

Getting the most out of remote career sessions

We all know that more and more is going online. At some points during the Covid-19 pandemic, of course, this became the only way to operate. Even before the pandemic, though, there were remote careers activities and events including virtual university open days, webcasts and webinars - some interactive, with a chance to submit questions – as well as videoconferencing and phone helplines.

As life moves on out of the pandemic, not everything will go back to the way it was before. Remote working may be the guidance format of the future, through preference or through expediency (budget cuts, etc). So your son or daughter may increasingly find themselves taking part in an online career session. You can support them by helping them use this new way of working to best effect.

In advance...

... maybe even before you book onto the session.

Make sure you and your young person are clear about **what type of session** and what is expected of them (are they attending or participating?). Is it

- one-to-one, just the young person and the adviser (a remote version of a career guidance interview at school/college). Is it an internet video call or a phone call?
- a broadcast where they watch (and maybe take notes) but don't have any input
- an interactive webinar where participants can ask questions (but don't have to).

They (and you) need to know whether it's **worth their while attending**. Everyone's time is valuable and no doubt both you and your son/daughter can think of plenty to do with that time instead. And if this information isn't immediately obvious, ask: encourage your young person to be an active user rather than a passive receiver of careers activity.

Other things to be clear about before booking:

- Who's the session for? Your daughter/son only? Young people? Young people and parents?
- How long is it scheduled for? If you/they are arranging a one-to-one, it's fine to ask.

Make sure the **timing suits you**. If scheduling a one-to-one, you can negotiate this – better to tell them if you have something else scheduled. (Neither you nor your son/daughter wants to be worrying about the important video call or meet-up that you're missing!) If it's a broadcast or webinar, is it available later, offline? If so, for how long?

Beforehand

- Do they need to book? If so, book your place. They won't want to miss out and you can cancel later.
- Download the software onto the device they plan to use.
- Make sure the device is charged up.
- Decide where you/they are going to be (may be determined by the device e.g. the family PC in a particular room).
- Landline or mobile for a phone session? The sound might be better on the landline, but your daughter/son may be more relaxed on their mobile (and they can use speaker, if they prefer).
- Tell the others in the household - and ask for an hour (or whatever) undisturbed.

Any questions

Encourage your son/daughter to think about what they want to get out of the session. Remind them why you/they decided that it was worth spending time on. If they have a specific question for the presenter, how do they ask it? Do they have to submit questions in advance (if so, how?) or via the Chat during the session?

On the day...

... suggest to your daughter/son that they

- Get dressed! It's handy to sit around in pyjamas but the session will feel more business-like in day clothes, if only T shirt and shorts or leggings (no need to dress up).
- Use the biggest screen they can e.g. laptop or PC rather than phone, especially for a webinar or broadcast.
- Sit at a desk or table, rather than lolling on the sofa or on the bed. It's not about impressing the other person; it's about getting themselves in the right frame of mind.
- Remove distractions. Turn off any other devices or put them well away out of sight and hearing. Messages popping up will be a diversion for you both.
- Be sure they know how to log on to the session and that that they do it in good time (it can sometimes take a few minutes).
- Remind the rest of the family about the 'no disturbance' agreement.

Remind your daughter or son that any links that are shared via the Chat function may disappear after the broadcast, so you/they need to save them (or at least open them so you can look at them later).

Afterwards

Whether or not you were with your son/daughter during the session, it's worth spending a few minutes discussing it

- Was it useful?
- Did it answer their specific questions? (if not, do you/they know where to go to get those answers?)
- Any follow up needed? (e.g. looking at suggested websites or attending further online sessions?)
- Has it taken them any further in their decision-making?

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