

Employable You

Decisions, decisions

You're in school right now and you know there is a whole world out there beyond education. Some people find it **scary**, some find it **exciting** and some...well, **haven't started to think about it** yet.

Which one are you? Whatever you answered, the fact is, it is ok.

Students in full time education are loaded with choices and **decisions** to make. Perhaps it is choosing your subjects or deciding if you should go to sixth form, college or an apprenticeship.

A job used to be a job for life

Back in the olden days, people used to leave school and go to work. They would work until retirement age and then take a pension.

The average number of careers a person has in their working life now is – **seven**.

Recent studies also show that students who are starting secondary school next academic year will see careers that don't even exist today. The world is changing so quickly!

So what does this mean? It means that the choices you make today are important but it is ok to change direction...and the chances are you will. Speak to as many adults as you can and ask them if what they are doing today is what they thought they would be doing when they were at school?

Traditional values and modern day options

This is an example of how a working life used to look:

GCSEs —————> **A Levels** —————> **Degree** —————> **Career** —————> **Retire**

Try looking at what these words mean for modern day options:

Business Opportunity **Self Employed** **Entrepreneur** **Investor**

More and more people are working for themselves, looking at home based businesses and investing money. A good recommendation is to read *Rich Dad, Poor Dad for Teens* by Robert Kiyosaki to find out more.

The difference between school and work

We surveyed 100 teenagers who had recently began apprenticeships and asked them what is the main difference between school and work?

Top answers included more responsibility and different independence in the work place. Of course, earning money and working more hours was popular as was working with people of different ages.

How Can You Build Responsibility At School?

You have the ability to respond and build your **life skills** for the future today. On the next page is a list of life skills that employer look for in new apprentices:

Communication Skills	Numeracy & Literacy	Teamwork
Reliable	Confidence	Maturity
Enterprise & Initiative	Problem Solving	Independent Thinking
Working Under Pressure	Hard-working	Personal Awareness & Attitude

So how can you get these **life skills**? Simple, start working on yourself today!

Let's take the example of a paper round, what **life skills** can you get?

Getting up at 6:00am would need someone **reliable, hard-working and a good attitude whilst showing maturity.**

Another example, babysitting. If you look after someone else's children this would require someone who is **mature, reliable able to work under pressure and with show initiative.**

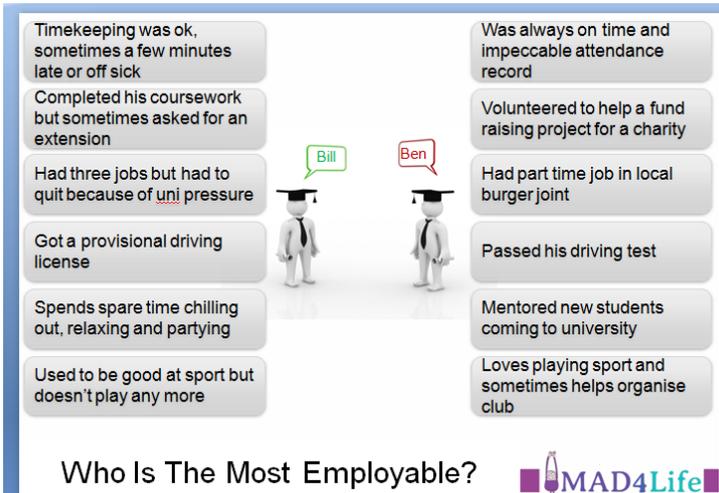
You can see how easy it is to add life skills to your own profile very quickly however, it does require effort.

In the box below, write down some **life skills** that you may have and how you gained them.

My life skills

Life skills usually win

Two new graduates are interviewed for the same job. They both are smart, have excellent communication skills and achieved 2:1 honours degrees. Although their background is similar, let us see who got the job.



Timekeeping was ok, sometimes a few minutes late or off sick	Was always on time and impeccable attendance record
Completed his coursework but sometimes asked for an extension	Volunteered to help a fund raising project for a charity
Had three jobs but had to quit because of <u>uni</u> pressure	Had part time job in local burger joint
Got a provisional driving license	Passed his driving test
Spends spare time chilling out, relaxing and partying	Mentored new students coming to university
Used to be good at sport but doesn't play any more	Loves playing sport and sometimes helps organise club

Who Is The Most Employable? 

Now you have read about the candidates, it is probably no surprise to you to learn that Ben was successful. Why? Yes, the extra **life skills** he possessed certainly helped. It is time to start building your **life skills** today!

Making Choices

We are faced with choices every day. What shall I eat for breakfast? Should I do my homework first or watch TV? What shall I wear today? Should I walk or ask for a lift?

Pretty simple stuff, but what about life choices? We began this eBook by talking about deciding if you should go to sixth form, college an apprenticeship or university and these are pretty important decisions.

Imagine you have won a prize in a game show. It is a car and you can choose from a *Mercedes* or a *Ferrari*, which would you choose? Let's imagine you chose the *Ferrari* and the host opened a curtain to reveal your car.

On the stage is a rusty old *Ferrari* with no wheels, no engine and no windows. This is parked next to a brand new *Mercedes*, gleaming and ready to drive away.

Be honest, if the game show host asked you if you wished you had chosen the *Mercedes*, bet the answer is yes!

If the host had shown you both cars before you made your decision, would you have picked the *Mercedes*? Again, yes is our guess!

Why would you change your mind? Because you were better informed about the car. It is time to do this in your life.

For example, find out what that university offers, what the degree is about, what the career choice entails, who does that as a career already and what are the good (and not so good points), what skills are required to take that direction but most importantly...

Have a plan B

Yes, some people focus on one choice that they forget that other things exist. Look at more than one option.

We asked some people who have some great careers to tell us what they don't like about what they do. Here are the answers from an actor, radio DJ, holiday rep and a professional footballer.

Actor	Radio DJ	Holiday Rep	Footballer
Repeating same scenes 20-30 times until director was happy	Have to be in the studio every morning at 5:30am	Have to clean the coach after every trip	Clean boots, changing rooms and do odd jobs everyday
Sitting around for hours waiting to be called for	Same routine every day	Same trips to same places every week	Had two injuries this season and can't play
Unemployed most of the year between contracts	Have to be cheerful always even if bored or unwell	Work 8am – 10pm most days and only one day off.	Same training routine every week, freezing cold in winter
Have to read the same lines over and over again	Can't choose the music, some of it isn't my taste	Same complaints from holiday-makers every week.	Low pay as an apprentice and less than 2% chance of making it

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As you can see, all jobs have bad points and it is good to be aware of the negatives before you begin.

What is the most important thing to you in your job?

Above is another question we asked apprentices in the survey and the answers included; job satisfaction, responsibilities, the people and the team, money, training offered, prospects, the future and security.

Job satisfaction outweighed money as the most important factor by 4:1.

“Find a job you love and you will never work a day in your life”

What an amazing quote!

Think about things that you really enjoy and the skills to match. Perhaps you like the idea of working with people but you are a little shy. Make a note of this and then find out how you could work on your confidence.

Maybe you are a creative person who likes making things with your hands. Look at what may require creativity.

Ideas

The key is to talk to as many people as you can; explore lots of options; find out what is in the world but remember...the career that you end up doing in years to come may be a million miles from your expectation today.

Work to learn, not to earn.

