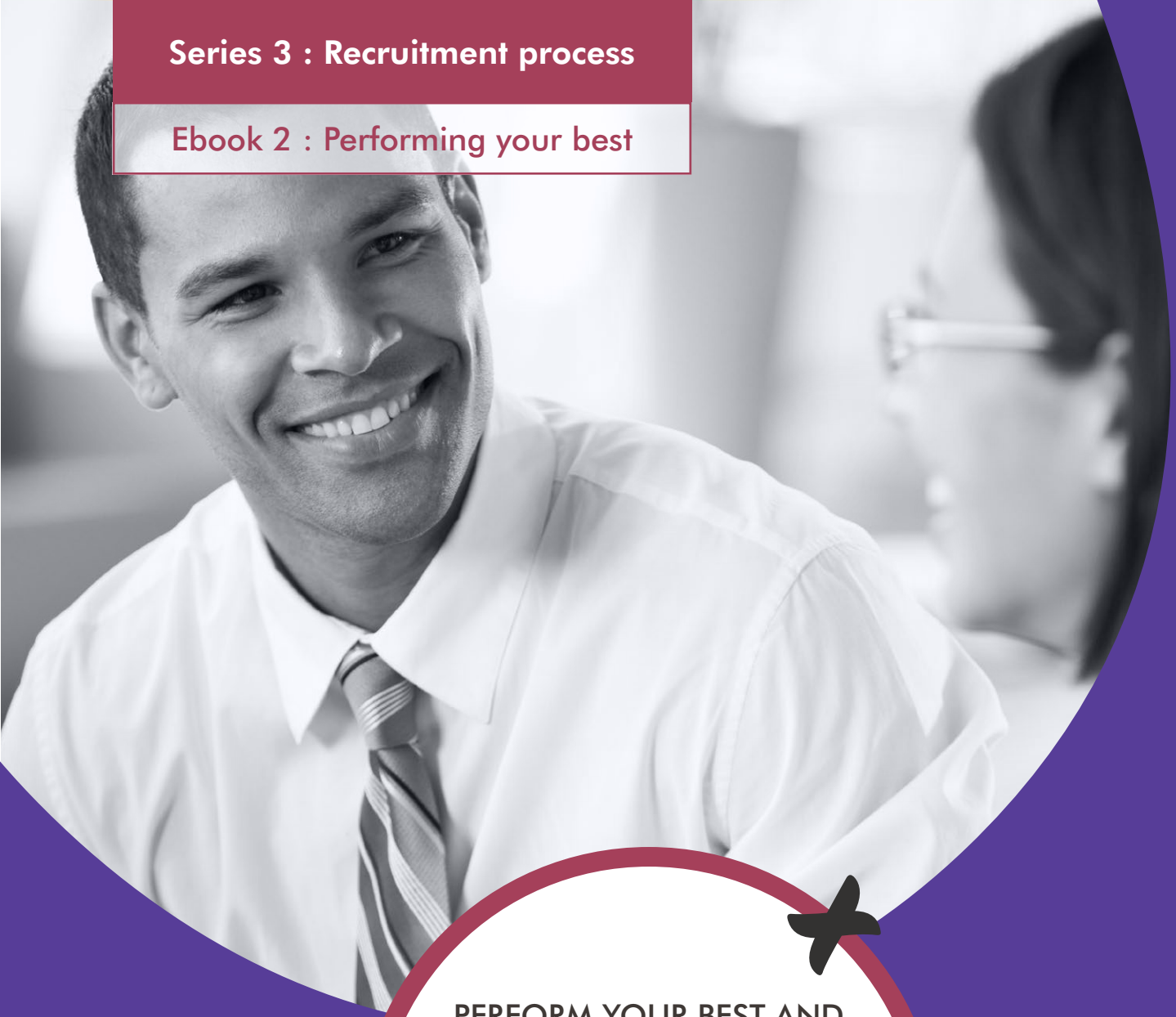
Series 3 : Recruitment process

Ebook 2 : Performing your best



PERFORM YOUR BEST AND

ACE THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

TIPS TO HELP YOU MANAGE A DISABILITY AND SUCCEED AT EVERY STAGE OF THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS.

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INTRODUCTION

So you have submitted an application for a job and received the email invitation to complete an online assessment or in-person interview. Congratulations – you are on the applicant shortlist! Now it's time for you to showcase those skills and experiences on your CV, to the employer in the next stages of the recruitment process in order to secure your dream job.

In this ebook, we will give you an overview of the recruitment process and introduce you to four common assessment methods used by graduate employers. We will share top tips to help you manage your disability and perform your best in the following:

- Psychometric tests
- Telephone interview
- Assessment centre / Face-to-face interview

It is important to note that the format of the recruitment process will vary between industry sectors and employers, so you will need refer to the employer's website for assessment details when you apply.

You will be required to complete all parts of the assessment process and we encourage you to be open with your employer about a disability to request the adjustments you need. Remember that the aim of an adjustment is to enable you to perform to the best of your ability, and allow the employer to accurately assess you on an equal basis to your peers. The employer cannot assess your performance fairly if you do not complete all parts of the assessment.



This is the second book of the Recruitment Process series. Visit www.myplusstudentsclub.com for careers advice and more information on applying with a disability. Become a member on the website for free, in order to download the following ebooks on topics such as writing a cover letter and informing an employer about your disability:

- Benefits of being open
- How to be open
- Applying with a disability
- Writing a cover letter
- Recruitment adjustments

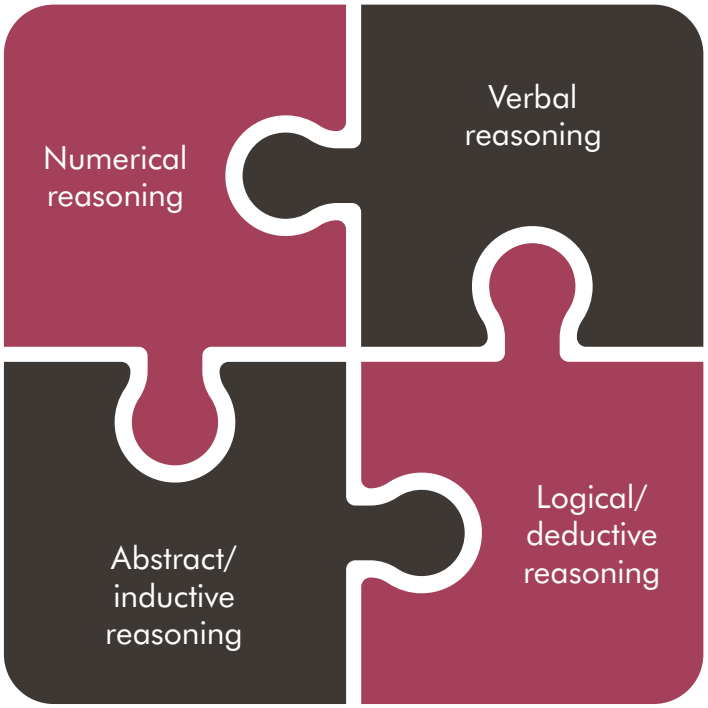
PSYCHOMETRIC TESTS

Many employers use online psychometric testing as a way of screening applicants in the early stages of the recruitment process. There are various types of tests, these include but are not limited to numerical, verbal, logical reasoning and personality. These tests are objective and standardised to help employers assess different applicants' strengths and aptitudes irrespective of educational background.

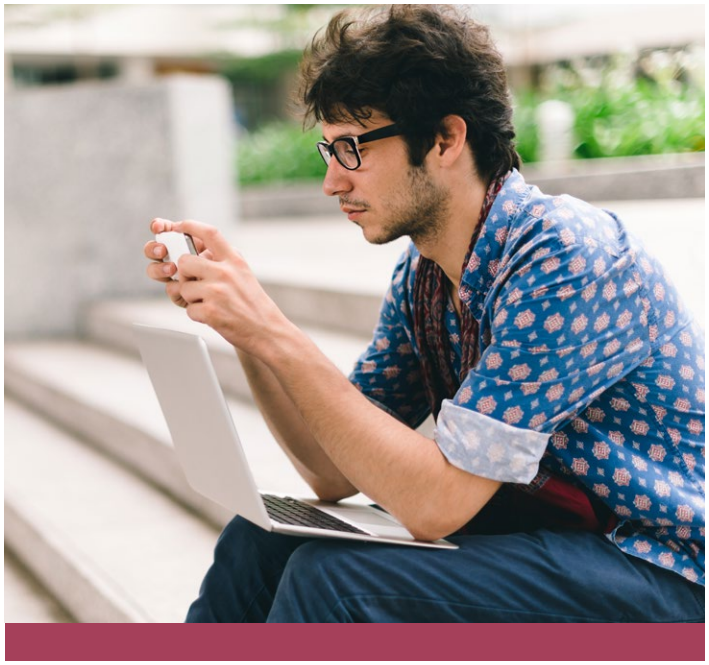
Types of Tests

The following are ability tests that you can expect to complete as part of the recruitment process.

- Numerical reasoning to assess how well you are able to interpret data from a graph, chart or statistics.
- Verbal reasoning to assess how well you can understand written information and evaluate statements.
- Abstract/inductive reasoning to assess how well you are able to identify patterns in a visual diagram.
- Logical/deductive reasoning to assess how well you are able to form a conclusion when given basic rules and information.



Aside from these, you may also be invited to take aptitude, situational judgement and personality tests. These tests are designed to measure your suitability for the role and how you might fit in with the organisational culture so the best approach is to answer honestly.



How to prepare

Your disability or long-term health condition may mean that in order for you to demonstrate your full potential in the test, you need to have an adjustment. The adjustments you request will vary depending on what type of test it is, how it is structured and how you are required to perform the tasks.

The best way to find out what adjustments you require is to complete a practice test. You wouldn't go into an exam without doing some revision first; the same goes for recruitment tests. Practicing these tests online will help you to get familiarised with the format of each assessment and give you an insight into what you need, in order to perform your best.

Many employers will have practice tests on their careers websites and they can also be found online at the websites below. Just click on one to start practicing:

- Psychometric tests from AssessmentDay
- Personality report from Peoplemaps
- Practice tests and questionnaires from Mark Parkinson (author of How to Master Psychometric Tests)
- Preparation guides for aptitude tests from Saville Assessment
- Practice numerical and critical thinking tests from TalentLens (UK), Pearson

If you need an adjustment to the test, you must inform the employer of the adjustments you require prior to taking the tests; leaving it until afterwards is too late and you may not be given the opportunity to re-sit them. Examples of adjustments that employers can provide range from additional time to complete a test, to providing a hard copy of the test for candidates to complete in the office.



TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

If recruiters are impressed by your CV and you passed all the psychometric tests, the next step is usually a telephone interview. A telephone interview is quicker and more convenient for both you and the employer. However, they can be a challenge since neither party can see the other, so the usual visual clues are absent.

If you are unable to participate in a telephone interview as a result of your disability, or are likely to find it difficult, you should inform the recruiter of this. The telephone interview may be replaced by a face-to-face / video interview and the employer can arrange for a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter to be present should you require this.

What to expect

During the interview the employer will be aiming to find out more about you based on what they already know from your application. They will look to see whether your skills, competencies and personal qualities match the role specification.

The interviewer is likely to refer to your application and CV during the interview; you should revisit the information that you included in your application and be prepared to talk about your achievements and experiences. Think about the competencies they are recruiting for and prepare examples of when you have demonstrated skills such as leadership, teamwork, communication and results in the past.

The following are examples of common competency-based interview questions. Practice using the STAR technique to answer these. First, describe the situation you were in, the task you were assigned, the action you took to address the situation and the end result.

- Communication. Tell us about a time you had to adjust your communication approach to suit a particular audience.
- Decision making. Give an example of a time when you had to make a difficult decision.
- Leadership. Describe a situation when you assumed the role of leader. Were there any challenges, and how did you address them?
- Results oriented. Give me an example of a time when you were particularly successful.
- Time management. Tell me about a time when you failed to complete a task or project on time, despite intending to do so.
- Teamwork. Describe a situation in which you were working as part of a team. How did you make a contribution?

You can draw upon different examples from university or work experience to illustrate the competencies you have developed. You can also use examples from your day-to-day experience of managing a disability to highlight the transferrable skills you have gained and how you can apply these strengths to the role. By mentioning your disability in this way, you are in control of your story and you can use this opportunity to demonstrate strengths such as self-awareness and proactivity. However, you should not use disability-related examples for too many questions.

If you have applied for a customer facing or sales-oriented role, the interviewer will be especially interested in how well you can hold a conversation and express yourself. You can expect the interviewer to ask about your motivations for applying so do prepare an answer and remember to show your personality and enthusiasm for the role and organisation.

Tips to remember

In addition to thinking about the main points that you want to convey, you may wish to read recent news articles on the organisation / industry, and prepare one or two questions to ask the interviewer.

If you require an adjustment due to your disability, inform the employer in advance. Remember that the aim of an adjustment is to level the playing field so think about what you need and give the employer enough time to plan adjustments e.g. use of specific technology or a change to the interview format.



ASSESSMENT CENTRE

The assessment centre is usually the final stage of the recruitment process. This is your chance to come face-to-face with representatives of the firm and to really show them that you have got what it takes to be successful in their organisation.

Assessment centres are used to assess how you perform in a variety of different situations. Employers will be looking to see how you interact with other people and whether you can demonstrate the key skills and competencies for the role.

What to expect

Graduate employers typically use a combination of the following exercises to assess applicants, however you should check the details of your assessment day schedule to see if there are different activities you should prepare for.

- Group case study and presentation

In a group exercise, you may be asked to evaluate a business or legal case scenario with your teammates and present your analysis and recommendations back to a panel of interviewers. Employers will be accessing skills such as communication, time management, leadership and teamwork, and more importantly what you bring to the team.

"If you feel that your disability may present difficulties for you in a group exercise you can consider whether or not to inform the employer and / or your fellow applicants in advance about your disability. If you have a visual impairment for example it may help you if the rest of your group are aware so that they can help position you for delivering the presentation. You may also need the brief in a particular font to ensure you are not at a disadvantage which the employer can only facilitate if they know in advance."

– Anna Preston, Senior Careers Consultant at the University of Warwick

- Individual case study and presentation

In an individual case study presentation, you may be asked to analyse different strategic options and present your recommendations for the business / legal client. Interviewers will be looking to see how well you can structure your presentation and deliver key insights to the client. A good approach would be to start with an introduction, identify three main points that you want to convey and summarize what you have covered at the end.

"If you have dyslexia or a physical disability which affects your note-taking you may benefit from extra time or assistive technology. To level the playing field this would need you to share information about your disability with the employer in advance so that they can make any adjustments. Without this you will be at an unfair disadvantage. If for example you have a stammer this might affect you discussing the case study and again letting the employer know in advance will enable them to better support you."

– Anna Preston, Senior Careers Consultant at the University of Warwick.

- Face-to-face interview

A face-to-face interview typically forms part of the assessment centre day. As well as revising your interview technique, you will also need to brush up on your employer research. If you have a disability or long-term health condition you will also need to decide whether to discuss this and how you will refer to it during the interview.

The interviewer will not ask you about your disability, however if you refer to it in your answer to a question, they may ask you follow-up questions in the context of your answer. The interview is not an opportunity to discuss what adjustments you might need if you were to be offered a position.

The interview process is designed to ensure you find the role that suits you; it is therefore important to be genuine and to show them who you really are. Do your research so that you are prepared to answer their questions, however you should also use this as an opportunity to ask questions and find out about the employer and their organisational culture.

Tips to remember

If you have a disability or long-term health condition you may need an adjustment to be made for the assessment centre even if you have not required one before now. For those of you with a visible or noticeable disability, you should think about how you manage this with the other candidates in terms of whether you feel you need to say or explain anything.

If you do decide it would be beneficial for the other candidates to know, you can put together your 'openness statement' using this checklist, and explain to your fellow applicants or employers as and when you need to:

1. This is my disability / condition
2. This is the implication for the recruitment process
3. As a consequence, this is what I require.

Top Tips:

- Be prepared. Find out what the assessment entails so you can identify what adjustments you may need. Be open and honest about what you need and provide plenty of time for them to source and implement adjustments.
- Be yourself. They want to recruit the real you not someone you are pretending to be. Be confident in your abilities and reflect on the strengths you have developed through managing a disability.
- Use the experience to find out about the employer and whether you wish to work there. Come prepared to interact with your peers and representatives from the organisation.
- Immerse yourself in the process. Whilst completing an assessment, focus solely on the task; block out all external distractions.
- Ensure clarity of tasks. Listen carefully to instructions and guidance given; don't be afraid to ask when you are unsure.

CONCLUSION....

We hope this ebook has given you a good introduction to the assessment methods used in each stage of the recruitment process. Now that you know what to expect in the recruitment process, you can plan adjustments and perfect your interview / assessment day technique.

For more advice and information, become a member on **www.myplusstudentsclub.com** to download ebooks on topics such as informing an employer about your disability and requesting recruitment adjustments.