

Overcoming barriers



Everyone will have different barriers or challenges to overcome in their journey towards employment. These barriers can negatively impact on someone's chance of gaining employment but some might also be perceived and not actual barriers. It's helpful to identify and understand these further so you can prepare and overcome barriers.

Sometimes it is easier to do this from an outsider's perspective so let's look at a fictional scenario and identify barriers and how to overcome them.

Consider this scenario

Rosie was diagnosed with postnatal depression a year ago. Since then, she has become extremely isolated and only leaves the house when she has to. She would like to take her daughter to a new playgroup, but she finds it hard to go to new places or speak to people. She usually asks her mum to take her daughter but she feels like she is missing out on the shared experience.

Rosie would like to return to work part time. She began her Level 1 qualification in childcare before her pregnancy but doesn't think she would be able to access college again or if she could afford to do it. There are local groups offering volunteering placements, but she doesn't have the confidence to go there to ask about them in more detail.

Consider the questions below and overleaf and write your thoughts in the boxes.

What do you think Rosie's main barriers are?

Example: Rosie's isolation and confidence, childcare, etc.



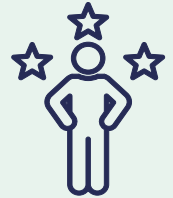
What could Rosie do to build her confidence and get more involved with others?

Example: Rosie could go to local baby groups, volunteer at a community centre, etc.



How would Rosie benefit from your suggestions above?

Example: gain confidence and motivation from interacting with others.



What support could Rosie access to help her overcome her barriers?

Example: library to find local opportunities, GP to find if any support group or talking therapy she can access, etc.



Sometimes we put up barriers for different reasons such as avoidance or wanting to protect ourselves. Understanding why we've done this can lead to potential actions we can take to reduce those barriers or completely remove them.



Below are a list of some common barriers people often talk about when seeking employment and some possible solutions to overcoming them.

Common Barriers

Possible solutions

Transportation

- Search for remote or home working posts
- Search for local vacancies within walking distance
- Research how much it would cost to get transport to the workplace for example monthly train/bus pass, etc.

Computer literacy and confidence

- Local libraries may have computer literacy courses
- Could a friend or family member support you to use a PC?
- Are there YouTube videos of basic computer tutorials?
- Look for posts that have minimal computer use
- Find an online course to build your confidence and literacy.

Gap in your CV

- Use a skills-based layout as opposed to date specific
- Don't be date specific, i.e., place, year, or month
- Include voluntary experience or training undertaken in those gaps
- Use a covering letter to explain those gaps if you think necessary.



Using the two scenarios above, now consider your own situation. Complete the boxes below for each barrier you think you are facing on your journey to employment and what the potential solutions might be.



Completing these will help you to identify your next steps to overcome those barriers and identify people who could support you along the way.

What barrier am I facing?	What is the potential solution?	Who could support you? <i>(family, friend, peer, professional, etc.)</i>