

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT GUIDE



Top Tips for Carers

- **Check out our online course!** You can find our free 'Caring and Working' course which will provide you practical tips and information, to enroll, visit here: <https://learninghub.carersinbeds.org.uk/>
- **Check out your local support services** that can help you with specialist employment support, training or volunteering. Read our helpful list of partners.
- **Speak to your employer.** Download our template letter and send it to your employer, make them aware of your caring role and ask them to add this to your HR record.
- Some employers will not be aware of an unpaid carer. Carers in Beds provides a **'Supporting Carers in the Workplace' digital course** on our online hub. You can direct your colleagues and manager to this so they are aware of caring and what could be put in place for carers and how best to support you.
- **One step at a time.** As a carer it can be hard to focus time on yourself let alone putting together a CV, applying for jobs or just finding out about how your finances might change if you want to return to work. Our support worker team can help you put in a manageable plan or direct you to our Welfare Rights Advisor to empower you to achieve your employment goal.
- **Visit our national partner websites** [Carers UK](#) and [Carers Trust](#) for more information.



Top Tips for Writing a CV

- CV is positive, sells skills and qualities required for the job goal
- Name stands out from other information (increase font size and make bold)
- Address and contact details are present, appropriate, and up to date
- Appropriate amount of white space to make the CV look complete but not unreadable.
- Appropriate font type and size e.g., Arial, Calibri, and size 12
- Words used in CV are the same as the ones the owner uses.
- Spelling, punctuation, and grammar are correct
- No longer than 2x A4
- Consistent formatting e.g., One font type and colour with headings slightly larger and/or bold/underlined
- Include only last 10 years of employment history (unless position held before is the relevant for the position you are applying)

Links that you may find useful:

Chronological CV: <https://standout-cv.com/cv/chronological-cv-example>

A little help with transferable skills: [TransferableSkillschecklistFINAL.pdf \(illinoisworknet.com\)](#)



Top Tips for Writing a Cover Letter

- 1. Introduce Yourself:** It allows you to go beyond the factual information on your CV and express your enthusiasm for the position.
- 2.Highlight Relevant Skills and Experience:** This is a chance to tailor your application to the specific requirements of the position
- 3.Explain Employment Gaps or Career Changes:** This helps the employer understand your career timeline.
- 4.Express Enthusiasm and Interest:** You can demonstrate to the employer that you've done your research and are genuinely motivated to work for them.
- 5.Address Specific Job Requirements:** This helps to make a stronger case for your candidacy.
- 6.Demonstrate Communication Skills:** This is a chance to showcase your writing abilities.
- 7.Personalise Your Application:** This can make a significant difference in standing out from other applicants who may submit generic applications.
- 8.Request an Interview:** The covering letter typically concludes with a call to action, expressing your desire for an interview.



Interview Types

Traditional/Structured Interview:

Most common type of interview. Helps assess a candidate's qualifications, experience, and suitability for the role.

Phone or Video Interview:

Conducted remotely via phone or video conferencing. Common for initial screenings or when distance is a factor.

Second or Follow-Up Interview:

Provides an opportunity for more in-depth discussions and interactions. May involve meeting with higher-level executives or team members.

Behavioural Interview:

Candidates are asked to provide specific examples of how they handled situations in the past. Aims to evaluate skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, and communication.

Situational Interview:

Presents hypothetical scenarios related to the job. Assesses problem-solving skills, decision-making, and the ability to apply knowledge to practical situations.

Case Interview:

Common in consulting and analytical roles. Candidates are presented with a specific business scenario or problem to solve. Assesses analytical skills, problem-solving abilities, and strategic thinking.

Technical Interview:

Common in technical and IT roles. Focuses on assessing a candidate's technical skills, coding abilities, or proficiency with specific tools and technologies.

Panel Interview:

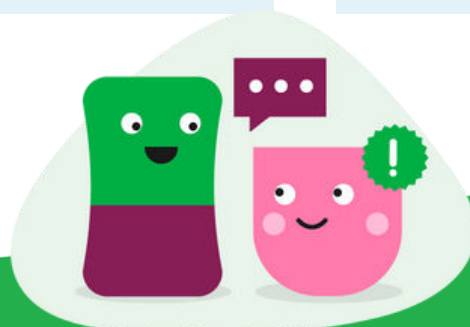
Involves multiple interviewers. Allows for a comprehensive assessment from various perspectives.

Group Interview:

Multiple candidates are interviewed simultaneously. Facilitates observation of how candidates interact with each other.

Assessment Centers:

A comprehensive evaluation process that may include various activities such as group exercises, presentations, role-playing, and tests.



Top 5 Interview Q&A

Tell me about yourself.

Provide a concise and focused overview of your professional background, highlighting relevant experiences, skills, and accomplishments. Tailor your response to align with the job you're applying for and end with a statement about why you're excited about the opportunity.

What is your greatest strength?

Choose a strength that is relevant to the job and back it up with specific examples. For instance, instead of just stating you're organised, you could say, "One of my greatest strengths is my organisational skills. In my previous role, I implemented a new project management system that increased team efficiency by 20%."

What is your greatest weakness?

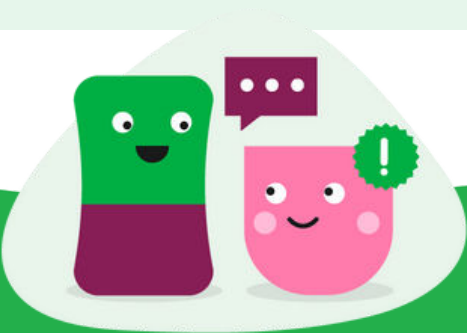
Be honest but strategic. Choose a weakness that is not directly related to the core requirements of the job, and discuss the steps you've taken to improve or manage that weakness. This shows self-awareness and a commitment to personal and professional growth.

Why should we employ you?

Highlight your unique qualifications, experiences, and skills that make you an ideal fit for the position. Discuss how your strengths align with the company's needs and values. Emphasise your enthusiasm for the role and your commitment to contributing positively to the team and organization.

Describe a challenging situation you faced at work and how you handled it.

Use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to structure your response. Clearly describe the situation or challenge, outline the task at hand, explain the actions you took to address the challenge, and conclude with the positive results or outcomes. This demonstrates problem-solving skills and your ability to handle adversity.



Employment Support Services Across Bedfordshire

Provider	Service offered	Who for / Eligibility	Link
Richmond Fellowship	Bedfordshire Employment Service Support & advice to retain/regain employment (or voluntary work, education or training) In work support (e.g. with grievances, disciplinarys)	People aged 18+ living with or recovering from mental ill health in Central Bedfordshire only	www.richmondfellowship.org.uk
Bedford Borough Council	Supported Employment Service (from job search to on-the-job support) Advising employers	People with learning disabilities (and a limited pan-disability service) in Bedford	https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adult-social-care/community-teams/learning-disabilities/supported-employment
Bedford Borough Council	<u>Jobs Hub 1:1 advice & support; workshops</u>	Anyone who lives in Bedford Borough	https://www.bedford.gov.uk/jobs/jobs-hub
Jobcentre	Work Coach who can help someone to get back into the workplace	People with a health condition or disability that affects their ability to work	https://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus
ELFT	Personalised advice and support	Anyone in contact with a care coordinator in the mental health team (only service users not carers) We work with them and signpost for cared for person – called IPS.	https://www.elft.nhs.uk/services/bedfordshire-and-luton-employment-service
Stepping Stone / Amicus Trust	Bedfordshire employment and education support	The Stepping Stones Education and Employment project can support homeless adults in gaining basic skills, learning independent living skills and also working towards getting into employment.	https://www.amicustrust.org/stepping-stones
Central Bedfordshire Council	1:1 support Bedfordshire Employment & Skills Academy (3 hour workshop)	Anyone aged 19+ who lives in Central Bedfordshire or Bedford Borough	https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/90/adult_learning
Shaw Trust	One to one employment and self-employment support	Only for those currently not in work	www.shawtrust.org.uk



Employment Support Services

Across Bedfordshire cont.

Noah Academy	Work experience and training for those that are homeless, on low income or unemployed. Their training and employment provision seek to address poverty by helping people to realise their full potential. It uniquely combines welfare services with work experience and volunteering opportunities in our social enterprise, to offer participants a complete package of support to guide them towards and into work.	Eligibility criteria: You must be unemployed or on a low income Aged 19 or over Currently living in Central Beds or Bedford You must have a National Insurance Number	https://noahenterprise.org/noah-academy/courses/central-beds-and-bedford-courses/
Be Positive (deliver courses on behalf of Bedfordshire Employment and Skills Service BESS)	A local training provider founded in 2011. They provide online and face-to-face classroom teaching, Coaching and Mentoring on a range of topics designed to help you feel good, feel optimistic and find a great career or job. We believe that positivity and optimism is central to success and we embed this approach into all our support and teaching.	They are currently funded by Central Bedfordshire Council to DWP customers, but still offer 3 week courses for those living in Bedford.	https://www.bepositivenow.co.uk OR https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/besa
Beds Rural Communities Charity (BRCC)	Beds RCC provide many different services that may support you while you are looking for work or if work is impacting your health and wellbeing. Your local social prescriber or community/village agent will be able to support you.	Must live in Bedford or Central Bedfordshire. You can self refer online	https://bedsrcc.org.uk/
Recovery College	Bedfordshire and Luton Recovery College is part of the Bedfordshire Mental Health Academy which is a formal partnership with East London Foundation Trust and the University of Bedfordshire. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their courses and workshops focus on mental health well-being and recovery. • They are delivered by people with lived experience and professional experience. 	The college is open to any adults who live or work in Bedfordshire and Luton.	https://www.elft.nhs.uk/services/bedfordshire-and-luton-recovery-college
Community Catalysts	They help people and communities across the country to use their talents to start and run small enterprises and community businesses that support and care for other local people. They also keep a directory of the small business called 'Small Good Stuff' - some of these business provide respite.	Only available in Central Bedfordshire	https://www.communitycatalysts.co.uk/

