The Third Sector (not for profit)

A Career Guide for Students interested in working in the Third Sector

This guide has been produced to assist students considering a career in the Third Sector to effectively plan their route into their chosen role

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Industry Health Check

This is the job sector with the claim to the largest variety of different names: not for profit, voluntary and community charity, third sector and more recently the Civil Society. Whatever the name the underlying features are: independent of government and business, non profit distributing, providing a wider public benefit or be a non sacramental body or place of worship. Social Enterprises are closely related to the charity sector despite their businesses status. They share a common goal to: to help people, tackle social problems, the environment and invest in communities. Profits are used to invest in the specific areas of interest. They are not covered in this guide.

The UK Charity sector lists 180,893 charities in total registered in the UK with 943,871 Trustees, and 901,955 employees and with more than three times the number of volunteers, 3,725,420. Source: http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/showcharity/registerofcharities/SectorData/SectorOverview.aspx. These include huge multinational charities such as Amnesty International or the Red Cross to thousands of smaller and localised organisations such as East London Business Alliance and CitizensUK (umbrella group for local organisations). These larger organisations provide graduate training programmes, internships and structured career development opportunities.

Working within the sector is not for the fainthearted. The sector has taken a massive hit in income since the impact of the 2008 economic recession. This is because of a massive reduction in local government contributions towards funding and a fall in contributions from the public whose wages have been hit hard. As a result there are fewer jobs to go around and more individuals competing for to get their foot in the door. The Third Sector is wildly competitive for paid employment roles, loaded with short term contracts and contains massive numbers of people working for free with the hope to progress into paid employment.

Employment opportunities within this broad sector are grouped into:

- administrative;
- advisory;
- animal conservation;
- campaigning and lobbying;
- conservation and environmental;
- economic development and capacity building;
- emergency and poverty alleviation;
- environmental research;
- financial management;
- fundraising;
- health education and promotion;
- human resources management, including volunteer management;
- human rights;
- policy development;
- provision of care services and carer support;
- public relations and branding;
- scientific and social research and development.

Source: http://www.prospects.ac.uk/charities_voluntary_sector_overview.htm
Read more about the sector at the Graduate Prospects website.

Entry requirements

Resilience, stamina, commitment and a philosophical loyalty are basic entry requirements along with a proven track record in volunteering to demonstrate your passion and skills.
Larger organisations such as those below provide graduate training programmes, internships and structured career development opportunities

- Alzheimer's Society
- Arts Council England
- Barnado's
- British Red Cross
- Cancer Research UK
- National Trust
- Oxfam
- Age UK

Source: [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/charities_voluntary_sector_overview.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/charities_voluntary_sector_overview.htm)

Graduate schemes and internships have been collated together by TARGETjobs into a useful resource which can be accessed here: [http://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/public-service-charity-and-social-work/288141-graduate-schemes-and-internships-in-the-charitynot-for-profit-s](http://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/public-service-charity-and-social-work/288141-graduate-schemes-and-internships-in-the-charitynot-for-profit-s). There is also a useful sector wide article too: [http://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/public-service-charity-and-social-work/288141-graduate-schemes-and-internships-in-the-charitynot-for-profit-s](http://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/public-service-charity-and-social-work/288141-graduate-schemes-and-internships-in-the-charitynot-for-profit-s)

Networking is the lifeblood of this industry. If your research indicates this is the right sector for you, get networking as soon as possible to ensure you develop your industry contacts and knowledge, raise your professional profile, gain an inside ear to potential job/volunteering opportunities and develop your confidence. Several ways you can do this include attending sector events such as, completing short curses run by several of the third sector umbrella groups such as Community Matters and NCVO and contributing to online community forums. Register for news alerts and RSS job feeds. Another method to network is via online blogs; reading and leaving well thought out comments on industry blogs such as: [http://blogs.ncvo.org.uk/2014/10/31/halloween-special-what-are-the-eks-spookiest-charities/](http://blogs.ncvo.org.uk/2014/10/31/halloween-special-what-are-the-eks-spookiest-charities/) or the Joseph Rountree Foundation - [http://www.jrf.org.uk/blog/2014/10/plan-tackle-poverty-beyond-election-friendly-headlines](http://www.jrf.org.uk/blog/2014/10/plan-tackle-poverty-beyond-election-friendly-headlines).


Working your way through the ranks is aided by experience although a degree will help you to stand out. Postgraduate qualifications are often essential for management and fundraising roles. They will certainly help add to your personal confidence and professional development within the sector.
Development Opportunities

Senior roles include: Executive Manager, Corporate Fundraising and Partnerships Manager, Fundraising Selections Analyst, and Head of Digital Marketing.

The Institute for Fundraising run a series of short courses concerned with funding; certificates, diplomas and a soon to be advanced diploma.

Graduate salaries can be low too. So, if your personal circumstances such as income requirements demand a greater stability and basic higher income, working in this sector may not be for you. This sector is no different from other sectors in that research is key to making successful work shadowing, voluntary work, and internship and employment applications. You must know the charity, the breadth of services to others, current projects and campaigns; understand their marketing methods, client/service user group, and breadth of roles, who their competitors are, if you are to get to the interview room door. Why not register for CaSE volunteer vacancies to test your career plans out; http://www.uel.ac.uk/eet/students/volunteering/.

Support roles such as an administrator or IT support are common entry routes for all potential employees.

Unsure if this sector is right for you?

Many people want to work for a charity because they want to do what they feel is a meaningful job to help others. Many have an idea of who they would like to help. Some have experience of falling into one or more of the below categories and wish use this experience to develop their skills and knowledge to support others through these difficult periods.

Popular service user groups include people that fall into one or several of the below categories:
- refugees and migrants
- ex-offenders
- homeless
- addiction
- young people
- mental health
- non governmental organisations (NGOs) which help people and communities overseas


The Careers and Student Employability Team (CaSE) can help you through the decision making process. Why not take a look how through accessing the Plan Your Career section of our website - http://www.uel.ac.uk/eet/students/plan/makingacareerchoice/ . We offer professionally trained, impartial and non judgemental support to help you navigate through your career options. In addition we host a rich variety of mentoring and volunteering opportunities within this sector which will enable you to test it out whilst you compete your studies. Full details of CaSE’s support for your career plans and professional development can be found here: http://www.uel.ac.uk/eet/students/.
Read key sector newspapers, journals or online community forums to find out what is in the news to see if it appeals to you and if you like the sound of the people doing the talking or reporting! Take a look at live prospective volunteering opportunities and look at the paid vacancies for those with experience.

Give yourself a time limit and a manageable plan to help you do this as the internet can offer limitless research resources to those with some time and some energy to focus on a hunt. For example, ‘today I will look at three organisations online that can help me find out more about the industry and examine 5 volunteer job details.’

Use the resource list at the end of this guide to help you get started. You might want to start with The Guardian’s Voluntary/Volunteering hub: [http://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/volunteering](http://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/volunteering) or an article about graduate entry: [http://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2014/mar/01/best-bits-moving-career-charity](http://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2014/mar/01/best-bits-moving-career-charity). The body that regulates UK charities hosts lots of brief data which might be of interest. For example a top ten list which you can filter to identify who has the most generous track record in charity spending. You can find it here: [http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/showcharity/registreofcharities/SectorData/Top10Charities.aspx](http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/showcharity/registreofcharities/SectorData/Top10Charities.aspx)

**Breadth of roles**

Gone are the days when charities used to rely on a collection box in the high street on a Saturday to generate income. All charities have had to adapt to the twenty first century and add skills associated with the business sector to manage and promote their origination in order to maximise access to funds. Social media skills are key here as charities have had to run fast to keep up with technological changes in order to access a wider support and income generating base. So effective have the campaigning activities become for many charities that a recent government politician told the sector to stick to knitting activities rather than advocate upon social/government policy such as Food Banks. Source: [http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/sep/03/charities-knitting-politics-brook-newmark](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/sep/03/charities-knitting-politics-brook-newmark).
Specific Third Sector roles - investigate further detail -
www.prospects.ac.uk/charities_voluntary_sector_graduate_jobs.htm

1. **Advice worker** (different title for a similar role include: Advocate, Support Worker and Case Load Worker)
Advice workers provide free, impartial and confidential advice and information to their clients on a wide range of issues. Some act as general advisers covering legal and financial topics such as debt, housing, employment, welfare and education. Others specialise in just one area and offer expert advice. This will usually be in a topic that requires in-depth knowledge such as immigration or homelessness. Read more: http://www.prospects.ac.uk/advice_worker_job_description.htm

Example job vacancy – CharityJob - http://www.charityjob.co.uk/ - Advice and Information Officer
Rethink Mental Health

- **Salary** £21,965 to £25,183 per annum + £3,285 per annum Inner London Weighting
- **Location** London, Greater London - **Job Type** Permanent
- **Category** Advice, Information - **Sectors** : Health, Medical

**Job Description**
Rethink Mental Illness is a charity that believes a better life is possible for millions of people affected by mental illness. For 40 years we have brought people together to support each other. We run services and support groups across England that change people’s lives and we challenge attitudes about mental illness. Our Advice and Information Service offers expert practical advice and information to people affected by mental health problems, as well as their carers, family and friends and professionals in health and social care. Working within our Advice & Information team you will work directly with our clients to provide advice on a wide range of issues, over the telephone or in writing. Our clients are people living with mental illness, their carers, family and friends and professionals.
You will come from an advice background and/or have experience of working with our client group. Experience of researching and drafting information resources is also desirable. A demonstrable commitment to working in this challenging area is essential.

2. **Arts Administrator**
An arts administrator manages activities and services which support the arts sector, involving projects and initiatives provided by:

- theatres, galleries and museums;
- arts festivals and centres;
- dance companies; community and disability arts organisations;
- local authorities and arts councils.
3. **Charity Administrator**

This is an entry level job for many looking to break into the Third Sector. Volunteering, work placement or internship experience is also preferred to get this far. Charity Administrators will tackle all areas of administration such as producing documents, handling stationary, keeping diaries, receiving visitors and implementing data handling policies such as Data Protection.

4. **Charity fundraiser**

This is often the top job within a charity. The key aim is to raise funds to deliver the service, highlight the captains, train volunteers and pay employees is essential.

Charity fundraisers are employed primarily to increase the contributions of individuals and groups to a charity by building relationships and exploring new fundraising opportunities from various sources. They tend to be categorised according to the types of donors on whom they focus.

The main categories of fundraiser are:
- community
- corporate
- legacy
- major gifts
- trusts
- events

Source: [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/charity_fundraiser_job_description.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/charity_fundraiser_job_description.htm)

Example job vacancy

**Community Fundraising Officer - TPP Not for Profit Salford**

£19000 - £27000 per annum

This dearly loved charity based within Little Hulton, Manchester exists to deliver care that is special and unique to each individual person. They are currently looking for a Community Fundraising Officer to join their fundraising team, to cover Salford. The Community Fundraising Officer will develop and maximise relationships with the local community, volunteers and individuals. As well as this they will work with volunteer fundraising groups and associations, schools and high street corporates. This is an exciting opportunity for someone with the following experience:

* Relevant experience in a community fundraising or volunteering environment
* Fundraising experience raising money from the public and promoting activities from within another charity setting.
* Experience of dealing with the public - in person and on the telephone.
* Confident in contribution towards the development of annual budgets, (some financial reporting will be required by the successful candidate).
* Experience in initiating and developing relationships with new business and schools and manage these partnerships.
* Experience of working with, managing and motivating fund raising committees and volunteers.
* Taking Responsibility for their own administration and efficiently organise their own activities with support from volunteers wherever possible.
* Experience of using a variety of communication methods to raise awareness of the health charity and their events through a wide range of methods
5. **Charity officer**

A charity officer works for, or is a trustee of, a charitable organisation. The job title can refer to personnel in several roles within a charity. Roles vary considerably depending on the size, aim and type of organisation. In larger organisations, the role may focus on a specific area, such as project management, business development, finance, marketing, public relations, fundraising or volunteer management. In smaller charities, the charity officer may undertake multiple tasks. Common activities range from applying for grants or managing volunteers to providing advice and information. Charity officers may also be called charity administrators, community liaison officers or project development officer.

Source: [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/charity_officer_job_description.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/charity_officer_job_description.htm)

**Example job vacancy**

**Job Description**

The Project Officer (Green Team) will work with Lone Parents to provide training and support to develop skills in Horticulture, Conservation and Landscaping and community event planning, supporting them towards sustainable careers in the Land Based or Community Sector.

**Role: Project Officer (Green Team)**

**Salary:** £22,000 pro rata (18hrs pw)

**Start date:** Immediate

**End date:** Fixed Term ending 31st March 2015

**Location:** Bristol and Somerset - REF: WOE-POGT-02

Groundwork South is committed to transforming people’s lives and places through social, economic and environmental action. In terms of development and delivery of these projects we work across three business themes, Parks & Open Spaces, Youth & Learning Services and Greener Living & Working. You will work with the Project Officer (Play Worker) to ensure training environments are suitable for both Parents & Children. You will work remotely delivering community projects in parks and open spaces around Bristol & Somerset supporting a diverse client group.

This post runs initially for 12 weeks with the possibility of extension for successful delivery. You should hold a full clean driving licence with a D1 classification, a first aid certificate and have a current DBS check.

In return, we can offer a competitive salary.

6. **Community development worker**

Community development workers help communities to bring about social change and improve the quality of life in their local area. They work with individuals, families and whole communities to empower them to:

- identify their assets, needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities;
- plan what they want to achieve and take appropriate action;
- develop activities and services to generate aspiration and confidence.

A community development worker often acts as a link between communities and a range of other local authority and voluntary sector providers. They are frequently involved in addressing inequality, and projects often target communities perceived to be culturally, economically or geographically disadvantaged.

7. **Outreach Worker**

Traditionally this role served to take the local services of an organisation such as a charity or public sector service to the community to offer support through information, advice, funding and guidance
to empower them in some way to improve their quality of life. Digital inclusion has now been incorporated within these broad and basic support services.

**Example job vacancy**

Digital Inclusion Outreach Worker - **Networx Recruitment** Field based covering West of England and Somerset £16,300

**Digital Inclusion Outreach Worker**
Field based covering West of England and Somerset
£16,300 pa (£9,127.99 for 21 hours)
21 hours per week (37.5 hours full time)
Fixed term contract until 31 March 2015 - Social Inclusion, Community Outreach, Housing, Public Sector

Our client, a leading housing association, currently has a fantastic opportunity for a Digital Inclusion Outreach Worker to join their team on a fixed term contract basis. Working out in the field, you will be supporting volunteers and residents within the community to help them get online. You will also work closely with volunteers, staff and partners to deliver training opportunities that lead to residents becoming digitally included. The successful candidate will have experience of delivering digital inclusion activities and understand the benefits associated with digital inclusion, both personal and community. You will have a commitment to customer service, excellent written and verbal communication skills and a methodical and organised approach to work. This role is field based and therefore a clean driving licence is essential.

8. **Community Education Officer**

Community education officers work within diverse communities to promote and organise adult or family education or training opportunities. Education can include skills in literacy and numeracy, life skills or practical skills, such as budgeting, cooking or learning how to use a computer. Learning typically takes places in non-traditional venues such as community centres, children’s centres, and libraries and within places of worship. Community education officers liaise closely with course providers and external partners such as Jobcentre Plus staff and spend a lot of time developing positive working relationships with community support workers, such as housing support and money advice staff. They usually, though not exclusively, work in areas of social deprivation or high unemployment.

Source: [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/community_education_officer_job_description.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/community_education_officer_job_description.htm)
9. **International Aid/Development Worker**

International aid/development workers focus on meeting the needs of people and communities in the developing world. International development seeks to work with developing countries to implement long-term and sustainable solutions to problems. Many work on development projects in fields such as education, sanitation, health and agriculture. They also work in urban, rural and small business development. Work in this sector is diverse and encompasses governance, healthcare, education, gender equality, disaster preparedness, infrastructure, economics, livelihoods, human rights, forced migration, security, conflict and the environment.

Career areas include administration, research, fundraising, training, consultancy, advocacy, relief work and economist roles, as well as professional roles within health work, medicine, engineering and planning. There is currently a shortage of doctors and water engineers. Humanitarian and disaster relief work may call for highly specific skills and experience and usually involves short-term assignments.

Source: [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/international_aid_development_worker_job_description.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/international_aid_development_worker_job_description.htm)


**Example job vacancy**

**Organisation:** Human Rights Watch  
**Job type:** Paid  
**Salary notes:** Competitive

**Human Rights Watch** (“HRW”) is seeking a **Development Officer** to take the lead on all fundraising and outreach events and initiatives for the Development and Outreach Department in the London Office. This position reports to the City Director in London.

**Responsibilities:**

- Manage the production of fundraising, outreach and cultivation events in London, including HRW’s annual Voices for Justice dinner, Film Festival Benefit, conferences, privately hosted dinners and cultivation events;
- Work in partnership with the City Director on all aspects of event logistics, strategy and follow-up;
- Work in partnership with the Brand Team to manage the marketing and branding elements related to all printed materials and marketing merchandise;
- Create and track guest lists, donor lists, fundraising, and expenses for all events;
- Assist the City Director to identify, cultivate, service, and solicit individual donors, prospects and Committee members;
• Assist with donor research and profiles;
• Manage various aspects of the London Committee including Committee meetings, executive meetings, sub-committee meetings, communication and ad hoc away days;
• Identify areas of interest for our community with regard to HRW’s work so that Development & Outreach can adopt a more proactive, strategic approach to events;
• Manage communications with constituents via phone, mail and electronic media;
• Coordinate public programs and outreach e.g. manage theatre outreach, form relationships with partner organizations, and identify new opportunities; and
• Perform other responsibilities as may be required.

**Qualifications:**

**Education:** A bachelor’s degree is required.

**Experience:** Minimum three to five years of fundraising experience is required.

**Related Skills and Knowledge:**

• Experience coordinating events, preferably large-scale events, is required.
• Creativity, initiative, follow-through and excellent organizational skills are required.
• Excellent oral and written communications skills in English are required.
• Strong interpersonal skills in order to work collaboratively within HRW as well as with external partners are required.
• Demonstrated commitment to human rights and/or international issues and the capacity to master and represent the mission and programs of HRW is essential.
• Strong technology skills, including experience with Raiser’s Edge and knowledge of social media are highly desirable.
• An entrepreneurial spirit and the discipline to work independently, but also the ability to function as a member of a development team is highly desirable.
• **Salary and Benefits:** Human Rights Watch offers comprehensive employer-paid benefits, including medical, dental, vision, disability and life insurance, a retirement savings plan and twenty-five (25) days vacation per year.

**Human Rights Watch** is an equal opportunity employer that does not discriminate in its hiring practices and, in order to build the strongest possible workforce, actively seeks a diverse applicant pool.

Source: [http://www.hrw.org/about/jobs](http://www.hrw.org/about/jobs)

Further reading: [http://www.bond.org.uk](http://www.bond.org.uk)

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**10. Youth Worker**

Youth workers help facilitate personal, social and educational growth in young people to help them reach their full potential in society. At its core, youth work is about the relationship and conversations built up between a youth worker and a young person. Youth workers generally support the 11 to 25 age group and work with young people in a variety of settings such as:

- youth centres;
- schools;
- colleges;
- faith-based groups.

Work could also be street based due to its outreach nature.

Source: [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/youth_worker_job_description.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/youth_worker_job_description.htm)

An enhanced DBS disclosure is a requirement for the above posts. Our recruitment checks reflect our commitment to safeguarding our clients.

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**11. PR and Communications**
Digital skills are much required, no point having an excellent Fund Raiser without the skills to tell the organisation’s story or, (to coin business sector language) and thus build a unique sales brand. Story telling skills throughout social media channels such as websites, Face book and Twitter demand particular web writing, copywriting and a firm grasp of social media outlets to share the story with as many potential worldwide charity givers as possible.

Example job vacancy

Communications Officer
The Early Intervention Foundation is an ambitious and dynamic charity, working to change the culture of help from crisis-led late intervention to early intervention, nationally and locally so that all babies, children and young people have the life chances they need to succeed. This is an exciting opportunity for a motivated communications professional to be part of an important venture which can make a real difference to children and families’ lives. The Early Intervention Foundation is the focus of a great deal of interest from policy-makers at the highest level with backing from all three political party leaders to the people on the ground delivering Early Intervention in local authorities, health bodies, schools and the voluntary sector.

We promote Early Intervention by:

- Assessing the evidence on what works and what doesn’t, for who, when.
- Advising organisations across the public, voluntary and private sectors on what they can do to protect and grow early intervention activity and to enhance its impact
- Advocating for a shift to early intervention nationally and locally

The Communications Officer will provide communications activity to support all three of these strands.

Communications Officer

Role and scope

We are looking for an exceptional person to help drive forward the communications work of the EIF. The Communications Officer will use creativity, imagination and understanding of what makes a good media story to proactively generate opportunities to communicate the Foundation’s messages through local, regional and national media as well as through key sector press. They will also drive forward the future development of the EIF website, run social media channels and support senior staff in our political engagement strategy. This job offers an opportunity for a proactive individual with a willingness to learn and develop within this key role.

The post holder must have experience of working in a communications or public affairs team and have operated at national and local levels. They will have a broad knowledge of communications practices and concepts, have excellent written and verbal communication skills and have the knowledge and ability to effectively communicate with a wide range of audiences at all levels. They will have an appreciation of the role of evidence in advising policy and practice.

Key requirements
A passionate commitment to Early Intervention with the ability to communicate and obtain the support of others to the approach

- An interest in and understanding of local government, public services and the use of evidence in policy making
- Outstanding verbal and written skills and ability to produce high quality, clear and persuasive written materials
- Significant experience of contact with the media and how it works, with experience working in a busy press office/public affairs environment.
- Clear evidence of successful national or specialist media coverage, for which you were directly responsible.
- Highly organised and adept at coordinating a group of individuals to deliver effective communications strategies.
- Experience of maintaining and generating content for websites and social media
- Excellent interpersonal skills, a persuasive communicator, with the ability to develop and maintain effective relationships at a senior level
- A self-motivated and dynamic approach to communications that will catalyse the resource and expertise of the EIF team, Trustees and supporters.
- Creative, flexible character and a generator of new ideas with a proven ability to work as part of a team as well as independently and take responsibility for results/impacts of work
- Excellent IT and social media skills

**12. Social Policy Researcher**

Social researchers plan, design and manage social research projects. They use a variety of computer software packages to collect, analyse and organise information and data, which they then present to others, either in a written report or oral presentation. A variety of methods, such as interviews, questionnaires and focus groups, are used to investigate the views of population samples on specific issues.

The research might centre on a range of topics, such as:

- population structure and migration;
- unemployment;
- gender;
- crime;
- transport;
- social services;
- healthcare;
- education;
- the environment.

Survey results may be used to shape policy or to examine the effectiveness of existing policy. Read more: [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/social_researcher_job_description.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/social_researcher_job_description.htm)
Where are the Third Sector employment, volunteering and work experience opportunities and sector information?

Sites to get you started:
http://www.ncvo.org.uk/
http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/home/
http://www.workingforacharity.org.uk/skills_profile.html
http://vr.volresource.org.uk/
Recruitment agency
http://www.charityjob.co.uk/
http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/
http://www.youngpeoplematter.org/ypm/contact/

Sector overview and graduate opportunities
http://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/public-service-charity-and-social-work
http://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/public-service-charity-and-social-work/341724-your-graduate-career-options-in-charity-work
http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Showcharity/RegisterOfCharities/SectorData/SectorOverview.aspx
Directory for Social Change - http://www.dsc.org.uk/Home#.VFYTk8J_t0k
http://www.youngpeoplematter.org/ypm/contact/
http://www.jrf.org.uk/
http://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/
http://classonline.org.uk/
http://www.workingforacharity.org.uk/links/recruitment.html
http://ncvo.charityjob.co.uk/jobs

(NGO) links
Bond - www.bond.org.uk/ & www.wango.org

A network of UK based NGOs working in international development seeking to foster greater collaboration on issues such as training, advocacy and fund raising.

What skills should you develop to work in the charity sector?
By Patrick Nash, Published: 15 April 2014

Source: http://jobs.thirdsector.co.uk/article/what-skills-should-you-develop-to-work-in-the-charity-sector/
In the charity sector, there are specific skillsets required when it comes to communicating on behalf of an organisation. Whether supplying information by email or more challenging work such as offering emotional support and counselling over the phone, there are key attributes that the people supplying these services need to possess.

So what type of skills should these team members possess?
Most importantly, charity staff must be able to communicate with service users, donors and supporters in a compassionate and sensitive way. They must also be prepared to ‘talk’ with their users through a variety of platforms, including phone, email, SMS and - nowadays - even social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Many charities are now texting supporters to thank them, tell them about their latest campaigns, ask for opinions or update supporters on their most recent successes. This may all seem rather simplistic. However, this is no small task and, as communicating with supporters is integral to every charity; staff must be carefully selected to ensure the organisation can offer first-class support to its donors as well as its end users.

**So what skills should you look to develop?**

**Communication and IT skills**

There are a number of skills that each employee or volunteer must possess that go beyond a polite phone manner and accurate spelling and punctuation. Team members must be properly equipped to use Customer Relationship Management (CRM) programmes that have the ability to store and record all user and donor communication, from tweets to text messages, in one place. Understanding the importance of collecting data in real time is absolutely vital – and applicants must have the ability to ‘talk and type’ effectively; we even test this at the interview stage for all our call handlers.

**Social media**

Platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are now also key channels for charities to interact with their users, donors and prospective team members. Along with being quick to reply to users’ comments and queries, employees and volunteers must also be adept at monitoring social media platforms, with experience of using social relationship management systems that have the ability to seek out those who could benefit from services. Furthermore, all staff members with the responsibility for using social media must be made aware of the importance of that responsibility. The charity’s reputation is quite literally at their fingertips.

**Interpersonal skills**

Team members should offer empathetic support and advice, while building relationships with users. They must be able to listen and comprehend potentially emotionally challenging issues, and provide support and guidance to the person in need. Often, those in need may find issues difficult to talk through over the phone with another human being, and therefore a text or an email might seem easier. Providing a warm and comforting response by email or text is not an easy task, and therefore demonstrating your caring, tactful and empathetic manner is of the utmost importance. In our experience it takes longer to craft and empathic email than answer a similar phone call, so experience of written work is an essential.

**Flexibility**

Charity staff should be prepared to go above and beyond the normal expectation. Nearly all charities do not operate on a standard 9 - 5 basis from Monday to Friday. In numerous instances, evening and weekend work may be required, and some charities are even on hand on a 24/7 basis, 365 days a year. Many people with caring responsibilities can often prefer to work flexibly - as is the case with a lot of my team - who regularly work from home. This allows those who cannot always leave their homes to complete the job to the same high standard while not impeding on their social responsibilities.

**Recruit diversely**

We are active in recruiting a diverse workforce. Charities need to meet the needs of a diverse population and having a range of staff of different ages, ethnicities and with a range of enduring health conditions makes for a stronger workforce that can better meet the needs of charity service users.

**Conclusion**

Working for a charity requires commitment and empathy, along with the skill set to communicate with users and supporters across a number of different platforms. If you have the dedication to go
beyond the expectations of a ‘normal’ workplace and make a real difference to somebody truly in need, the charity sector might be the one for you. The work will be challenging, sometimes thought provoking and possibly even emotional, but one thing is for certain, it is rewarding and energising to help those in need on a daily basis.

Patrick Nash is chief executive of Connect Assist, a contact centre that provides services to charity and third sector organisations.

Advice from the experts

Rory White - Director, Flow Caritas

Temporary jobs can be a great way in: Temporary jobs are a great way of getting paid charity experience on your CV and opening up opportunities. Once you’re temping in an organisation you can network and find out about upcoming vacancies - the fact that you are there and already doing a great job will help your application stand out.

Focus on your personal statement: A lot of charities, especially larger ones, require full applications now. There is a lot of fairly standard form filling, but the key is the personal statement. If you’re going through a recruitment agency they should be able to give you some guidance on this, especially as every charity has slightly different requirements. Focus on the personal statement section and illustrate your ability to do the job by including lots of achievements. Remember to show a genuine interest in the charity - they like to know that your application is not generic but speaking directly to them. Use the job specification as guidance on the key areas.

Good CVs: The initial impact of a CV is very important. Something as simple as font and layout may make all the difference. Once you have grabbed someone’s attention, the CV needs to be very easy to read - not too much text with examples and achievements included with each post. Do not include hobbies unless they are genuinely different and a potential talking point.

Have a great accompanying cover letter: A cover letter gives you the opportunity to explain your skills and experience, discuss why you are interested in the role and what you can bring to it, addressing any areas of the criteria that you do not meet. If I have several CVs that are all very similar, it will be the cover letter that will often sway my final decision. Those that can really demonstrate a desire for the role, are able to address areas of potential weakness and illustrate transferable skills and experience to cover this will trump those that can’t every time.

Remove all errors: The biggest mistakes in CVs are spelling and grammar errors and poor layouts. It sends a clear message about attention to detail and care in work when a CV has not been spell checked and has red and green lines all the way through it. It’s also really hard to read poorly formatted CVs. Trying to cram relevant skills and experience into two pages by decreasing the type face or pushing everything together is not advisable. CVs should be clear, relevant, easy to read with distinct titles and bullet-pointed achievement/skills and error free.

Rebecca Birs - Recruitment Manager, British Heart Foundation

Paul Marvell - Director of Learning, Institute of Fundraising

Moving across sectors: You must learn the language of the voluntary sector and understand the culture. Demonstrate your commitment through volunteering experience but remember not to consider fundraising as a foot in the door as it is a proper profession. Be careful not to imply that you see the charity sector as an easy pre-retirement/ sector swap and describe your transferable skills in a way that obviously relates to the post you have applied for. For example if you work in private
wealth and you’re applying for a fundraising role, relate working with high-net worth-individuals to major donors.

**Include extra experience:** Volunteer roles are crucial to include on CVs and application forms. They show a side of you that an employer cannot see from your work experience alone, especially if the volunteer includes organisational and people management skills. For example if you’re a trustee, that is brilliant experience as you have knowledge of governance. It’s also useful to say if you’re a member of your professional body, and whether you have the relevant qualifications for your profession. While in fundraising this is not often essential, it does help to differentiate you from other applicants and shows your commitment to your profession and development. Also be sure to mention if you are a regular speaker at sector events, networking groups etc. It looks good to be well-networked.

Lauren Bates - Director, **ethicaledge**

**Graphic vs text:** There are more and more infographic CVs at the moment. The decision between a text CV and one that is graphics-based depends largely on the profession and sector you’re in. There’s still a preference amongst recruiters for text-based CVs as we need to be able to evaluate experience quickly and sometimes the message can get lost in a sea of graphics. That said, however, done well an infographic can be very powerful particularly for creative and digital roles – they can really show talents. Whichever style you go for, it stills needs to concisely convey your experience so the message or content should still take priority. If in doubt, have two versions.

**Give concrete examples:** Application forms can restrict flair, but you can still stand out from the crowd by giving concrete examples that show how you meet the person specification. Showing your achievements rather than listing your duties as they appear in your job description really brings your experience to life. Many forms are online these days so if you can, it’s a good idea to include links to any examples of your work, which is especially useful if you’re going for a creative, digital or social media role.

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From the first step towards making a career choice that is right for you, to the next stride which enables you to develop and evidence many of the core competencies and aptitudes that graduate employers expect via our volunteering, mentoring and internship opportunities to the final interview preparation stage, we can help you move ahead at the pace that is right for you. If, you engage with us.

**Top Tips – Health Warning - Graduate Level Effort Required for Graduate Recruitment Applications.**

Keep yourself firmly inside the potential employer’s head at all times with the focus on what they do and what the role requires. Keep it honest; under the Fraud Act of 2006 it is possible to get a prison sentence for making false claims on a job application. Reflect heavily to identify how you can meet their requirement needs. What are your strengths and weaknesses for each application? Identify any skills and experiences that you need to develop and come to the CaSE team for impartial, non judgemental professional support.

- Research widely - trade journals, company websites, employer and job vacancy details, read what employees say (the glass ceiling and Job Crowd), professional organisations & graduate websites. Focus upon your chosen role, specialist field and potential employers.
- Reflect upon why you make a good match demonstrate how you can bring value through a combination of specific examples drawn from education (relevant modules only), training, experience, technical knowledge, experience (including extracurricular) evidence of professionalism (LinkedIn preferred by many) & soft skills.
- Build an effective strategic career plan – See our Career planning tips & Career Planning resources - [www.uel/eet.ac.uk](http://www.uel/eet.ac.uk).
- Join a professional body such as The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and begin to develop your confidence, network and skills through participating through on/off line activates such as community forums and short courses. Sign up for RSS feeds.
- Develop your networking skills by securing a mentor to gain an insight into an industry and the graduate employer expectations via meeting regularly with a professional in the field – see UEL’s mentoring scheme - [http://www.uel.ac.uk/eet/students/mentoring/](http://www.uel.ac.uk/eet/students/mentoring/)
- Consider making speculative application to secure a work shadowing opportunity (unstructured learning opportunity to observe and learn from employees, the business culture, ethos, values, etiquettes and expectations) with the sort of Third Sector employer that you would like to work with
- Gain a relevant industry internship for the summer or year long industrial placement Treat both as an extended job interview - [http://employability.uelconnect.org.uk/pages/videos/0/videos.html](http://employability.uelconnect.org.uk/pages/videos/0/videos.html)
- If you fail to secure the above develop transferable employability skills through part-time work, volunteering or through extracurricular activities such a start your own student society or join a sports club
- Investigate online open source projects and knowledge transfer partnerships to identify a suitable local opportunity to contribute towards: develop your confidence, technical skills and professional and peer network – see resource links below
- Begin to build your online professional profile through LinkedIn and develop your social media job hunting skills e.g. more employers are using social media to advertise vacancies than traditional career fairs or graduate vacancies. Consider writing a blog to chart your student experience and invite comment.
- Practice psychometric test via EET’s webpage – [www.uel.ac.uk/eet](http://www.uel.ac.uk/eet)
• Compile a list of 10 employers that you want to work for & research widely: products, services, technologies, clients, competitors, projects, and annual report and core values.
• Adhere to a strategic approach. Spread your personal investment between large and SME employers. SMEs may offer less money and be nationwide however they also may offer a quicker promotion route because of simplified management structures and less internal / external competition.
• Keep your application concise. Less is more; better to make 8 well crafted and researched applications than 20 with a scattergun approach.
• CV Format - Keep it succinct – no more than 2 pages. See CaSE’S CV Builder for practical steps to build a solid CV which best showcases your talents: http://www.uel.ac.uk/eet/students/cv-builder/ and covering letter guide - http://employability.uelconnect.org.uk/
• USE either the STAR (Situation, Task, Action & Result) or CAR (Context, Action & Result) acronyms to structure your competency or how you behaved in a specific situation examples for both CVs and application forms.
• Check spelling, typos & grammar by reading out loud and asking family/friends to check it too.
• Covering letter – No more than 1 page of A4. Avoids repetition of CV
• See Example CVs & Covering Letters from professional organisations such as NCVO.
• See CaSE’s CV builder and example covering letter guides to help you get started - http://www.uel.ac.uk/eet/students/cv-builder/ - Get That Job
• If self employment is of interest whether now or in the future. The Enterprise team can help you prepare a viable business plan. Contact Timothy Isle – t.isle@uel.ac.uk to find out more.
• Want to talk through your options and how to prepare to get to where you want to be? Book an appointment with ACE’s Career Consultant – s.pemberton@uel.ac.uk