

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS BRIEFING

TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATION

This PDF supports the short video about teamwork and collaboration skills and it's one of nine paired videos and PDFs on Tunnelworks, each covering a common employability skill.

The main aim with these resources is to help you understand what these skills are, and how they are used. You might be surprised to realise that you're probably using many of these skills in your school, social and family lives already.

So, even if you don't have lots of working experience, you do have relevant work skills to talk about when applying for jobs. Use these resources to help identify your skills and practise writing and talking about them. Then you'll be interview ready!

What is a good general definition of teamwork and collaboration?

Teamwork is when two or more people agree to work together to achieve a common goal. Collaboration means people with different skills and expertise co-operating to do everything the team needs to do. Sometimes teamwork and collaboration involve large groups of people such as departments in a business, or teachers in a school.

What does that mean in practice on the Thames Tideway Tunnel project?

The Thames Tideway Tunnel project is a large and complicated construction project where lots of things have to happen at the same time. Different departments e.g. engineering, finance, and communications have to show good teamwork and collaboration as they work alongside each other to make sure everything gets done safely, on time and within the budget. There are also lots of smaller individual teams in each department, who collaborate to ensure their department contributes to the bigger team effort.

What are two typical examples of teamwork and collaboration in action on the Thames Tideway Tunnel project?

One example is when the engineering and finance teams collaborate to work out how much different parts of the project will cost.

Another example is when teams of project engineers work closely with the teams of workers on the construction sites, to ensure everyone understands what needs to be done, how safety can be ensured, and when work needs to be finished by.

What are the individual elements in teamwork and collaboration?

These include: the ability to work well with different personality types, to get stuck in, contribute and be fully involved; to help and respect others; to share ideas and information; to recognise

everyone's strengths; to see how others think and work and to see things from different perspectives.

At school or at home what sort of activities might help me to develop teamwork and collaboration skills?

If you've worked successfully with a group of classmates or friends then you will have developed and used teamwork and collaboration skills. Typical activities include: playing in a school sports team; working with other students in your class to complete a project or presentation; joining a school committee to plan a social event e.g. your end-of-year prom, or deciding to work with others on a fundraising project for your favourite charity.

If I'm applying for a job and the employer says they want good team players, how can I talk about things I've done and make them relevant?

Think about and write down things you've done as part of a team. Practice and be ready to talk about them in an interview.

You could say you were a good team player by explaining that you worked well as part of a group of students on a fund-raising project, shared ideas and information, did what needed to be done in order to achieve your common goal, respected others' points of views and got fully involved in discussions and actions.

Or maybe you're part of the school drama club. You could explain that you were a fully committed member of the team. You were a good team player because you attended all rehearsals, you didn't let anyone down and you helped when someone forgot their lines. You collaborated with others with different skills in different aspects of your school production, like scenery painting or cleaning costumes or designing and printing invitations.