

Episode Transcript:

JobSmart 2.0



Way2Learn: Job Smart 2.0

Way2Learn TV transcript

This is a transcript of the four episodes of **Job Smart** on *Way2Learn TV*.

There are 4 episodes to watch, then complete each of the units in the workbook:

1. Understanding mind set
2. Finding the right job for you
3. Preparing for an interview
4. Problem-solving in the workplace

Episode 1: Understanding mindset -

What is a mindset? If you look at the Collins English dictionary, you will get this answer: *“If you refer to a person’s mindset, you mean their general attitudes and the way they typically think about things”*. It doesn’t tell us a great deal though when it comes to gaining and sustaining employment so we’re going to break it down a little further and look at the individual mindsets that employers may find attractive in a potential employee. They are: honesty, commitment, flexibility and accountability.

- **Honesty** is the quality of being honest.
- **Commitment** is a promise to support somebody or something.
- **Flexibility** is the ability to change to suit new conditions or situations.
- **Accountability** is the fact of being responsible for your decisions or actions and expected to explain them when you are asked.

You should now be able to fill out **task 1.1** in your workbook. Having identified and described those individual mindsets, let’s look at why they might be so important to a prospective employer. On **pages 9 and 10** in your workbook, I want you explain why each mindset might be important to an employer and give one example of when you have displayed this quality.

Here to help you with this an employer, my employer, *Jezz Wright*.

“OK, so from an employer’s perspective, these four mindsets are absolutely vital. Look at the first one, **honesty**. You’ve got to be honest about yourself and you’ve got to be honest towards others. Your strengths, your challenges, what you do and don’t like, what you’re not very good at, what you’re excellent at and also in terms of reporting and accounting, honesty is absolutely key. If you want those around you to support you, that includes your line manager, the directors, HR, your colleagues, being honest and being transparent is absolutely essential.

Commitment: if you don’t have a commitment to the company you’re working for, if you don’t have loyalty, then how can that be reciprocated to you? You know you’ve got to make that commitment. You’ve got to see more to the job than someone who pays your bills every month. It’s got to mean more than that. So, a commitment to the product, the services that company provides is absolutely essential. And a commitment to your colleagues and to the management to support the growth and health of the business.

Be flexible. Yes, it may not be on your job description but do you know what? There’ll be someone else, a colleague of yours, that will be covering your back at some point and doing an extra shift or doing whatever they can to support you in your role. So be flexible. Be flexible in your approach to how you work, to the many different processes, change. Nobody likes change foisted upon them but sometimes it’s inevitable for the health of the company and sometimes for the survival of the company.

Accountability. You have to be accountable. Everybody has to be accountable. True north. Where is your true north compass? Everybody has to be accountable. You need to accept that. And what level of accountability suits you is absolutely important, but you need to be accountable.

You are now ready to move onto tasks 1.4 and 1.5 in your workbook on page 11 .
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Mindsets

Stuart: We all have things we want to improve, like TV presenting for instance. Some mindsets are more difficult than others. For instance, you might be a ‘set in stone’ kind of a person, you find it difficult to adapt to different situations, meaning the mindset of flexibility might be very testing for you. To illustrate this, I’m going to hand over to Louisa. She’s a better presenter than me ... or is that just my negative mindset?

Louisa Gilley: Let’s talk mindsets and specifically, let’s talk about what our weakest mindset might be and how we can work on that and improve.

I would say that my weakest mindset is probably just general negativity and self-talk around myself and not really giving myself enough credit in a lot of places. So I feel that this covers all four of the honesty, commitment, flexibility and accountability because if I’m being so negative about myself all the time then there’s no way I can give myself and give my all to any of those categories really, so it’s a good one to use as an example here.

So, some of the ways that I find to help with this negativity and negative self-talk is something called positive affirmations. It is basically the idea that you can invite

positivity into your life and if you keep telling yourself enough times then you start to believe it. And do you know what? There's actually some science behind it because when somebody tells you something negative, that's what you remember. You might have had a hundred positive comments that day but you always fester on whatever negative thing you've been told. And that's because the brain naturally tries to find negativity and pull on it.

By repeating positive things back to yourself you can rewire your brain into having positive thoughts instead of negative ones. Generally, loads and loads of positive thoughts and bombarding the negative thoughts and getting it out of your brain really. Positive affirmations can come from you physically standing in front of a mirror and saying: "I am strong, I am in control, I attract positive thoughts", like that. Or it could just be generally sort of surrounding yourself with more positivity in life, so I find that by doing daily yoga each day I am bringing these positive affirmations into my life. And just generally telling yourself that you're doing ok, even if you don't really feel it. These thoughts definitely at the beginning with these positive affirmations when I'd be like: "I am strong, I am capable.". I didn't think them and I didn't really believe them as I was saying them but the more you do them, the more that you find that they actually sink in a little bit and then you find that you're actually kind of believing it more than you realise. So, you're kind of changing your mindset without even really having to do that much which I think is great.

I do think for this to work in terms of employability you do have to kind of back-pedal a little bit and start to ask yourself things like: "Do I really want to find work? Am I qualified for the kind of work I'm going for? And am I willing to take on the responsibility and effort that's going to be required from the job?". Because I think if you're not saying "Yes" or "I'm working on it to those kind of questions", then the positive affirmations aren't really going to make that much difference because you haven't really worked on the foundations.

If, like me, you're struggling with negative self-talk, negative attitudes around yourself, I think you need to go back to the basics and you need to ask yourself what you really want in life and how you want to go about getting that and then you can start working on bringing in the positive affirmations. I mean you can start with it anyway and just be like: "I am fantastic, I am amazing", because it's basically just a 'fake it 'til you make it' mindset, so you sort of tell yourself that you're fantastic and eventually you just start to believe it.

I can't tell you how much these things have really helped me in my life and not just in getting work but in general. I'm a very anxious person. I suffer with anxiety and I found that just having these positive affirmations in my life just helps to ground me a little bit. And I think it's something that is going to help to put you in a better mindset to be able to go out there and get work if you're just a little bit more positive about it because it's not a great position to be in when you're looking for work. It's not great, it's not fun so really all you can do is try to make the best of the situation and just be as positive as you possibly can and I know it sounds silly just to be like, 'all you need to do, you need to be positive', but it actually does work and that's coming from like the ultimate critic of all of this. I thought it was all so stupid, it was rubbish. I started doing yoga and I thought there is absolutely no point in me doing this because it's not going to help whatsoever, and then it did. You just kind of have to let these things in a little bit and

you find they really do kind of actually work so hopefully this has been kind of useful for you guys so, back to Stu.

Let's have a look at tasks **1.4 and 1.5**. We have learnt how to identify your weakest mindset qualities and given you a few hints on how you can counter that situation. You should now have enough knowledge to complete **page 11** in your workbook.

Different mindsets: growth mindsets and fixed mindsets

As well as the individual mindset qualities we have explored in this episode, there are other things that come into play when dealing with mindsets, like, have you got a **growth** mindset or a **fixed** one?

There are 2 major types of mindsets. On one side is the **fixed mindset** that believes that your qualities are carved in stone. This creates the urgency to prove yourself over and over and over again. After all, if you are who you are and have a certain amount of intelligence and personality, you'd better prove that you have a healthy dose of them. You know such people, for sure. You've seen them in the classroom, in the office and maybe even in your family and social circles. Every situation calls for confirmation of their intelligence, personality or character.

On the other side you have a **growth mindset**. It is based on the belief that your basic qualities are things that you can cultivate through your efforts, from your strategies and from help from other people. People may differ in their initial talents, attitudes, interests and temperaments, but everyone can change and grow through application and experience. This doesn't mean that everyone can be an Einstein or a Beethoven, of course not. But growth mindset people believe that one's true potential is unknown and it is impossible to foresee what can be accomplished with years of passion, learning and training. After all, Darwin and Tolstoy were considered normal children and one of the greatest golfers of all time, Ben Hogan was pretty uncoordinated as a child and even Walt Disney himself was fired from his job due to lack of imagination.

Let's dig a little bit deeper into how your mindset literally controls your life. Your mindset dictates your relationship with success and failure and that plays a huge role in your career development. In a fixed mindset world, success is about proving to yourself and to others that you are smart and talented. So, any type of a setback: a bad grade, a losing score, not getting the job you wanted, means you are not smart or capable enough.

In a growth mindset, success is determined by learning and improving. It's all about stretching yourself. If you didn't win but the loss helped you learn something new, it is a success. Spending your time and effort on always evolving and learning and honing down your skills instead of proving that you're already the best, certainly gives you a much greater chance of success.

Your mindset also governs your relationships. If you believe that both you and your partner, friends and family members have traits and characteristics that are unchangeable it means that your relationship is also unchangeable. It is either meant to be and you live in perfect harmony or in an eternal misery. In contrast, people with a growth mindset believe that people can still have flaws and good relationships. Things

that are not working in a relationship can be improved upon with clear communication and effort. And that in turn makes the entire relationship that much better and that much stronger.

We have covered pages 6-11 in your workbook, dealing with tasks 1.1 to 1.5.

Summary

4 mindset qualities:

- **Honesty** – your ability to tell the truth
- **Commitment** – your promise to your employers that you are fulfilling the role that you were asked to fulfil.
- **Flexibility** – your ability to adapt and change
- **Accountability** – your responsibility and being able to take ownership of your actions

You should be able to pick one of those four mindsets that maybe you're not the strongest in (nobody's perfect) so everyone is going to have strengths and weaknesses and think of different ways in which you are able to work on these things in a positive way towards getting a job.

Episode 2: Deciding the right job for you

Task 1.1 page 14: for this task you need to identify your skills and abilities.

Stuart: But what are skills and abilities? The Collins English dictionary says:

“A skill is a type of work or activity which requires special training and knowledge”.

“An ability is the quality you have which makes it possible for you to do something”.

In layman's terms, a skill is something you learn that in turn gives you the ability to do that thing. Let's have a quick look at the skills you might have that you don't even know that you have.

Effective skills, learning and attitudes for learning and work

In this video, we'll explore the skills and personal qualities which are useful whether you're in education or employment. The topic can be broken down into 4 sub-categories: qualities, behaviours, attitudes and skills. Understanding these areas can help you comprehend what employers want and what you might need to work on.

Qualities are characteristics or personality traits. For example, honesty and patience are considered useful qualities for employees

Behaviour is the conduct or actions of a person. The way they interact or dress, for example, or how punctual they are.

Attitudes are the views, opinions and feelings of a person. For example, in a work environment, someone who values their job often does well and is, in turn, valued by their employer.

A **skill** is the ability to do something well. This might be designing something, selling or operating specific equipment.

In the world of work, employers are often specific about the skills and qualities that they require for a particular job. However, some traits, such as a positive attitude and reliability are universally prized.

We asked several employers what they thought useful character traits were for themselves or their workforce.

Tom Haczewski, Small business owner: “I think I’m quite a **confident** person. I run the biggest design networking group in the city. I’m always talking at events and things like that. I’m always trying to push to do something more, I’m always trying to see what the next thing is. So, you have to be confident.”

Katherine Wood, Small business owner: “You’ve got to have a lot of **grit** and that means you’re going to have really tough times when you think “*I don’t want to do this!*”. And you’ve got to still have that determination when you’re having those down times. You’ve still got to believe that this will go somewhere. And grit is one of the qualities that I’ve got and been able to hold on for dear life through those really tough times.”

Most job adverts give a very detailed **job description** and within this you’ll be able to spot the required qualities and skills. To increase your chances of getting a job, you need to identify the wish list in the job description and make sure that you include them in your application ideally with evidence to reinforce your points. For example, if you note that a hairdressing job requires skill with colourants, make sure you address this in your application with details of relevant training and the specifics of your experience.

David Childs, Business Skills Consultant: “If I’m running a business, I’m looking for people that are bringing that passion, that enthusiasm, to my business because it’s value added and the bottom line is to be profitable. If I can get my people to be working together in that way, our profitability will improve and their wages improve. The business moves on. That’s really what we’re looking for. And the people that are involved in the business have to feel integral to that, and bring those skills, passion and enthusiasm to the workplace.”

So, there are various skills, qualities and behaviours which will be valuable in your prospective workplace and these will vary according to the job type. Identifying what employers are looking for and being able to assess your own strengths and areas for development are crucial skills for gaining employment.

For the next activity you need to be looking at task 1.2 on pages 15 and 16.

Start with page 16 and list as many examples of what you like and what you are good at. It might help you with your personal and professional strengths.

Stuart: That short video talked about the **hard and soft skills**, which for this section translates to **personal and professional strengths**. For example, being a good listener is a good example of a personal strength, whereas being a good bookkeeper would be an example of a professional strength.

An employer’s perspective, Jez Wright:

Personal and professional strengths to a prospective employer are absolutely key and in an interview or application situation or even in your first couple of weeks in a new job, **be honest**, hide nothing.

What are your personal strengths? It might be a cliché, but are you a good team player? Do you have great interpersonal skills? Are you a people person? Do you like helping people and being part of a team? Is that important to you? Demonstrate it. Talk about it. That's really important. Give examples of when you being a team player has made all the difference. Then elaborate on that during an interview. It's really important that you don't just say you have the qualities but that you back them up with **evidence**, stories and situations with a certain **passion** as well and an **energy** that makes a prospective employer buy in and believe in what you're saying and what you're claiming.

Your professional skills and qualities are self-evident, but sometimes that's the problem because they're so obvious we don't talk about them! What are your professional qualities that you excel at or have a particular interest in or want to develop further? That's all really important, and why? Do you have any previous experience around those areas?

So, I think when you talk about professional experience, it's not just about the professional skills and experience you have, but also the ones you **want to have** as well, that's really important. I don't think that when it comes to personal and professional strengths you can go too far in illustrating those strengths with actual stories, situations and examples. That's absolutely key.

Recap:

- the difference between skills and abilities
- the hard or soft skills we already possess
- what would make us attractive to a potential employer?

In the next section, you're going to use all of this knowledge to identify your ideal job. Tasks 2.1 and 2.2 on pages 17 and 18.

For these tasks you need to look back over your skills and abilities and personal and professional strengths.

In these tasks you need to rank your chances of success and identify the most likely job for your skillset.

Louisa: Let's have a bit of a chat about **hidden skills** and **transferable skills**.

One of my worst qualities is that I can spend hours on *YouTube* just watching random stuff and wasting entire evenings, which is not productive. Let's reframe that, so all of those hours that I've spend watching *YouTube*, I've come up with a quite good idea of what is likely to be successful on *YouTube* because I'm watching content that has lots of views. So, I've kind of got quite a good idea about how the *YouTube* algorithm works and what might do quite well on the internet so what I could is use those skills, do myself maybe like a free SEO online course in marketing and go out and see if I can get a job in social media marketing with this knowledge.

Think of the ideas involved in your hobbies. The idea is basically to reframe your past times and pull out those soft skills from them. So that example was very much like a hard skill that you pull out, like you've got your marketing skill, but you can do it with soft skills as well. So, if you have a hobby, maybe you like collecting something, and you've organised it everywhere, that's organisation and that is a really good soft skill that you can use and put in your applications because everyone wants to see that.

Problem solving, dependability, communication: these are all skills that you're probably doing without even thinking about it. Communication, if you're a very 'social' person, you're going out, you're probably doing a lot of communication. You can reframe these things and use them in your CV and your applications to make yourself sound fantastic even if you think you've been wasting your time with your hobbies you absolutely haven't.

Have a look **at tasks 2.1 and 2.2 on pages 17 and 18.**

At this point you should have a fair idea of the jobs you are suitable for and the job choice that is most likely to lead to a sustainable career. As well as the individual skills and abilities we have explored in this episode, there are other things that come into play when setting yourself up for employment. Like, do you really understand your skill set or they just words on a page?

Episode 3: Getting ready for interview

We will be looking at pages 23 to 29 of the workbook.

First let's look at **pages 24 and 25.** For both tasks I need you to think about the people, companies or resources you might need to call on to get information about the job that you are applying for, and what additional information you might need about the company.

So, off the top of my head, you could look at the company website, a contact who works for the company or search the company's social media profile. Try to determine what information you can get from them and how it will help you when it comes to interview.

Pre-interview research

- If the company's gone through a major change, an acquisition or a new CEO the candidate should have been able to find out online.
- Look for any press releases or anything that's been written about the company in the news. A simple *Google* search can tell you a lot.
- The company and the industry.
- Who the company's key competitors are.
- The organisation's accomplishments over the past 12 months.
- The products sold.
- Who are the core customers?
- Research the actual job being applied for.

- Find out the background of the people who are interviewing. Do *LinkedIn* searches on them and see if you have commonalities. It will really help smooth your interview and also help guide the questions that you want to ask them.

What to wear for a job interview

Whether you are attending an interview in person or, what is now commonplace, doing a virtual interview, which is a bit like this, first impressions are going to count.

For the next activity you need to be looking at task 2.3 on page 26 of the workbook. You need to draw what you might wear for a job interview.

Make notes from the clip: what to wear for a job interview.

Interview questions

To help you fill in page 27 of your workbook, let's go over to Jezz to highlight some of the questions you may get asked in your interview.

I have here **5 questions** you're most likely to be asked in an interview.

1. Tell us about yourself.
2. Why do you want this job?
3. What makes you the ideal candidate?
4. What's your five-year plan?
5. Do you have any questions?

Tell us about yourself.

We talked earlier about professional strengths and personal strengths and we also talked about mindsets. This is really important. When you start talking about yourself, you're not talking about your pets, family or where you come from. This is about you as a professional and about your personal qualities that fit this job, this company, this team. So, by all means give them a potted history of your employment, that's really key, and any qualifications that are really important as well. A little bit about yourself in terms of your personal traits and professional skills, even if they're slightly outside of your professional life. If you're going for a job that's slightly left-field that you don't have history in professionally but it's been part of your life because it's been a hobby or interest, tell them about it. Keep it focused – don't ramble! Plan what it is you want to say about yourself in relation to this job. That's absolutely key.

Why do you want this job?

Well, it's not just about paying the bills because you don't have a job, right? You need to talk about the company specifically values, services, products, ethos. Anything you know about the company is important. Why do you want to work for THIS company? Not even just in this sector, why this company? Really important.

What makes you the ideal candidate?

You've got to put yourself above Joe Bloggs who's sitting in the waiting room. What is it about those professional strengths, that commitment, that resilience that is going to place you above other candidates who might just have the same skill sets?

What's your five-year plan?

Have a plan. Where do you want to be in 5 years' time? Look at the progression within the company and start, not being too overly ambitious, but be ambitious enough to say "I really want a future here, and this is why ...".

Do you have any questions?

And finally, the last most important question: "Is there anything you want to ask us?" don't scratch your chin and go "Actually, I can't really think of anything". Well, you should have thought of something. You should have been engaged from the day you wrote the application in terms of you want to find out about this company. They're interested in you, they've granted you an interview, now be interested in them. There will be questions, you just need to seek them out beforehand. Don't go without questions you can ask them. Good luck!

Recap

- You must prepare
- Research the company fully
- Dress in an appropriate manner
- Make a good first impression
- Practise and rehearse some potential questions

Speaking and listening skills

Of course, the problem with any interview situation is that you have built up all the potential questions they might ask, written yourself a mental script and find that you are only concentrating on that instead of listening to the actual conversation.

For tasks 2.3 and 2.4 we are going to concentrate on speaking and listening skills.

Louisa: Let's chat speaking and listening skills and just how important they are for having a successful interview because obviously these interviewers, they don't know you, they're coming at things with a clean slate so you need to make sure you are giving and portraying the best version of yourself possible in every single way. So, you know now that you have to make sure that you are dressing correctly for the interview, but something that you're doing might be giving off a bad impression without you even realising. If you've got bad, closed-off body language, which I know I do when I'm very nervous, it might be giving off an impression to an employer that you don't really care what's going on, whereas obviously you know it's because you're anxious but they don't know that. So, it's definitely about taking on board these tips to make sure that you are giving off the best impression possible.

Open and positive body language is key. Lots of smiling, lots of nodding, lots of listening. Listen to everything they're saying. I know that sometimes when you get nervous you may not be paying attention because your brain's going at a million miles an hour, but it's slowing things down, trying to keep calm so that you can fully take in what they're saying and you can engage properly with them.

Effective communication

In this video, we'll explore the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication. Many employers stress the importance of positive constructive communication with customers, colleagues or managers. So, with the help of experts, we'll identify some techniques for developing this skill.

Effective communication occurs when your ideas arrive in someone else's mind intact and well understood. But communication can be problematic and it's frustrating for everyone if the message is unclear or misunderstood. Barriers to effective communication include using the wrong tone of voice, speaking too quickly or using regional terms which may not be understood.

Verbal communication can also be disrupted in a noisy environment or if your body language contradicts what you are saying. Perhaps, for example, you're welcoming somebody but your arms are folded, which is considered an unwelcoming gesture. There are many aspects to the voice which combine to communicate and sometimes unintentionally. Voice elements such as pitch, tone and speed can communicate your underlying enthusiasm, anxiety or certainty about a subject.

A surprising amount of communication is non-verbal with about 65% of the information you transmit being from things like facial expression, appearance, eye contact and even how closely you stand to someone. If you are aware of these elements of communication, you will be more able to control what you are saying to others and to understand what they're saying to you.

Toby Oddy, business owner: "Body language is a massive indicator of where the person's mindset is, so you can look at key things. For example, putting your hand over your mouth, psychologically the person in front of you will speak because they think you can't speak. Crossing your arms shows the person is very defensive and you can read it as the person does not want to hear what you're trying to say or they have something they need to add that you haven't covered yet so you need to uncover that by open and closed question techniques.

Louisa: Isn't it amazing to think that 65% of your communication isn't even coming from the words that are coming out of your mouth? It's from your body language, the way you're presenting yourself and this can be absolutely amazing for giving off a fantastic impression in an interview and making people think that you're confident, you're outgoing, you're fantastic and they'll definitely want to give you a job.

A little practise session now: see if you can rope in a friend or practise in the mirror. Pick two of the questions from task 2.2 and rehearse how you would answer them in an interview situation. When you are confident with your answers fill out page 29 of your workbook.

Interview dos and don'ts

1. **Practice and prepare:** research the company and practise verbalising answers.
2. **Be memorable.** When asked a question, do 3 things:
 1. Answer the question
 2. Give an example
 3. Say why it is important for them and for the job.
3. Think about the **perspective of the employer.**
4. **Honesty is the best policy** – if you have a messy past, don't apologise and don't lie because nowadays people can find out. Discuss values.
5. Be aware of **body language** – project enthusiasm and openness, sit forwards, make eye contact to show we're engaged and interested. Be authentic.

Top ten tips for interview

1. Research – the company, the job and yourself
2. Dress professionally
3. Don't go empty handed – take CV, business cards, notes and pen
4. Arrive early
5. Positive body language and tone of voice
6. Communication and listening to everything that is said
7. Give specific examples for everything
8. Ask a question at the end of the interview
9. Practise before you go
10. Follow up with a call/email to thank them for the opportunity to give a final positive impression.

Episode 4: Problem solving in the workplace

Workplace problems can have a really negative impact on both a personal and professional level. To illustrate problems in the workplace, according to the internet, the top 5 workplace problems are:

1. Interpersonal conflict
2. Communication problems
3. Gossip
4. Bullying
5. Low motivation and job satisfaction.

This unit looks at pages 31-35 of your workbook.

For tasks 1.1 and 1.2, write down a workplace problem that you have faced in the past. This could be in paid work, voluntary work or placements.

How to address problems in the workplace

Jason Nazar, CEO and Co-founder, Docstoc

No matter how successful an organisation looks from the outside, once you get in it, it's got its scars, potholes, problems and issues. And any employee that works in any company can tell you the issues of that company. What are the best ways to address those?

Well to start off with, in a start-up or small business, we know that there is a tiny amount of things that we do that actually make a difference. Just because there's an

issue doesn't mean it's something that should be worked on. So first off, agree whether it's a top priority and an urgent issue. And if it's not, be ok with the fact there are going to be some processes that are broken and some things that won't work, so that you can focus on other things that are more important.

If it is a top priority and it is something that you should fix, but you don't have the ability to do it yourself, make sure that the person whether it's your manager, a co-worker or a person that reports to you that can fix it understand it, takes accountability for it, and then remind them and hold them accountable for fixing that issue. So, if something's on fire and you can't fix it raise your hand

Finally, if it's an issue that you can fix yourself, raise your hand and say "I'm going to take care of this". Don't wait for someone else to come and fix it if you have the ability fix or improve a process or something urgently important that's blocking a top priority of a company, just take responsibility.

If you follow those three steps, even though we always know there's going to be issues and scars and potholes and problems inside organisations, we'll always be more successful.

Stuart: Problem-solving is just as important as any other skills and abilities we have identified during this course. You will spend a third of your life at work, so being able to effectively handle workplace problems is essential for a healthy workplace environment.

For the next activity you need to be looking at Task 2.1 and 2.2 on page 33. Taking the problem you identified over the page, list ways you may be able to solve the problem and identify the best solution.

How some workplace issues can be resolved

Louisa: You've got the job. You think everything's going to be fantastic and then you run into a problem. So, what are you going to do about it?

Identify the **source of the conflict** – generally conflict happens because two people are different and both of their needs aren't being met. Difference is at the heart of conflict. When you're in a workplace you're going to be working with lots of different people from lots of different backgrounds and that makes working really, really fun and really exciting but it does mean that obviously sometimes there are going to be problems.

We can solve these problems. The big, big point here it is going to be about **listening**. Listening to the other side of the story and have the other party listen to what you have to say. If this has to be done with a mediator somewhere who can control the room and make sure that the conversation is on track, that's absolutely great too, but I think generally having a mutual understanding of where each of you are coming from in an argument can help you solve the issue, because as I've said, conflict comes from people's needs not being met so if you are listening to people, that might be the need that they needed to be met. They might just need to be heard but hearing them out you might be able to know what the solution is. And then of course you're going to need to brainstorm ideas for how we're going to solve these conflicts so, think, when you work at a company, there is a common goal which is normally the advancement of said

company so you're going to want to focus in on any common commonalities that you have with whoever the conflict is with and focus on that as a way of solving the issue.

This is when the speaking and listening skills from the last episode are going to come in handy making sure that you are giving off positive body language and that your tone of voice is fine and that you're speaking correctly towards people. Things can get misconstrued in a workplace situation and you don't want people thinking that you're doing things to upset them when you're not, so honestly, body language and all that can really help.

I think another thing is generally just kind of letting things go a little bit, sort of just working out really what's worth fighting over and what's worth just taking as part of the job and moving on with it and if the other person's not going to be the bigger person it might have to be you, to be the bigger person and just put it to bed and go with it. Looking for agreement and that willingness to sort of seek out a common ground is such an important thing in the workplace and it's definitely something that your higher-ups will notice as very good and important and if you're the person being the bigger person and taking steps, even if nobody else notices it, it just makes your life a little bit easier.

Obviously, conflict comes with anger so definitely anger management is an extremely important thing if you are somebody who struggles with their anger. I think it's definitely trying to use relaxation techniques and calm yourself down. Maybe take yourself out of the situation to start with, let yourself cool off so you don't say something you'll regret and just once again, going back to what I was saying in the first episode, is positive affirmations and just trying to have a more positive mindset in general because these anger problems aren't ever going to be good for you in the workplace so it's going to be a case of trying to do what you can to kind of like tone down that part of you. You don't have to get rid of it because everybody is different, some people do have these kinds of things and that's absolutely fine but in a workplace it's just sort of you just have to dull down your personality regardless of what it is, so it's just sort of sticking with that and just dulling things down, trying to get through and just, yes, picking your battles really, what's really worth having a fight over? And what's worth maybe just ignoring or letting go and moving on from just to make the workplace a little bit easier because work is hard enough as it is you don't really need extra problems on top of that in conflict.

In your workbooks you should now have identified a problem you have faced in a work environment, made a list of potential solutions and shortlisted the best solutions for your problem.

Stuart: In my opinion good communication and conflict resolution are the key to a happy and settled workplace. Let's face it, if you are going to spend 8 hours a day somewhere then you need to make that time as pleasant and productive as possible.

On page 35, task 2.3. for this task, list 3 sources that could help you solve your work problem.

Support for workplace problems

Jezz: You've got a problem at work, where do you go?

- First of all, ask a **trusted colleague**.
- Your **line manager** – maybe able to help you or signpost you to help to resolve that issue.
- **Human Resources** (HR) – they are trained professionals to help resolve situations and usually the best placed person to be able to do that.
- Your **union** - if you're a member of a union, they will take out a grievance on your behalf, they can suggest arbitration or some other mechanism.
- Ideally if you've got a grievance with somebody, sometimes you should approach them tactfully and see if you can sort it out **between yourselves**, but if not, these other people are best placed to support you.

6 qualities of exceptional problem solvers

1. Combines the right feelings with the right logic
2. Considers problems as new challenges and opportunities
3. Regularly improves communication between employees
4. Keep egos aside
5. Encourages creativity and new ideas
6. Able to find the right root causes of the problem to stop them recurring.

Eliminating small problems allows bigger problems to gradually disappear.