gain?	What did I enjoy about it?	What didn't I enjoy about it?	How have I used this successfully?
<p>Beginner's Computing</p>	<p>I was struggling with word processors – I had only used a typewriter before.</p> <p>I had no skills or experience with computers.</p> <p>All the jobs I wanted to apply for required this qualification.</p>	<p>How to save and file documents.</p> <p>How to change the look of a document.</p> <p>How to open a new document.</p> <p>What the different icons mean and what they can do.</p>	<p>The tutor was really supportive.</p> <p>Learning to do things better and faster.</p> <p>It took away a lot of fear.</p>	<p>Felt physically sick before the first class.</p> <p>The feeling that there was so much more to learn.</p> <p>Some people wanted to rush ahead – I needed to take things slowly.</p>	<p>Documents are neater and better presented.</p> <p>I can file new documents correctly and find existing ones.</p> <p>I can complete tasks in less time, as I know what I am doing.</p>

QUALIFICATIONS – TABLE FORMAT

Qualification	Why did I take this qualification?	What skills did I gain?	What did I enjoy about it?	What didn't I enjoy about it?	How have I used this successfully?

4. THINGS IN THE WAY OF YOUR GOAL

The purpose of this worksheet is to:

- Encourage you to identify the things in your life that are getting in the way of a specific goal. We often stop ourselves achieving our goals by not recognising the barriers and therefore, not doing something about them.
- Help you make a list of actions to reduce or remove the things that are currently getting in the way of your goal.

To make the best use of this worksheet:

- First look at the example provided.
- Start by clearly identifying what your goal is – be specific.
- List the broad areas that are the problems and then break these down into smaller, more specific issues.
- Write down what you can do to help overcome the issues – this could include asking for help.
- You may want to repeat the exercise if you identify more than one specific goal.
- Transfer your action points to the summary sheet and add a time when you will do these.

THINGS IN THE WAY OF YOUR GOAL (EXAMPLE)

**My current goal is
To return to work**

What's stopping me?	Why is this stopping me?	What can I do about this?
Lack of practical experience	I've been out of work for a long time.	Make the most of my previous experience and skills I already have. Arrange some suitable voluntary work Approach local companies for 'work experience' or 'work shadowing'.
Lack of confidence	Most of my time recently has been in the company of my young child not with adults.	Speak to the adults at the places I take my child. Prepare some things to talk about before I go up to someone.
Not able to read, write or use numbers very well	I know these skills will be needed by employers.	Contact learndirect Advice (0800 100 900) about basic skills courses.
Can't use computers	Every job seems to require computers these days.	Contact learndirect Advice (0800 100 900) about basic computing courses.
Fear of rejection or failure	I think I will make lots of mistakes.	Remember – this can happen to anyone. Be prepared to learn from experience.

THINGS IN THE WAY OF YOUR GOAL

My current goal is

What's stopping me?	Why is this stopping me?	What can I do about this?

5. WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM A JOB?

The purpose of this worksheet is to help you:

- Identify what type of working environment suits you.
- Narrow down what sort of employment would suit you.

To make the best use of this worksheet:

- Ask yourself how important each of the following statements is in your future job.
- Tick an appropriate box for each statement, only using the 'essential' box when you simply cannot do without it.
- Add to the list any other personally important statements.

- Revisit the list and think honestly:

How realistic is it to achieve all the 'essential' and 'very important' statements? For example, if you don't want to move geographically, there is no point in applying for jobs in another town.

- Keep a record of your finalised 'essential' and 'very important' statements on the summary sheet.

WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM A JOB?

Independence	Essential	Very Important	Important	Fairly Important	Not Important
Freedom to make my own decisions					
Working independently					
Freedom from organisational rules and constraints					
Ability to define my own tasks, schedules and procedures					
Pursuing an independent career on my own terms					

STABILITY & SECURITY	Essential	Very Important	Important	Fairly Important	Not Important
A clearly mapped-out career path					
Job that requires steady, predictable performance					
Long-term security and stability					
Working in a stable, well-known organisation					
Incremental pay and benefits based on length of service					

ENTERPRISE	Essential	Very Important	Important	Fairly Important	Not Important
Creating new organisations, products and services					
Building my own business					
Owning something developed from my ideas and efforts					
Producing things that people associate with me					
Financial success					

SENSE OF PURPOSE	Essential	Very Important	Important	Fairly Important	Not Important
Providing a service to help others					
Contributing to the wider community					
Dedication to a course of action					
Having a job of real value					
Making a difference in the world					

BALANCED LIFESTYLE	Essential	Very Important	Important	Fairly Important	Not Important
A balanced personal and professional lifestyle					
Flexible working hours and practices (able to work at home)					
Work that minimises interference with personal/family life					
Working close to home					
Sufficient time for pastimes, holidays and relaxing					

EXPERTISE & CHALLENGE	Essential	Very Important	Important	Fairly Important	Not Important
Developing a specialism to a high level of excellence					
Being recognised as an expert in the field					
Ability to use my special skills and talents					
Solving complex problems					
Regular challenges to stretch my abilities and skills					

REWARDS & RECOGNITION	Essential	Very Important	Important	Fairly Important	Not Important
Having a high standard of living					
Being recognised for my achievements					
Having a well paid job					
Being highly regarded by others					
Reaching a respected social status					

AUTHORITY & INFLUENCE	Essential	Very Important	Important	Fairly Important	Not Important
Responsibility for making major decisions					
Advancement up the organisational ladder					
Ability to influence, supervise, lead and control people					
Contributing to the success of my organisation					
Accountability for finances and resources					

6. YOUR PERSONAL INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS

The purpose of this worksheet is to help you:

- Think about the various ingredients that make up your ideal job.
- Identify the sort of organisation that suits you best.

To make the best use of this worksheet:

- Complete the exercises.
- Transfer your answers to the summary sheet.

TASKS & RESPONSIBILITIES IN YOUR IDEAL JOB

Can you identify the **five** main tasks or responsibilities in your ideal job? Do you prefer working with detail, ideas, people or practical things? What tasks give you a real buzz? Use the table below to record how much you like the tasks listed and if you think you are good at them.

Tasks	I like this task	I don't like this task	I think I am good at this task
Managing			
Communicating			
Creating			
Promoting			
Planning			
Organising			
Producing			
Inspecting			
Maintaining			
Advising			

YOUR PERSONAL INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS

PURPOSE – What is the main purpose of your ideal job?

Don't get hung up on job titles. Can you look beyond broad job titles such as marketing and personnel and identify their purpose in more detail? Think about how you see the main outcomes of your work and ask yourself what you hope to achieve and how this fits into your broad goals.

ORGANISATION –What type of organisation would you ideally like to work in?

Use the table below to record your preferences.

Type of organisation	Examples	Tick your preference
Voluntary/non-profit making		
Community-based		
Public sector		
Commercial		
Industrial		
Manufacturing		
Service		
Multinational		

ORGANISATION – What Culture?

It is vital to find the right culture for you. You need to target the kind of firm that will allow you to feel comfortable and confident at work. This will depend on such factors as:

- Style of management.
- Company values.
- Norms and expectations.
- Performance measurement methods.
- Family-friendly policies.

ORGANISATION – What Size?

Use the table below to record your ideal company size

Company size	Tick your preference
Small (1-49 employees)	
Medium (50-249 employees)	
Large (over 250 employees)	

It is worth looking at the pros and cons of working in a large or small organisation.

SMALL ORGANISATION	
Potential Advantages	Risks
Early responsibility	Lack of support and training
Chance to make significant impact	A different kind of career progression (fewer layers of management offering promotion)
Variety and challenge	Potential insecurity, short-term contracts
Positive role models	Low public image of small businesses but everybody knows big, blue-chip companies
Forced to become extremely self-reliant	Potentially fewer people to meet
Growth in new job opportunities	N/A

LARGE ORGANISATIONS	
Potential Advantages	Risks
Structured training and development opportunities	Small cog in a large wheel
Clearer career progression	Lower levels of overall influence and impact on the business
Ready-made support networks	Less immediate task variety
Competitive salary	Potential to get stuck in a rut
Potentially higher level of security	More impersonal
Higher public awareness and credibility	Higher chances of being underemployed

7. YOUR WORKING ENVIRONMENT

The purpose of this worksheet is to:

- Help you identify what type of working environment suits you.
- Help you narrow down what sort of employment might be of interest to you.

To make the best use of this worksheet:

- Tick all the factors that apply to you.
- Transfer your answers to the summary sheet.

YOUR WORKING ENVIRONMENT

What type of working environment energises you?	Tick those that apply
Pressurised	
Challenging	
Working outdoors	
Unstressed atmosphere	
Steady routine	
Office-based	
Home-based	
Analytical	
Well-structured	
Independent	
Project-based	
Working with people	
Ideas/creativity	
Autonomy/freedom	
Team-orientated	
Practical-hands-on	
Working with data/information/detail	
Travelling	

What type of learning environment do you work best in?	Tick those that apply
Active – chance to get actively involved	
Reflective – time and opportunity to sit back and think things through	
Pragmatic – chance to work practically with things	
Theoretical – opportunities to look at underlying principles and concepts	

What type of working relationship do you enjoy?	Tick those that apply
Relaxed	
Formal	
Informal	
Independent	
Team-based	
Professional	
Pressurised	

What type of working hours do you want to work?	Tick those that apply
9 - 5	
Flexible	
Part-time	
Shift work	

What other characteristics are important to you?

SUMMARY SHEETS

Use this sheet to record your answers from the exercises on the previous pages.

Life Experience	
Main learning points	
Paid/Unpaid Work I Have Done Before	
Skills	Responsibilities
What you have enjoyed	
Qualifications	
Skills	What you enjoyed
How you have used your qualifications successfully?	
Things in the Way of Your Goal	
What actions do you need to take?	When will you do this?

SUMMARY SHEETS

Your Personal Ingredients for Success	
Five tasks in your ideal job:	What type of organisation would you ideally like to work in?
What size of organisation would you ideally like to work in?	
What Do You Want From A Job?	
‘Essential’	‘Very Important’
Working Environment	
What type of working environment energises you?	
What type of working environment do you work best in?	What type of working relationship do you enjoy?
What type of working hours do you want to work?	What other characteristics are important to you?