

# Inspiring women

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**7 Easy Steps to ‘Speed Career Dating’  
and ‘Career Insight’ Events  
with Inspiring the Future**

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**2014**



## The national Inspiring Women campaign

### Why is it needed?

It is clear that for girls and young women, it's 'who you know' that influences career aspirations and choice. They rely on female role models from a range of sectors, positions of responsibility and stages of their life to broaden their horizons and help to combat stereotypes about occupations. This is what Inspiring Women aims to do.

Key findings from a variety of research reports are highlighted below.

### Children's Perceptions of Gender and Careers

- By the age of 6, children classify jobs as male and female – by the age of 8, they are limiting aspirations and then by 13 many of them have already ruled out career options that don't fit with gender stereotypes.
- Knowing adults in certain professions significantly influences desires to work in those areas; 68% of pupils knew someone who did either their first and/or second choice of jobs.
- Young girls aged 7-11 say their influences are mainly female family members, but they also feel inspired by celebrities; their aspirations reflect this – they want to be mums, teachers, nurses and hairdressers, and a disproportionate number of girls this age also want to be actors, singers, writers or dancers.

### Adolescents' Perceptions of Gender and Careers

- 60% of girls aged 16-17 aspire to stereotypically 'female' jobs; this has, in fact, increased from the proportion at age 11-12, where the figure is less than 50%
- By the age of 14, critical decisions on academic pathways have been made, and many young people have already accepted the 'status quo' of gender stereotyped occupations.

- 76% of young people agree they would like to know more about jobs traditionally done by the opposite sex. 66% of girls and 54% of boys said they would be tempted to train for a job normally done by the other sex if there was more information about the kind of work they could do.
- Girls are much more concerned than boys about how they would be treated in the workplace if they decided to enter an occupation traditionally seen as for the opposite sex.

### Careers Advice, Experience and Guidance

- Careers advice and parental guidance are the prime influencing factors determining career choice.
- School records showed that only 9% (164 out of 1,725) of work placements at school represented non-stereotypical experiences. For example, over 90% of engineering and construction placements were taken up by boys, while 90% of hair and beauty placements were completed girls.
- In the few examples where girls set out on an unfamiliar route for work experience, this had often come about after a personal experience with someone from that profession.
- Informal networks – adults who are role models outside and inside the family – are more important in addressing gender stereotyping of occupations than formal mechanisms of advice.

### Role Models

- Role models are cited by girls, young women, and employers as vital in helping to overcome gender divides in occupation choice but 55% of girls aged 11 to 21 agree that there aren't enough female role models.
- Young people often base their assumptions about the suitability of jobs for men and women on the number of men and women who already work in that sector.

### Women in the Workplace

- In 2010, women accounted for 47% of the UK labour force yet only 6% of Executive Directors in FTSE 100 companies are women, and only 3% are CEOs.
- 75% of women still end up in the five Cs of employment – cleaning, catering, caring, cashiering and clerical. Women are still significantly underrepresented in senior positions, and across a range of sectors (particularly in science and technology).
- 'Who you know' counts for women who are entrepreneurs as well; 83% of women who have started their own business have known someone else who has done so.

## 7 Easy Steps to ‘Speed Career Dating’ and ‘Career Insight’ Events with Inspiring the Future

If you are looking to help pupils gain insights into different careers and broaden their aspirations, the more informal ‘speed career dating’ or networking sessions can help to answer their questions by setting up informal Q&As with people from a range of sectors and professions.

1. Select a date and time where you have 1 hour and a group of anywhere between 50-100 students to take part.
2. Log on to Inspiring the Future and invite volunteers in the professions, specialisms or areas (e.g. apprenticeships) you would like to see represented (ideally, one volunteer speaking to a group of 8-10 pupils); Send them details of the venue, timing and directions. Follow up one week before the event to re-confirm. We suggest you give volunteers at least 4 - 6 weeks notice prior to your event.
3. Prepare your students by going through sample questions they might want to ask as they ‘speed career dating’ with the volunteers (see reverse for some examples).
4. Set up the tables so it is easy for the volunteers to rotate around the room while the pupils remain seated.
5. When volunteers arrive, welcome them and ensure volunteers have the chance to ask you any questions they may have. Give them a short intro talk and then sit them down with the young people.
6. Rotate the volunteers around the tables every 8 - 10 minutes.
7. Let us know how it went – send us any pictures, videos and feedback so we can help to showcase and celebrate your success on our website and through social media. Please email [carol.glover@educationandemployers.org](mailto:carol.glover@educationandemployers.org)

## Sample Questions for Pupils: ‘Speed Career Dating’

Here are questions to help you think about what sort of things you might like to ask. These are just ideas. What do you want to know about the job or sector?

- What did you learn in school that you find useful at work? Have you found activities outside of school teach you any useful skills for work?
- Do you manage other people/are you managed by someone else? What do you think makes a good manager?
- What do you enjoy most about your job? What are the biggest challenges for you at work?
- What advice would you give to someone of my age thinking about their career?
- What can I do now to prepare me for this kind of career?
- What skills/qualities do you need to do your job? What does a typical day/week look like at work?
- Why did you choose this career? Is the job what you expected when you entered this industry?
- What was your education route into this career (degree, FE college)? Are there other routes in nowadays (e.g. apprenticeships)?
- Is there anything you would do differently in your education/career path to this point?
- Have you done different kinds of jobs before Is this the only sector in which you have worked?
- Do you have a family? Is it easy to have a family and do the job you do?
- Do you use languages/maths/science in your job at all?
- What is the salary range for this kind of work? Are there any other benefits?

## 7 Easy Steps to Career Insight Talks with Inspiring the Future

Career insight talks give pupils insights into a career by having a professional talk them through their own career and education pathway, as well as the job they do. They could be in an assembly, in a careers class, or to a small group of students interested in particular careers.

Some schools integrate talks into subject lessons (for example, they ask a doctor to come in and talk in a biology class, or a journalist in an English lesson).

See overleaf for tips to make the visit a success, and here are seven easy steps to running a careers talk:

1. Decide on a date and time for your talk, as well as the setup (is it a talk in an assembly to 300 pupils or a talk to a class of 30? Is it during school hours, at lunchtime or after school?)
2. Log on to Inspiring the Future and invite a volunteer (or volunteers) of your choice, giving details on the date, time and venue, along with what you would like them to visit. Volunteers tend to need 4 – 6 weeks notice.
3. Follow up one week before the event to re-confirm.
4. Prepare pupils with some questions ready to kick-start the Q&A.
5. Have someone greet the volunteer and ensure they are comfortable before introducing them to the class. Remember that have given up their time for free.
6. Encourage students to ask questions and engage with the volunteer.
7. Let the volunteer and us know how it went – send us any pictures, videos and feedback so we can help to showcase and celebrate your success:  
**[carol.glover@educationandemployers.org](mailto:carol.glover@educationandemployers.org)**

## What do volunteers talk about?

**Volunteers giving a career insight talk to young people in a school or college are encouraged to address the following:**

- What they do. They might talk through 'an average day'.
- What education route they took. E.g. University, FE college, Apprenticeship.
- What advice would they give young people hoping to get into their field
- What I wish someone had told me aged 14 or 16

## Tips for making the visit a success

- Ensure the volunteer arrives with time to prepare; remember they are often coming during work hours so timing is important to them
- Let everyone know that the visit is happening and what to expect in the session. Ensure someone is on hand to meet them.
- Organise car parking if required
- Ensure there are some questions ready to kick-start the Q&A
- Let your volunteer know how the visit went. Through feedback they can develop their communication and presentation style.

## Tips for helping volunteers engage young people

Some schools try to make it a little more interactive. You could:

- Ask volunteers to bring props that represent their job
- Suggest that volunteers write some statements about their job for pupils to guess which are true and which are false
- Start the session with a 'guess my job' activity to help get pupils thinking about skills and career pathways.

Many volunteers will happily run workshops or more interactive sessions with just a little help from schools, so talk to them about any ideas you have to make it more exciting for your students.

## 7 Easy Steps to Subject Talks with Inspiring the Future

Many teachers find that having a specialist professional talk to pupils in a subject lesson can help increase their enthusiasm and their understanding of how their work at school will help them later in life.

1. Decide on a date and time for your talk, and narrow down which sectors, professions or specialisms (e.g. apprenticeships) you might like to cover
2. Log on to Inspiring the Future and invite a volunteer (or volunteers) of your choice, giving details on the date, time and venue, along with what you would like them to do and/or bring. Volunteer tend to need 4 – 6 weeks notice.
3. Follow up one week before the event to re-confirm.
4. Prepare pupils with some questions ready to kick-start the Q&A
5. Have someone greet the volunteer and ensure they are comfortable before introducing them to the class
6. Encourage students to ask questions and engage with the speaker
7. Let us know how it went – send us any pictures, videos and feedback so we can help to showcase and celebrate your success:  
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**Need some inspiration? Turn over to see how other schools are integrating talks from professionals into their subject lessons.**

## Ideas for Subject Talks in Your School

Although people's work is often relevant to a range of different subjects, the following can be good starting points for subject talks (these are just a small sample of the hundreds of different occupations done by volunteers who can be found through Inspiring the Future):

Subject	Relevant professions
<b>Maths</b>	Finance/banking professional; engineer; electrician; plumber; architect
<b>English</b>	Journalist; publisher/editor; lawyer; PR/marketing professional; business administration apprentice
<b>Languages</b>	Lawyer, finance professional, not-for-profit worker, doctor, marketing/sales professional, politician
<b>Science</b>	Doctor; researcher; tech company employee; medic; nurse; midwife, apprentice electrician
<b>Technology, IT and Design</b>	Product designer; fashion designer; tech company employee; IT practitioner; advertising executive; set designer
<b>Geography</b>	Geologist; environmentalist; local authority worker; travel agent
<b>History</b>	Curator; academic; civil servant; management
<b>Business Studies</b>	Retail professional; entrepreneur; CEO; HR professional; customer service apprentice

## 7 Steps to Mock Interviews for jobs or going to university with Inspiring the Future

Teachers might find in Year 11 or Sixth Form/College that pupils need extra support ahead of thinking about applying for their first permanent job or for interviews for Apprenticeships or college courses.

They may never have had an interview and be unused to the more formal Q&As; this is an opportunity for professionals who are used to recruiting to give their valuable hints and tips to students.

1. Select a group of students who would benefit from mock interviews
2. Log on to Inspiring the Future and invite volunteers who have selected 'mock interviews' as an activity, giving details on the date, time and venue, along with what you would like them to do and/or bring
3. Follow up one week before the event to re-confirm.
4. Send volunteer examples of questions they might want to think through
5. Prepare pupils by asking them to prepare a CV and/or think about their transferable skills, any work experience and what career they might like in the future
6. Allow 10-15 minutes per pupil for mock interviews and ensure your volunteers have chance to give feedback to them
7. Let us know how it went – send us any pictures, videos and feedback so we can help to showcase and celebrate your success

## Example mock interview questions for volunteers

### Mock Interviews Sample Questions

- What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
- Do you like working on your own or working in a team?
- What would you look for in a job?
- What do you enjoy doing?
- Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
- What are your hobbies and interests?
- How would you describe your style of working?
- What are the three most important things to you when you are looking for a job?
- What makes a good manager/team player?
- How has your education prepared you for work?
- Describe a time you have:
  - worked in a team
  - managed conflicting priorities
  - done something difficult
  - solved a problem
  - come up with a new idea
  - responded quickly and efficiently to a task

## 7 Easy Steps to Getting CV Help with Inspiring the Future

Inspiring the Future offers schools the chance to invite in professionals to help pupils understand what a good CV looks like, how to write cover letters and what employers are looking for.

1. Decide if it is a whole-class activity or a one-to-one with particular students
2. Log on to Inspiring the Future and invite volunteers who have selected 'CV help' as an activity, giving details on the date, time and venue, along with what you would like them to do and/or bring
3. Once a volunteer has confirmed attendance, follow up one week before the event to re-confirm.
4. Brief the volunteer, sending them any example CVs or anything you might want them to particularly focus on
5. Prepare pupils by asking them to draft a sample CV so they can explore how they would improve or add to it
6. Ensure the volunteer knows the format and is prepared to speak to the right number of pupils in the right environment
7. Let us know how it went – send us any pictures, videos and feedback so we can help to showcase and celebrate your success

**You can find a range of free resources on our website ([www.inspiringthefuture.org/resources](http://www.inspiringthefuture.org/resources)) such as example CVs and hints and tips on covering letters.**

## Running CV events and mock interviews

Other free online resources, developed with the CIPD which represents 130,000 people working in Human Resources and Personnel, for Inspiring the Future school and college activities include:

Hand outs for students

Writing a good CV

What good and bad CVs look like

Interviews: hints on questions and answers

Interviews: personal impact and presentation

What a good covering letter looks like

How to conduct a successful job search

How to read job adverts, write a covering letter and complete applications

How to research a company

Applying for an Apprenticeship

**Just go to:**

**[www.inspiringthefuture.org/employers-volunteers/helping-students-with-cvs-and-interviews](http://www.inspiringthefuture.org/employers-volunteers/helping-students-with-cvs-and-interviews)**

Or scan here

