



Queen Mary  
University of London

School of English and Drama

**Careers and Enterprise**

# Workshop 3: Presenting yourself to others

Charlotte Brown – February 2022

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# How are you feeling about life after QM?





## Objectives for today

- A reminder of the **transferable skills** you are building through your studies and why they matter
- Exploring how to **express your skills**:
  - on your **CV**
  - in **cover letters**
  - in **interviews**
- Looking at **networking** and how to present yourself
- Highlighting **ongoing support** available from **Careers & Enterprise**

# EAST

EAST is the Queen Mary student career journey, and is designed to help you prepare for life after graduation, whether that be work, study, or launching an enterprise.

- **Explore** your career options
- **Acquire** experience
- **Show** your skills and experience
- **Tell** us your stories





# Skills developed studying English

- Communication
- Time management
- Influencing and persuasion
- Independent working
- Organisation & planning
- Reasoning and judgement
- Critical thinking
- Research skills
- Analytical skills
- Presentation skills
- Attention to detail
- Theoretical understanding
- Remote working
- Resilience



# Why do these skills matter?

These are classic 'transferable skills':

- skills developed in one situation which can be transferred to another situation. They are also called competencies.
- 82% of leading graduate recruiters do not mind WHAT you studied! They are recruiting for skills & potential.



# Your CV is...?





# Your CV is...

- A **marketing document** that demonstrates you are the ideal
  - Tailor your CV to each application
  - Maximum two sides of A4
- Focus needs to be:
  - **What does the employer want?**
  - **How can I show them what they want?**
- **Not** *how can I fit everything I have ever done on to two pages!*







# There is no such thing as a perfect CV!

What you include on your CV, its length, and what it looks like, will depend on:

- The job and sector you are applying to;
- What the employer most wants to see.

Some **areas to cover** include:

- Contact details
- Education
- Work experience
- Other experience (e.g. volunteering, societies)
- Interests





## Some top CV tips

When including your work/other experience, make sure that you:

- Give a short line of context.
- Use positive, active language:
  - “**Volunteered** to take on a mentoring role supporting fellow students”
- Use punchy **bullet points**, not long sentences



## Some top CV tips

- Quantify contribution
  - ***“Consistently exceeded weekly targets at part-time role; developing a new organisational system reduced admin burden by half.”***

### Penguin Random House - Editorial Assistant, Viking

- Enthusiastic self-starter and avid reader.
- Interested in engaging with authors, the text, and publishing to a wide audience.
- Strong administration and organisational skills.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Meticulous attention to detail.





# Cover letters are...?





## Cover letters are...

- An **opportunity** to show an employer why you are a great candidate for their role.
- A means to get across to the recruiter:
  - Why you want to work in their **organisation**
  - Why you would like that particular **role**
  - Why **your** skills and experience make you the right candidate.
- Not longer than one side of A4.





## A cover letter example

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

“I have excellent **communication skills**, which have been developed through both my work in customer service, working with a large range of clients, and my English degree at Queen Mary, University of London. Through my studies I am highly skilled in analysing and communicating my thoughts and opinions on literature and its wider context both in discussion and in writing.”





## Interviews are...





## Interviews are...

- An **achievement** to be celebrated!
- A **confidence boost** – the employer wants to hear more about you
- Another opportunity to show you're a great candidate
- A chance to get to know more about the organisation – and whether you want to work for them!







# Video interviews



- Approach preparation in the same way as an in-person interview
- Make sure you keep your energy focused towards the screen:
  - **Looking in the camera** will feel like eye contact to the interviewers
  - Looking away from the screen may look like you are reading notes
- Make sure you have good lighting, and that your background is professional.
- <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/interview-tips/video-interview-tips>



# Types of interview questions

## Motivation questions

These are focused on your interest:

- Why would you like this role?
- What interests you about this company?

## Strengths

The interviewer wants your honest reaction to better understand you as a person:

- What do you consider a weakness?
- What energises you?

## Competency

Questions focused on skills or competencies:

- Tell me about a time when you...



# Showing your skills in interviews

- The **STAR technique** is a great tool for answering competency questions
- **S = Situation**  
Give a brief overview of the context
- **T = Task**  
What you needed to do
- **A = Action**  
What **you** did  
Spend most of the answer talking about this
- **R = Result**  
The outcome of your actions





## A STAR example

- Strong administration and organisational skills.

- **S = Situation**

“In my second year of university I was working part-time for Bulb as a Customer Service Advisor alongside my studies when lockdown started and I couldn’t go to the office any more.”

- **T = Task**

“I had to rapidly adapt to remote working, and organise my time in order to make sure I was delivering on all my commitments.”

- **A = Action**

- **R = Result**



# Networking





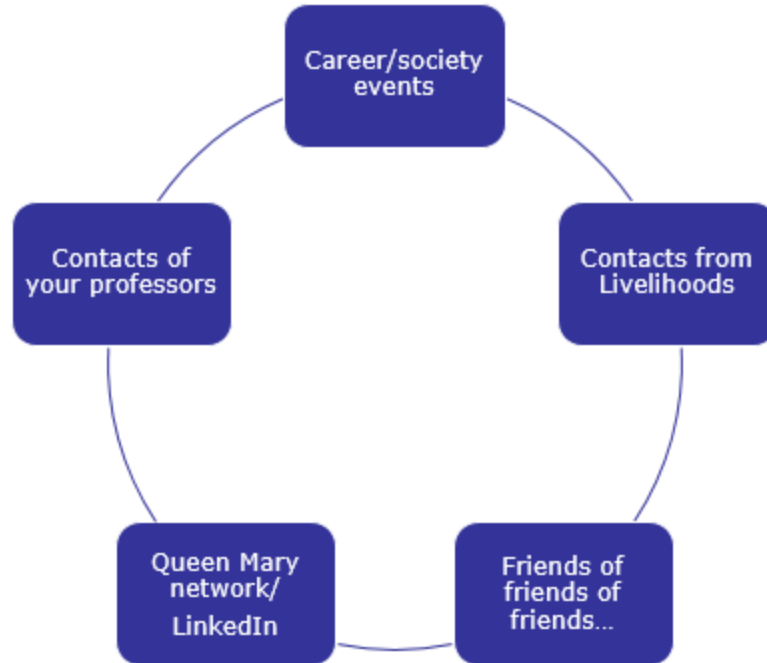
## Networking is...

- A conversation with a purpose.
  - A means of learning more about a role, sector, or organisation from someone with experience.
  - An opportunity to be curious.
  - A way to make connections.
  - Easier with practice.
- **Networking isn't...**
    - A competition you can win or lose.
    - About taking advantage of people!
    - One-directional.





# Your network sources





# Networking and presenting yourself

When you have the opportunity to network:

- Be aware of what you'd like them to know about you, and how you can get it across.
- BUT the aim is to **listen more than talk!**
  - What would you like to know? E.g.
    - How did they get started in their career?
    - What kind of skills are needed in their profession?
- **LinkedIn**
  - Make sure it is up to date and matches your CV.
  - Follow companies that interest you.
  - Personalise your connection request invites.







## What next?

- Think about your skills, and the evidence you have for them
  - Ensure they are included in your CV!
  - Consider how you might include them in a cover letter
- Consider making some notes about your experiences for use in future interviews
  - **Don't make a script to memorise!**
- Think about your network
- Book a Careers appointment!

# Our Services in Careers and Enterprise

- **Appointments**
  - Guidance
  - Application
  - Practice Interviews
- **Events**
  - Careers Fairs
  - Workshops
  - Sector-related events
  - Alumni panels
- **Information and resources**
  - Industry guides
  - Application guides
  - CV Builder
- **Programmes**
  - Student Consultancy Project
  - QTaster
  - QMentoring
- **Opportunities**
  - Careers Hub job listings
  - QTemps agency
  - Internships
- **Enterprise**
  - Appointments
  - Events
  - Funding

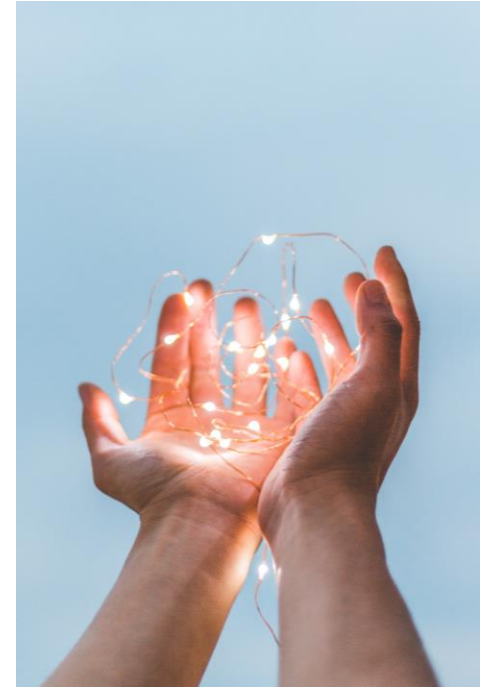


Photo by Diego PH on Unsplash



## SED Alumni Panel Events – Book now!

**The Next Chapter: English Alumni Careers Panel - Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March - 5.30pm**

<https://qmul.targetconnect.net/leap/event.html?id=9491&service=Careers+Service>

**In the Spotlight: Drama Alumni Careers Panel - Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March - 4pm**

<https://qmul.targetconnect.net/leap/event.html?id=9505&service=Careers+Service>

These online career events will give you the opportunity to hear SED graduates career journey and experiences, and gain advice about actions you can take now to build your career.



# Contacting Careers & Enterprise

- **Careers and Enterprise**
- **WG3, Queens Building, Mile End Campus**
-  020 7882 8533
-  [careers@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:careers@qmul.ac.uk)
-  @qmcareers
-  @qmcareers
-  [facebook.com/qmcareers](https://facebook.com/qmcareers)
-  [www.qmul.ac.uk/careers](http://www.qmul.ac.uk/careers)



Photo by marianne bos on Unsplash

**Thank you**



**Queen Mary**  
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