

Don't be Modest!

If most candidates applying for the job you are applying for have the minimum criteria for the role, how can you make your application stand out?

Whilst the prospective employer needs to know what you can do, it is far more powerful to write about how well you can do it. The best way to do that is to give specific examples of results you have achieved. We are socialised not to be boastful, but in job search it's important to make sure the recruiter can immediately see how great you are!

Look at the job description (if you have it), or job advert (if not), and decide what specific qualities they are looking for. Focusing just on those qualities, consider how you can best demonstrate your excellence in each one.

Use real examples of where you have used these skills in practice. This does not necessarily have to be in a work context. If you have used the skill to great effect in, say, a voluntary capacity, or even as part of a hobby, still mention it if it is relevant to the role.

If the role requires experience of budgeting, for example, you could use a work example if you have one, if budgeting was part of a previous role. Or it may be that you volunteered as part of a management team for a charity which involved budgeting. Or it may be that you are in receipt of Direct Payments and have to budget those. All these examples are valid in demonstrating your experience of budgeting.

Recruiting people is always a risk, so recruiters like to have proof that you can do the job rather than just saying you can (which every candidate will say).

In your CV, mention your top qualities for the role in the personal profile. Have a section on "skills", and give brief examples of each of the skills they are looking for. In your work history, talk about results achieved rather than tasks undertaken.

Before an interview, prepare relevant examples of achievements for each of the skills they are likely to ask you questions about. If your impairment gives you a specific advantage, make that very clear. Examples include:

- My autism means I can spot errors in coding very easily
- Using dictation software (paid for by Access to Work) I work more quickly and accurately than my colleagues
- Being blind, I pick up on subtle voice changes in meetings, which help to understand the real meaning behind what people are saying

- I have discovered that my Dyslexia enables me to be far more creative in finding solutions to problems than my colleagues

The key is not to be modest about the qualities you have that will make you the best person for the role you are applying for. Make sure the recruiter can easily see your full potential.

