

**Engage  
with...  
Employers**

# **Get Going**

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**Educator  
Resource Pack**

# Cover Letter Template

**School or College Name**  
Address  
Post Code  
Email and Phone number

Business Name  
Business Address  
Business Post Code

Dear [Named Business Person]

My name is [Name] and I am very proud to be the [Job Title] at [School or College Name]. We are passionate about providing children and young adults in [Town or City] with the skills and experience they need to truly fulfil their potential.

Our aim is to help create 'employees for the future' who have the right skills, knowledge and ability to either set up and run their own business, or to become a valued and highly effective employee. Our role, as a [school or college], is to help them develop the necessary aptitude and attitude, but nothing prepares them better for the world of work than direct, first-hand experience.

We also know, from extensive research, that having a diverse workforce that includes people with a wide range of support needs brings many business benefits. These include: improving staff confidence in working alongside people with a range of disabilities; improved staff loyalty and retention, as they prefer to work for an inclusive company; and helping staff develop new skills, perhaps by communicating in a different style. We believe that working alongside [school or college name] will provide you with an ideal opportunity to learn more about the potential of this valuable talent pipeline.

Accordingly, we are approaching (business name) because we think you are ideally based to help inform and motivate our students, as well as providing information about employment possibilities that might be open to them with you or other employers in the (business sector). We appreciate that you may not have an abundance of time to commit at the moment, but we do hope that you will be able to support our students in some way.

We have attached a brochure/flier/list with some ideas of what we can offer – but if you have another idea, please don't let your imagination be limited by our list. I have asked (colleague name) to follow up our letter next week to see which areas you may be interested in supporting. If you would like to pass this letter on to another colleague, if this is their area of responsibility, please do so and just let us know at [email] so we can contact them instead.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this letter, We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards,

[Headteacher]

# Overcoming Objections

This guide is intended to help you learn how to answer some typical objections that you might face when engaging new employers.

Not many people like cold-calling and, unless you have good personal contacts with local employers, this will need to be part of someone's role. This guide is intended to take some of the fear out of picking up the phone for the first time and help you prepare yourself for the first rejection – which sadly will be inevitable.

## Research

If you cannot commit the time to research the organisation and who to approach, why should they invest time in responding to you? Most organisations' websites are very useful and will give a list of senior people, alongside their contact details. If you are looking for opportunities in specific departments, you need to approach the most senior person in the team. Alternatively, choose the CEO, Head of HR or Head of Diversity or equivalent roles. LinkedIn and Twitter are also great ways to contact someone through the direct message function.

Make sure you know a bit about what the employer does so you can have an informed conversation. Talking about an interest in having a presentation about jobs in accountancy when you are on the phone to a firm of solicitors is not likely to help your cause. Check if your school or college has been in touch with them before or have any other links.



## Prepare

Having a script is likely to help you keep on track and be prepared to overcome any objections they may have. Write it down and then practice by speaking it out loud, as how you say something in person is often different from how you write it down.

Can you get a colleague at school or college or a member of your family to listen to your pitch? Get them to come up with some objections, so you can practice your response.



## Dialogue, not monologue



You need to aim to set up a 2-way conversation rather than preparing everything you want to say and then delivering it at pace. Prepare some questions about their business sector or organisation and engage them in conversation. You need to show that you are really interested in them, as an employer, and that they are not just a random name on a list.

## Persist or withdraw?

You are likely to encourage some form of resistance when making approaches to employers. Don't take this personally – they are not rejecting you! You need to determine if they are just too busy to talk or are definitely not interested – is it “no, not now” or “no, never”? Don't annoy them by being too pushy and aim to leave the door open for a later approach.

Your research should have helped you prepare answers to some of the more common objections, but you will always come up with new ones. Whilst you may have been able to overcome them immediately, you should also make a note of them and practice some alternative responses for future conversations.



Objection	Hints
<p>Often the first person you speak to will be the Receptionist or PA to the person you really want to speak to. They have probably been told not to accept any cold calls and their job is to be the 'gatekeeper.'</p>	<p>You only have a few seconds to establish a positive response, so you need to show you know about their organisation and sector and that it's much more than a cold call! Let them know you have researched the business.</p> <p>Perhaps indicate that one of your students really wants to be a [business sector role] and have asked you if you can find someone for them to speak to in a local employer, so they can find out more.</p>
<p>"I am too busy."</p> <p>This is often their immediate response as they may think you are looking for a longer or significant time commitment.</p>	<p>You need to determine if they are too busy to discuss it today, or too busy to get involved in the future.</p> <p>If the former, then ask if there is a better time for you to ring back or if there is someone else you can speak to. If the latter, perhaps offer your easiest engagement opportunity – what we are looking for is just 15 minutes of someone's time to speak at an assembly, or could you spare up to 30 minutes to take part in an Q and A session over Zoom. They don't even need to leave their desk!</p>
<p>"I think a visit to our premises would disturb my staff too much and they are all very busy."</p>	<p>Accept that you realise they are busy and ask if they would be able to film a virtual tour of the building, instead, and link up via an online platform. Stress how important it is for students to understand about a range of different workplaces.</p>
<p>"We have never done anything like this before."</p>	<p>Reassure them that they don't need any prior experience and that your job is to support them. You would be delighted to send them more information and to come and visit or speak on the phone again and explain how it all works. Stress it's not onerous or time-consuming and that your experience is that employers really quite enjoy it.</p> <p>If you can offer them another employer to speak to, or that the Enterprise Advisor from WYCA will get in touch, that might help them.</p>

Objection	Hints
<p>“I am not the right person to speak to.”</p>	<p>This may be the genuine answer or an attempt to deflect you. Apologise for disturbing them and ask who the right person is – can they put you through now? If not, what is their name, title, email and phone number?</p>
<p>“Why would I be interested in something like this?”</p>	<p>This is where your prior research comes in. You may have read that they are expanding, launching a new product, have just got an award for something and that’s why you want to get in touch. It could be that teachers have identified their business sector as being one of particular interest to a group of students. They may be located just round the corner.</p>
<p>“Our office isn’t very accessible.”</p>	<p>Acknowledge that this may be an issue but that you could ensure the students that engage with the employer are able to access the site and that you would go and do a site visit and risk assessment first of all.</p>
<p>“We don’t have a budget for this kind of work.”</p>	<p>Reassure them that there are no real costs involved. The school arrange for students and support staff to get to and from their premises and they come with a packed lunch. The employer will be asked to provide hot and cold drinks during the day.</p>
<p>“We don’t have any experience in this area and I would be concerned that we might do or say something wrong.”</p>	<p>Explain that this is a common concern but that the school or college will provide specific support either to arrange a visit or a talk.</p> <p>Explain that there are also a range of organisations who can offer training around Disability Awareness if this was something of interest.</p>
<p>“It’s just too complicated and will require lots of pre-planning and paperwork.”</p>	<p>Reassure them that the school or college will do most of the work and that you have experience in this area (if you have!). Explain that all you need to do is make a visit to the premises (or invite them to your site) and complete a simple risk and health &amp; safety assessment and that you do all the rest.</p>
<p>“Can you drop me an email with the details?”</p>	<p>Agree that you can, of course, but first of all check they are the right person to speak to or if there is someone else more appropriate.</p>

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