



# Finding better work opportunities

 **BARCLAYS** | LifeSkills



# Module overview

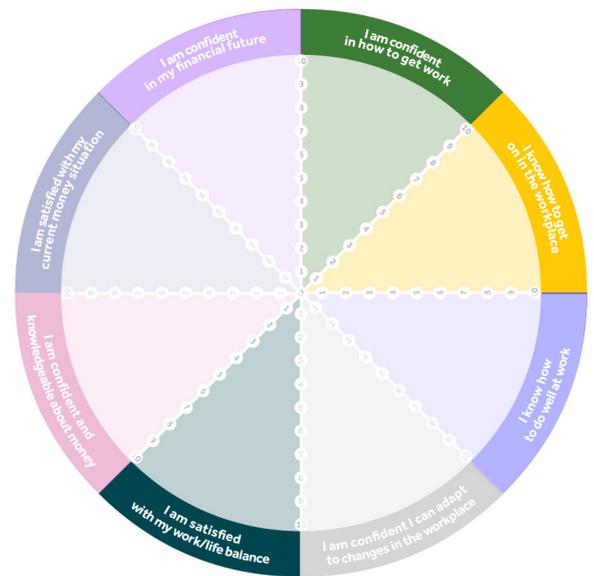
This module will support learners who are already in paid employment to seek out better work within their current company or industry. It is aimed at those who would like to improve their circumstances, whether by increasing their pay, finding more flexible or satisfying work, job security, or locating opportunities for professional development.

Time	Key learning outcomes	Which will lead to
35 mins	<p>By the end of the module, learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand their priorities in terms of improving their work circumstances</li> <li>Identify the skills they've learned/gained within their current role and how these skills can be transferred to a new role or job application</li> <li>Understand how personal experience can also be used to highlight transferable skills</li> <li>Understand how to identify and assess new opportunities for development or change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased confidence and capability in highlighting their skills, identifying skills gaps and taking action to secure better work</li> </ul>

## Important

Introduce the activity and theme and remind your learner of the coaching-based approach. Agree the desired outcome of the session with your learner.

Throughout the activity, we have included **'do now'**, **'do soon'** and **'do later'** actions which may help your learner to think about the next steps they could take. Alternatively, you could use the **'do now'**, **'do soon'** and **'do later'** headings to help your learner come up with their own actions.



# Contents

Activities	Time	Page
Core activity one: What does better work mean for your learner?	8 mins	3
Core activity two: Identifying core transferable skills	15 mins	4
Core activity three: How to secure better work	7 mins	5

# Introduction

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
🕒 2-3 mins	<p>Refer back to your learner’s LifeSkills wheel and discuss how they scored themselves in relation to this module.</p> <p>Discuss what they need to know/do to be able to increase how they rate their satisfaction with this area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners are reminded of where they are now and what they need to do to reach a higher satisfaction score in this area</li> </ul>

## Core activity one

### What does better work mean for your learner?

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
🕒 3-5 mins	<p><b>Start by asking your learner:</b></p> <p><b>What does better work mean for them?</b></p> <p>Ask your learner prompting questions to understand what better work means for them, such as:</p> <p><b>How would you like your current role to change?</b></p> <p><b>What is most important to you in your role?</b></p> <p><b>Are you working in an industry where you’d like to build your career?</b></p> <p>Your learner should then complete the <b>Scoring grid</b> handout to determine the pros and cons of their current role against their priorities.</p> <p><b>What do they think their result reveals?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners will identify what 'better work' means to them and if their needs are being met within their current role</li> </ul>

# Core activity two

## Identifying core transferable skills

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
<p>🕒 7-10 mins</p>	<p>Explain to your learner that the next activity is designed to support them to identify transferable skills that they have gained from their present and previous employment and from their personal lives.</p> <p>Explain to your learner that transferable skills are skills that they have already acquired through their work or wider lives that they can use in their current job or take with them into future employment.</p> <p>Ask your learner to identify three things they have learned within their current role and how these learnings could translate into skills.</p> <p>Show your learner the table of <b>Transferable skills</b> and prompt them to identify which ones they may already have. Remind them to focus on the transferable skills that are relevant to the job they have now and could be relevant to the type of job that they'd like to have in the future.</p> <p>Then, using the same table, ask your learner to identify skills from their personal life that could be transferred to the working environment.</p> <p>Refer to <b>Maxine's case study</b> to help your learner understand how transferable skills from their personal life can be used in a work setting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners will be able to explore and identify the transferable skills they have gained and developed through work and through personal activities</li> </ul>
<p>🕒 3-5 mins</p>	<p>Ask your learner to identify what skills they think they are missing based on what they have right now and what they will need for their next role. The missing skills may not be transferable. They may be more specific skills that your learner needs to acquire before they can apply or move into their next role.</p> <p>For example, they may want to move into a food-related role but need to gain skills in food hygiene. Or they may want to move into a marketing role within the company they currently work for but need to gain better skills in managing social media accounts.</p> <p><b>Do now:</b> Stick a list of your transferable skills to the wall in your kitchen where you can see it</p> <p><b>Do soon:</b> Update your CV with the transferable skills you have gained</p> <p><b>Do later:</b> Identify your skills gaps and ways in which you can plug these gaps to demonstrate to an employer that you have the skills for that job. Are they skills that the employer needs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners should now be able to identify what skills gaps they have and what they need to do to close these gaps</li> </ul>

# Core activity three

## How to secure better work

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
<p>🕒 5-7 mins</p>	<p>Highlight that in order to seek out better work, it's important to first understand your priorities, whether that is better pay, greater security, more flexibility etc.</p> <p>Hand your learner <b>James' case study</b>. James has been able to move into work which achieves his objectives of more flexibility and independence. Read through the case study together and discuss James' priorities and the steps he took to find better work.</p> <p>Then, hand your learner the examples of <b>Individuals who are considering a change of circumstances</b>. Ask your learner to provide their view for the individual based upon their work priorities.</p> <p>Explain to your learner that some jobs come with in-work benefits, such as increased holiday allowance, flexible hours and commissions. Explain how salary is not the only factor to consider when looking to increase benefits.</p> <p>Then, talk to your learner about ways in which they can explore securing better work with their current employer or industry, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approaching their current employer to discuss career ambitions</li> <li>• Identifying opportunities for promotion or more flexible working</li> <li>• Finding out if their employer offers learning, training or personal development opportunities that they are able to pursue. If so, they should discuss these with their employer</li> </ul> <p>Direct your learner to the list of <b>Accessible training courses</b> that they might be able to access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners should now be gaining confidence about how to move towards a situation that meets their priorities</li> <li>• Learners will understand the types of in-work benefits</li> <li>• Learners will identify ways they can explore securing better work</li> </ul>

# Wrap up

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
⌚ 2-3 mins	<p>Encourage your learner to discuss their work goals and talk about other ways in which they could achieve better paid, more challenging or more flexible work that suits their ambitions and life circumstances.</p> <p><b>Reflect on the score they gave themselves on the wheel – what is the focus of their goal, and would getting closer to achieving it increase how they score themselves in this area of the wheel?</b></p> <p><b>Thinking about what they have covered in this session, what steps can they take next to move forward in this area?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners should leave feeling more confident in securing better work opportunities</li> </ul>

# Optional extension

Time	Educator guidance	Expected outcome
⌚ 10-20 mins	<p>If there is time, encourage your learner to update their CV with the transferable skills from their current job and personal experiences.</p> <p><b>They can do this by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating a 'Skills' section on their CV, and listing their transferable skills and examples that are relevant to the area they are looking to develop, such as leadership skills for a management role</li> <li>Adding one to two of their biggest transferable skills to the profile/summary section of their CV</li> <li>Adding a 'hobbies and interests' section to their CV, if they do not already have one, or updating this with the transferable skills from their personal interests</li> </ul> <p>If relevant to your learner, follow up this session with one of the following relevant modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CV skills 1: Showing your best you</li> <li>CV skills 2: Tailoring applications to job roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners should be confident in updating their CV with their transferable skills</li> </ul>

# Finding better work opportunities

## Scoring grid

Thinking about your current role, complete the grid below. On a scale of 1–10, 1 being 'strongly disagree' and 10 being 'strongly agree', please state how you feel about the following:

	How I feel about my current job	How I want to feel in the right job
I feel very secure in my current role		
My current role is meeting my financial/salary needs		
My current role is giving me the flexibility I need to meet my personal commitments		
I am working in an industry that I love		
I feel secure in my job and what my weekly/monthly earnings are		
I am working in a job that I love		
I feel I need to increase my knowledge of my job/industry through further training		
My job/industry is giving me plenty of opportunities for professional development		
I am very happy in my current role		
I am actively looking for a new job		

# Finding better work opportunities

## Transferable skills

Identify which skills you already have. How are these relevant to the job you have now and the job you'd like to have in the future?

Teamwork	Leadership	Innovative thinking	Networking
Proactivity	Resilience/staying positive	Expressing ideas	Report writing
Negotiating	Adaptability	Defining needs	Problem solving
Research	Goal setting	Motivating others	Analysing information
Planning/strategising	Counselling	Decision making	Training/coaching
Delegating	Handling change	High attention to detail	Managing conflict
Multitasking	Time management	Commercial awareness	Organising
Collaboration	Data analysis	Speaking another language	Budgeting/managing money
Customer service	Providing feedback	Working independently	Being efficient
Learning new skills	Public speaking	Anticipating needs	Digital literacy
Being safety conscious	Investigating	Understanding the	Flexible
bigger picture	Sensitivity	Confident	Motivated
Empathy	Insightfulness	Acting	Articulating
Logical thinking	Accuracy	Creative thinking	Explaining things to others
Lowering risk factors	Taking risks	Communication: writing, listening and presenting	Interviewing
Dependability/loyalty	Relationship management	Entrepreneurial mindset	Thought leadership

# Case study

## How Maxine found better work with her employer



Maxine worked as a receptionist at a local hotel in her home town of Portsmouth. She liked her job, however after she'd been employed at the hotel for 12 months, Maxine was keen to move up the career ladder, learn new skills and earn more money.

During her time as a receptionist at the hotel, Maxine learnt to use the booking system to easily check guests in and out of their rooms. She communicated with the housekeeping staff to ensure rooms were ready for the next guest to check in and answered the phone on the front desk.

One part of the job where Maxine excelled was the way she quickly diffused situations when customers complained to her about an uncomfortable night's sleep or bad food in the hotel's restaurant. She loved this part of her job and received excellent feedback for handling these situations in a calm and diplomatic manner.

During her first year, Maxine gained some brilliant transferable skills, including digital literacy, teamwork, communication, negotiation, working independently, empathy and customer service.

Maxine is half Italian and is an assistant coach for her daughter's Sunday league football team. From her personal life, Maxine can add language skills, coaching, teamwork and leadership skills to her repertoire of transferable skills.

Because Maxine loves working for the hotel and gets great benefits, she knew she wanted to work her way up inside the company rather than looking for alternative employment. She identified a role within the hotel as a front of house manager, knowing that she had many of the transferable skills required for the role. However, she also knew she did not have enough knowledge of the food and beverage industry to apply for the position.

Maxine built some good relationships during the first year of her employment, so she felt comfortable enough to approach the hotel manager and ask for a meeting. During the meeting, Maxine explained that she'd love to progress her career and expressed her interest in joining the restaurant in a front of house role.

The hotel manager was impressed with Maxine's initiative and recognised that Maxine works hard, is a loyal member of staff and is an asset to the hotel. The manager agreed to sponsor Maxine through a hospitality and catering qualification and offered her a new role as a junior front of house manager.

Maxine excelled in her new role and gained top grades in her qualification. Within two years, Maxine was promoted to lead a front of house team within the hotel's restaurant and now has her sights set on a new position as a senior events manager.

# Case study

## James Walker



I joined the army when I was 16, straight after I took my GCSEs. I spent 15 years in the army. During this time I was posted at several different bases across the UK and Europe and completed two tours of Afghanistan. I worked my way up through the ranks from Lance Corporal to Corporal and finally to Sergeant for my last three years. While I was in the army I worked as an electrician, doing qualifications through City and Guilds.

I decided to leave the army in my early thirties so I could spend more time with my daughter and my family and have a permanent base rather than moving every few years. I knew being my own boss would allow me to choose my working hours and so I decided to set up a business using the electrician qualifications I gained from the military.

I started out working from my car, while saving up to buy a van. I decided to specialise in bathrooms and saw that there was a market for tradespeople who can do all parts of the work, so I took further courses in plumbing and decorating at a local college. This allows me to offer customers the whole package, from design to completion. I use the communication and problem solving skills I learnt in the military and still love having an active job. I get great satisfaction from the look on customers' faces when they see the finished work.

# Finding better work opportunities

## Individuals who are considering a change of circumstances

How would you advise the following individuals?

### Sarita wants to gain a promotion

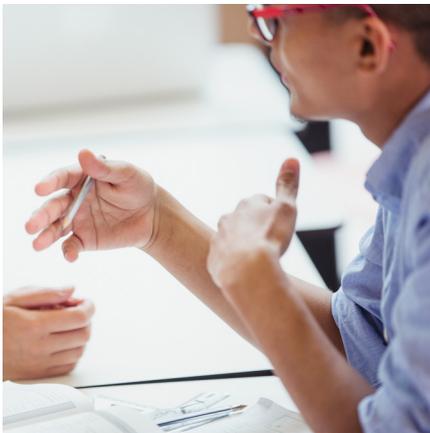


Sarita is currently working as a domestic care assistant, supporting elderly people to live more independently. She enjoys her job but would like to progress to a supervisor's role, where she would be looking after a team of five carers.

Ten years ago, Sarita was in a managerial role with another care company. She feels this experience was too long ago for her employer to consider her for promotion.

Sarita is a leader for her daughter's Brownies unit and often organises weekends away for up to 15 Brownies. Twice a week, she also does the bookkeeping for her partner's business.

### Colin needs more flexible hours



Colin is the sole carer for his eight-year-old twin daughters. He works as a project manager for a large engineering firm and due to the pressures of his job, he often arrives to collect his daughters from after-school club a few minutes late. This means that sometimes, Colin is asked by the after-school club leaders to pay for an extra hour.

Colin is quite stressed at work and at home and needs to remedy the situation.

### Kerri wants to work in a bigger company



Although Kerri enjoys her job as a customer assistant for a small retailer, she really wants to work for a bigger company with development opportunities. Kerri has some brilliant transferable skills: she anticipates commercial needs quickly, she's great at building customer relationships and because she is often working unassisted, she can multitask. She has no commitments outside of work and is still very early into her career.

Kerri has only worked in a small clothing shop. She's not sure what she needs to do to make the move from a small retailer into a large company.

# Finding better work opportunities

## Accessible training courses

### The National Careers Service (NCS)

All NCS training providers are contracted with the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Courses cover a wide and varied range of learning from English and Maths skills through to industry-specific training.

Search the [NCS database](#) and find the right training course for you.

### Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships combine on-the-job experience with practical training and qualifications. They can last from one to five years and are open to everyone aged 16 years or over. If you are looking to change your career or enter a new profession, an apprenticeship could offer the perfect opportunity to retrain or upskill.

Search for an apprenticeship [here](#).

### Google Digital Garage

Most of the courses within the Google Digital Garage are completely free and approved by leading employers and top industry experts. Covering subjects within data and technology, digital marketing and career development, you'll learn real world digital skills to support your career progression and study online at a pace that suits you.

Find a Google Digital Garage course [here](#).

### Learndirect #UpSkillUK

The #UpSkillUK programme via Learndirect offers free of charge access to a range of skills courses to help to improve employability prospects. Learners can sign up for fully-funded English, Maths, Life Skills and Employability courses, which are available to study through an online platform.

Find a Learndirect #UpSkillUK course [here](#).

### Tips on finding a suitable training course

If you'd like to upskill or retrain, there are thousands of courses available to you. Whether you choose to study online or at your local college or university, finding the right course can be tricky. Remember:

- Conduct research before selecting your course to be sure you'll be studying something that is up to date and relevant to progress your career
- Select a course from a reputable and accredited learning provider
- Make sure the course is certificated. Employers may ask for proof that you've passed your qualification
- Ask what level of support you'll receive from the tutors or assessors for the duration of your studies
- If needed, investigate funding opportunities for adult learners [here](#)