

Preparing for successful meetings:

- have a clear agenda
- research your audience
- establish a rapport
- ask questions
- listen and reflect on answers
- emphasise benefits not features
- agree the next steps



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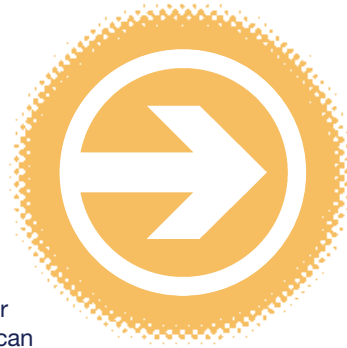
A Toolkit for meetings and presentations

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Using the toolkit



Introduction

This guide and the accompanying toolkit will support and provide information and guidance on selling the benefits of Modern Apprenticeships to employers. In the folder you will find a flexible pack of materials, containing a ring binder presenter with slides, supporting notes and cue cards. These can quickly and easily be adapted for different employers and situations.

The toolkit is flexible and easy to use, with material suitable for a range of situations. Read through the ring binder presentation and the supporting notes and familiarize yourself with the cue cards. You can decide how to use them to support your approach to employers. You may prefer to make formal presentations with slides; or you may prefer to chat informally but have the comfort of having your key points and important facts written in front of you (either in the form of hard copy slides or cue cards).

Ring binder presenter

In the presenter we've included a set of colour slides. These contain the main messages about Modern Apprenticeships and highlight the kind of benefits employers look for.

The slide presentation includes:

- generic slides (1-3, 9-11), which provide a framework for talking to employers about the benefits to them of taking on an apprentice;
- optional slides (4-8, 12-14), which you can select and adapt to suit individual presentations and your preferences.

Each slide has supporting notes, and there is further background advice and information in this guide. The notes are not intended to be a script, but to indicate the points you may include.

Slide presentation

A CD is enclosed in the pack so that you can adapt the slides with your own particular messages, or make a more formal slide presentation.

It is possible for you to add your own logo to the presentation, but we advise only doing this on the very first slide to avoid the slides looking too busy.

Please use the existing Modern Apprenticeship template for any slides you wish to add.

Before using the slides, you should review the messages, tailoring them for each employer's particular business needs so you can demonstrate how Modern Apprenticeships might affect their business.

Using the slides

- Keep your meetings effective, keep your presentation as short as possible.
- You don't need to use all the slides, only those that are relevant to the employer.

Cue cards

Rather than using slides in a meeting you may prefer a less formal approach. Use the cue cards to help prompt your discussion with an employer and to ensure you cover all the relevant and important points.

Planning your employer meeting

Careful planning will help you to get your message across efficiently.

Don't forget to research the employer's business before you go so you can deal with any concerns and questions.

Information about your audience and their expectations helps you to focus your presentation and anticipate and answer questions.

- Is the business growing or down-sizing?
- How much do they already know about Modern Apprenticeships?
- How might Modern Apprenticeships benefit them?
- How many people will attend your presentation and who are they?
- Are they the decision-makers?
- Why are they coming to the presentation and what information do they want?
- Finally, how much time have they allowed for your presentation?

Who should use this?

New staff or those requiring updating on MA's.
Many experienced staff may find the toolkit useful to develop or train new staff.

NOTE: However experienced staff may use some sections or some of the statistics.





Structuring your meeting and presentation



Ensure you:

- have a clear agenda
- understand your audience and establish rapport
- ask questions and listen very carefully to the answers
- present your points clearly, always with reference to benefits, not features
- use examples to illustrate benefits
- get commitment at the end of the meeting.

Don't use all the slides. Choose the ones that are most important for your audience and make the presentation as short as possible.

Use your own case studies about businesses in the same sector or with similar business challenges.

Making a good impression

A well-run meeting tells your audience you will organise their training in a similar, well-managed way.

The presentation has the following structure:

Introductions and agenda

Introductions mark the start of presentations and help you to establish a rapport with the audience (slide 1)

Message

- how Modern Apprenticeships work (slide 2)
- the benefits of Modern Apprenticeships (slides 3)
- who you are and how you can help the employer (slide 13)

Follow-up

- your chance to handle their objections (slides 11-12)
- questions

Conclusion

securing commitment to taking on apprentices (slide 13)

Ascertaining the employer's requirements

One of the main objectives of the meeting should be to find out more about the company and how Modern Apprenticeships could work for them.



Encourage discussion about the challenges facing their business sector and explain how Modern Apprenticeships can help. For example, if they talk about skills shortages, remind them that many businesses facing such shortages now realise that the only way to avoid the problem is to train people from scratch.

Use the first slide as the backdrop to this discussion.

The message (slides 2-8)

This is a key part of your presentation containing:

- the benefits of Modern Apprenticeships;
- how apprenticeships work (briefly); and
- facts and examples.

The benefit



Slide 3



Slide 5

Emphasise the benefits of Modern Apprenticeships and use case studies to illustrate these.





Use quotes from case studies and relate local success stories. There are examples at www.modernapprenticeships.com

Slides 4-6 contain case studies and 7-8 quotes. You do not need to use all of them, but you could adapt the slides to illustrate local examples - or memorise relevant case studies from companies similar to the one you are meeting.

Keep it short, keep it relevant. Each item in your presentation should only be there because it helps to put your proposal across more convincingly.

How Modern Apprenticeships work (slide 12)

Keep this section brief; if the employer is interested, you can provide more details at a later stage.

Who you are (slide 13)



Slide 13

This is where you explain who you are and why employers should work with you.

Employers will want to work with training providers they feel they can trust, and who have a strong track record of delivering quality training. The slide notes suggest the type of things you should cover here.



Train them, keep them

- 75,000 Apprentices have participated on programme
- 75 plus frameworks are available in Scotland
- Staff turnover was 25% in 2003 (20% in 2002)

The sectors where there are high proportions of young people employed but lower proportions on apprenticeships include manufacturing, banking and finance.

Securing commitment/ Business

Securing the employer's commitment to take on apprentices is the most important part of the meeting. It could be the difference between securing multiple apprenticeships across the business or walking away empty-handed.

Think about the most appropriate way to close your presentation for each employer.

Examples of open questions:

- Now that you've heard more about Modern Apprenticeships, how do you think your business might benefit?
- What do you think of Modern Apprenticeships?
- How might apprenticeships solve your (skill shortage/recruitment/staff retention) problems? Make sure you agree what happens next and clarify.

Finally, thank the employer for their time and attention.

Handling objections

Be prepared to handle questions and objections.

The most common objections are answered on slides 11-12. While it may not always be appropriate to show all of these slides, familiarise yourself with the issues and think through how you will respond.

Do:

- listen carefully to any questions
- respond clearly and concisely
- be honest – say you will get back to them if you don't know the answer

Don't:

- argue or get defensive
- go into too much detail unless the employer particularly wants more details

Top Tip

If they haven't given you a commitment, reiterate your main points about the benefits of Modern Apprenticeships.

