

**CHANGE  
COLLECTIVE**

**GUIDE TO RECRUITMENT  
FOR JOB SEEKERS**

# INTRODUCTION

You are interested in a job in fundraising, working for a charity with a cause you are passionate about. Maybe, you have taken a break and you are looking to return to work, possibly changing career, and want to use your skills and knowledge to help a charity raise the funds it needs to deliver its work. Where do you start?

The Chartered Institute of Fundraising is the profession's membership body. We know that looking for the right job can be a job in itself. You have to learn a new language to understand the job titles and the jargon used in the job adverts.

It can feel even harder if you don't see people who look like you working in those organisations. We are working with our members and charities across the UK to ensure fundraising is, and is acknowledged to be, an equal, diverse and inclusive profession.

We have produced this guide to help you find your route into the profession. You can skip through quickly by reading the hints and tips or you can delve deeper and read some of the expert advice and the lived experience of fundraisers.

The majority of the guide was written before the Coronavirus Covid-19 crisis and those principles, experience and guidance remain important. Additional elements have been added to reflect applying for work in a crisis. Let's get your career started.



# FUNDRAISING JOB TITLES

Fundraising is the catch-all title used to describe bringing in the money for a charity. Charities come in all shapes and sizes, from the very small with no paid workers to the very large with hundreds of people working in different specialist areas.

Fundraising job titles cover roles in face to face fundraising (the people you see on the street or knocking at your door asking you to sign up for regular donations) to those designing campaigns, raising money from wealthy individuals, companies or making grant applications to trusts and foundations.

Roles range from entry level to very senior, with salaries based on the skills and experience needed for each level and on the size and location of the charity.

Some roles will include marketing and communications elements, including making presentations to individuals and groups.

## YOU MIGHT SEE ROLES ADVERTISED WITH THE FOLLOWING JOB TITLES:

### ENTRY LEVEL AND JUNIOR ROLES:

- Trust Fundraising Administrator
- Junior Account Manager
- Development Administrator
- Community and Legacy Fundraising Assistant
- Community, Events and Fundraising Development Assistant

### MID-LEVEL ROLES:

- Fundraising Officer
- Development Officer
- Major Gifts Officer
- Statutory Funding Officer
- Community Fundraising Coordinator
- Corporate Account Manager
- Philanthropy Coordinator
- Prospect Research Executive
- Trusts and Foundation Fundraiser
- Trusts Programme Manager
- Corporate Partnerships Executive
- Prospect Research Executive

## SENIOR ROLES:

- Regional Fundraising Manager
- Regional Corporate Fundraiser
- UK Community Fundraising Manager
- Director of Fundraising
- Head of UK Giving and Engagement

## GENERAL GUIDE POINTS

1. Identify the type of role you want and type organisation you would like to work in. It may sound obvious but sometimes we focus on getting any job instead of the right job.
2. Find the specific job sites for fundraising roles and set up the job alert functions. The Institute partners with CharityJob for our members' fundraising vacancies but other sites, such as Third Sector Jobs and Guardian Jobs, also specialise in jobs in the charity sector.
3. Identify your skills. If you have a skill gap, can you find a volunteering opportunity, online course or programmes like the Prince's Trust Get Hired programme that can help you develop to meet the requirements of the jobs you are interested in?
4. Register with recruitment agencies that place fundraising roles. Call recruiters and build a relationship so that they remember you when they are looking to fill a role.
5. Larger charities will have HR departments that can explain their hiring process. If hiring managers offer a call before you apply take the opportunity: you will stand out from other applicants by demonstrating your proactive approach and the can-do attitude valued in fundraising.
6. Attend workshops and job fairs to help you network with potential recruiters and to keep yourself engaged within the job market search.
7. Always read the application instructions and follow them. If you send additional information it is unlikely to be seen by the hiring panel.
8. Ensure that you review the job specification as this will be useful when tailoring your cover letter to highlight your talents that best match the role you are applying for.
9. Consider how best to present your hobbies and interest to align with the culture of the organisation - this will help your CV stand out.
10. Check the application deadline and where it is to be sent. Missing the deadline by even 5 minutes may mean your application is not considered.

## EXPERT ADVICE



***Our Director of Individual Membership, Compliance and Professional Development, Alex Xavier, sets out the routes into the profession and provides guidance based on his many years as a recruitment consultant.***

## INTERNSHIPS

Many charities in the sector offer paid internships for those who want to gain experience of working in fundraising. Internships are usually short term and will give you experience of what it's like to work in a professional environment.

The tasks you undertake in your internship can vary, but these may include undertaking administrative tasks such as minute taking, data entry, handling supplier invoices and responding to emails.

Some internships may also give you the opportunity to develop skills in specialist areas such as supporter stewardship and digital. You can find out more about your rights as an intern here:

**[gov.uk/employment-rights-for-interns](https://www.gov.uk/employment-rights-for-interns)**

### TOP TIPS

- Make sure an internship is the right point of entry for you into the profession
- Be sure to familiarise yourself with the government's guidance on internships
- Try and find internships which provide you with skills beyond basic administration
- Immerse yourself into the internship to gain as much knowledge of fundraising as possible
- Build strong relationships with peers and superiors which may help with future job searches

## APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeships allow someone to undertake paid employment and professional training at the same time. In undertaking an apprenticeship, you will work very closely with your employer and an approved training provider to gain knowledge, develop skills and hone behavioural traits over the duration of your apprenticeship.

## EXPERT ADVICE

by Alex Xavier

When your employer and the training provider deem you ready, you will be put forward for an end-point assessment (EPA) where you are tested against the learning outcomes of the apprenticeship.

You can find out more information about apprenticeships on the Institute for Apprenticeships website at the following:

[instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprentices](https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprentices)

It is anticipated that a Level 3 (A-Level equivalent) 'Fundraiser' apprenticeship will be offered by charities in 2020, so please keep a look out for these roles during your job search.

You can keep up to date with the development of this standard by checking the [Institute for Apprenticeships](https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org) website.

### GUIDE POINTS

- Make sure you fully understand how apprenticeship programmes work
- Discuss what you want to get out of your apprenticeship with your employer
- Make sure you find the right balance between work and your 'off the job' training
- Immerse yourself in all the 'on the job' tasks assigned
- Thoroughly prepare with your organisation and training provider for your EPA

## MOVING FROM FACE TO FACE (F2F) TO OFFICE-BASED FUNDRAISING

If you have had experience working as a face to face fundraiser, you may have gained knowledge of the fundraising environment including its regulation and skills such as relationship building, storytelling and emotional intelligence. You may also have also honed behavioural traits such as being resilient and showing empathy. All these areas of knowledge, skills and behaviours are transferable into other areas of fundraising including but not limited to events, community, corporate partnerships and major donor fundraising.

When applying and interviewing for relevant roles, be sure to provide examples of how your face to face fundraising experience has developed your transferable skills, and how you could apply these within a charity environment. In order to learn about the wider fundraising sector prior to interview for roles, you may want to consider undertaking the Chartered Institute of Fundraising's Introduction to Fundraising course – either online or in person. Further information can be found on our website under events and training.

### GUIDE POINTS

- Be proud of your experience as you are already a fundraiser
- Clearly communicate examples of how your skills are transferable
- Make sure you gain knowledge about the broad scope of fundraising beyond F2F
- Be upfront about your development needs but express enthusiasm for learning
- Be aware of the differences between commercial companies and charities

## TEMP TO PERM TRANSITION

Some people are very happy to move from one temporary role to another, whilst others will look at temporary work as a route to more stable and permanent employment. If you are undertaking temporary employment in fundraising and your contract is due to expire, you may want to explore with your employer whether they would take you on permanently.

In order to make a positive impression on your employer, you should try and go the extra mile, make yourself invaluable and integrate within your team. You should also go out of your way to network with decision makers within the organisation to better your chances of being taken on permanently. If you are temping through an agency and you are offered a permanent role, you will need to be conscious that this is likely to come at a cost to the organisation as additional placement fees will be charged.

### GUIDE POINTS

- Volunteer for additional tasks during your temporary employment
- Build up positive relationships with your peers and superiors
- Make it known that you are seeking permanent employment after your contract
- Clearly communicate how you can add value to the organisation
- Don't worry if it doesn't work out - leave on a good note with a positive reference

## PROGRESSION TO MANAGERIAL ROLES

As a fundraiser you may find yourself delivering exceptional results in your specific area of fundraising. However, being a brilliant fundraiser doesn't necessarily mean you'll be a brilliant leader.

Everyone has the potential to be a leader, and it is important to be aware of the specific knowledge, skills and behaviours required if you would like to progress into leadership positions. Modern leaders need to be authentic, responsible, enabling, collaborative and have a clear vision for success, and our own **Fundraiser Competency Framework** will help guide your development in these areas. You may also find the **Chartered Institute of Fundraising's Future Leaders Programme** beneficial to your development.

### GUIDE POINTS

- Identify areas of personal development and start to address these
- Volunteer for more leadership and management responsibilities to gain experience
- Be inquisitive and acquire knowledge around strategy and financial management
- Build up meaningful relationships with decision makers and present yourself positively
- Hone your emotional intelligence

## APPLYING THROUGH AN AGENCY

You may want to consider using a specialist recruitment agency to help you in your search for employment in fundraising. There are a number of specialist agencies who can help you including Charity People, Harris Hill, Morgan Hunt and TPP.

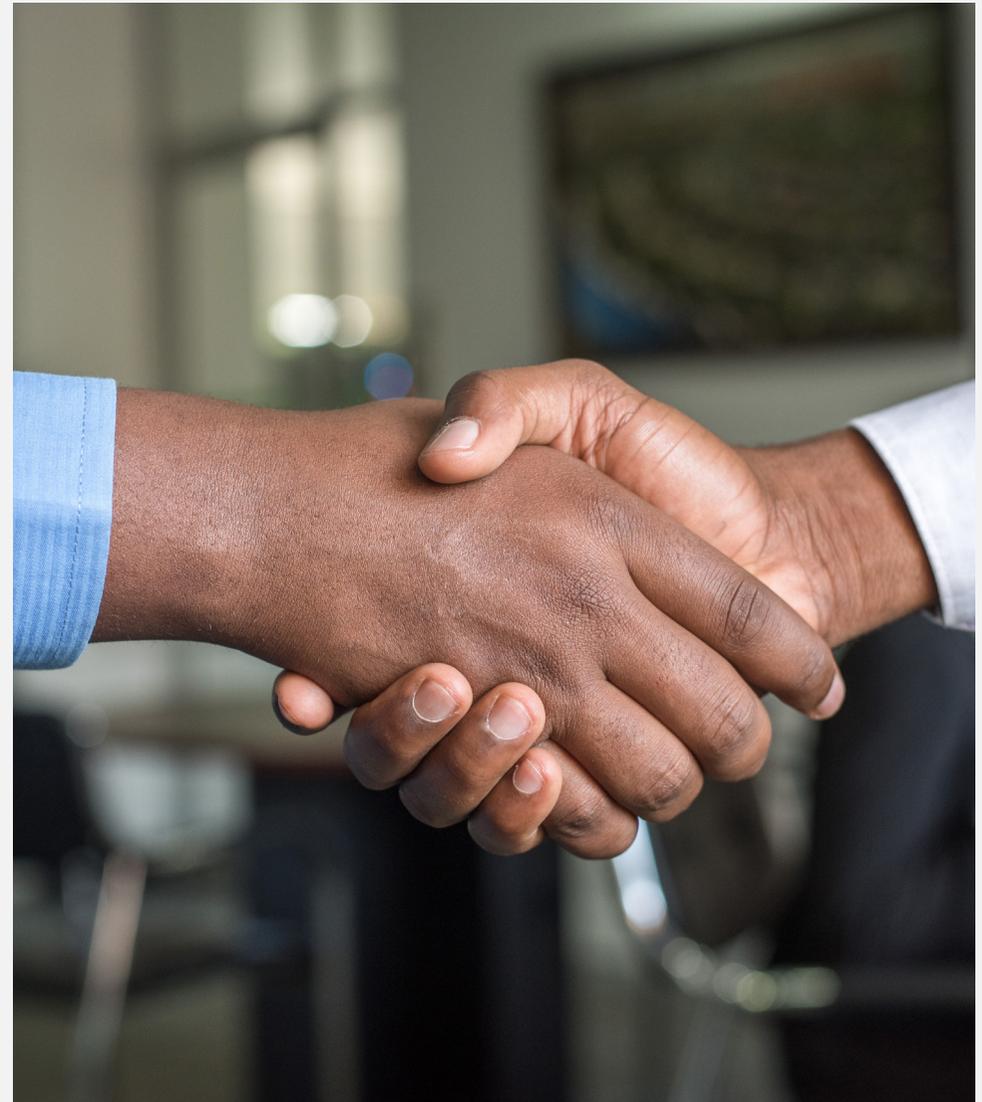
When working with an agency, it is highly advisable to meet one of their consultants in person to clearly explain your background and skills which will help them search for the right role for you. A good consultant will be able to help tailor your CV and cover letter for relevant roles and keep you abreast of developments, and the very best consultants will find a role for you and steward you throughout your fundraising career.

## APPLYING DIRECTLY

In addition to or instead of, you may want to look for fundraising jobs yourself and apply directly. There are a number of reputable job boards you may want to look at including Charity Job, Third Sector Jobs, Guardian Jobs, as well as on the websites of recruitment agencies. You may also want to browse the 'jobs' or 'work for us' sections on the website of charities you are interested in working for.

The application process when applying directly may allow you to submit a tailored cover letter and CV but, in some cases, it may be an online or paper-based form that needs to be completed. If the latter, ensure you take the time to complete these as comprehensively as possible in order to sell your suitability for the role.

You may also want to differentiate yourself by contacting organisations directly to enquire about vacancies or discuss specific roles which are being advertised.



## PRESENTING NON-UK QUALIFICATIONS AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

Fundraising is a career for everyone. If you have gained a qualification outside of the UK, and/or possess lived experience, you have a place in the profession and can help make the world a better place.

If you have a non-UK qualification, be sure to focus on the specific knowledge and skills undertaking it has provided you.

Be sure to use examples of how your qualification can be applied in a fundraising role. If you possess lived experience around a specific cause, as long as you're comfortable, try and bring out how these experiences make you a good fit for a fundraising role, but make sure you present your lived experience alongside the knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the Institute's Fundraising Competency Framework.



## INTERVIEWS

The interview process can be challenging, whether it is your first ever interview or you have lots of experience and even success at interviews. We all get nervous, especially when we don't know what to expect. Hiring managers may conduct interviews in a number of ways:

- **Some first interviews may be a phone call, Skype, Facetime, WhatsApp, Zoom or Teams and might be used to sift through a large number of applicants to decide who to see face to face.**
- **It is usual for the face to face interview to be conducted by a panel of interviewers. This may be 2 to 4 people who will take it in turns to ask you questions from a pre-set list of questions.**
- **Panel interviews may now take place remotely, using Zoom, Teams or other means, and may be recorded.**
- **Less common, but still happens, you may be interviewed by one person.**
- **Some interviews may be group interviews with others applying for the same role.**

You should be given information about the type of interview you will have. If there is no information, ask. Remember, it is your interview and you need to decide whether you want to work with the organisation and the people you meet.

Interview preparation is important. This is the time you are expected to speak up confidently about who you are and to provide reasons as to why you want to work for the organisation.

## EXPERT ADVICE

by Alex Xavier

You are selling yourself and your skills and experience – remember that you know you better than anyone else so think about your strong points and the areas you might need to develop.

You will need to find out about the organisation. What is their mission and their values? What can you find out about their recent work? What do others say about them on social media? Do they have an equality and diversity statement or policy available in the information sent to you or on their website? Do you know how long it will take you to travel to and from work if you are appointed?

***“You are selling yourself and your skills and experience – remember that you know you better than anyone else so think about your strong points and the areas you might need to develop.”***

### GUIDE POINTS

1. In preparation, for the interview make sure you know where and when the interview is being held.
2. Find out whether the interview process is a telephone interview, **Teams/Zoom/Skype** interview, competency-based interview with interviewer or in front of a panel, or is it a group interview (in person or online). This will allow you to prepare psychologically and practically. Ask a friend or group of friends to give you a practice interview – it can be more nerve-wracking to be interviewed by people who know you.
3. Ensure you have the right link for remote interviews and test your equipment. Set up a quiet, well-lit space and dress as you would for a face to face interview.
4. You have done your research about the organisation and they may carry out research on you too. Ensure all the necessary private settings on your social media are in place and your LinkedIn account is up to date, if you have one.
5. Plan what you are going to wear for the interview ahead of the day. What has your research found about how people usually dress at the organisation? Dress to be smart but comfortable. You are trying to impress but you won't be able to do that if you are wearing something new that feels uncomfortable.
6. You have practiced what you want to say but it is vital you listen to the questions asked and match the answers you have practiced to that question. If the person asking the question is not clear, or you haven't understood the question, ask for it to be repeated. Jot down some notes, take a breath and then answer with confidence and, if possible, maintain good eye contact with the panel members.
7. Finally, prepare two or three questions to ask the interviewers. This illustrates that you have thought about the role, care about the organisation and are engaged in its future endeavours.

# WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE INTERVIEW?

You've made it to the end of the interview and you are still interested in the role. It's good practice for hiring managers to inform candidates about the next steps. If they don't you can end the interview by asking them about the next steps:

- 1. Ask them when they expect to inform you about their decision.**
- 2. Ask them if there are further stages planned for the recruitment and whether there are dates you might need to keep clear.**
- 3. Ask if feedback is available. Take up the feedback, whether you have been successful or not.**
- 4. If you have been unsuccessful this time listen carefully to the feedback and ask if they have any advice you can use to improve for the next interview. Remember that feedback is about your work and what you presented – it is not a personal comment on you.**
- 5. If you have been successful, and you still want the job, you will agree a salary and start date for the job.**
- 6. Discuss your notice period, if you are in another role, and do not offer a start date that you may have to change.**
- 7. If you would benefit by working from home you can ask about this – the Coronavirus crisis has shown than many jobs can be done from home.**
- 8. Contact your referees and let them know that the hiring manager will be asking for references.**

- 9. Ask for and complete all information needed before you start. If nothing is needed make sure you have your identification documents, National Insurance and bank account details ready for your first day.**

## I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT...

### COMPLETING EDI MONITORING AND DISCLOSING

Many charity organisations will ask you to complete a monitoring form along with your application. You may be worried that disclosing your personal information, such as your ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability, may mean you are not shortlisted for interview. This is not what the form is for.

The form is usually separated from the application so that hiring managers and the shortlisting panel do not see your information. The monitoring form is for internal use only to track whether the organisation is attracting a diversity of applicants and, over time, to see whether the organisation's processes and recruitment decisions are discriminating against particular groups of people.

Having a large number of candidates completing the form helps identify the changes that need to be made. You do not have to complete this form and an organisation cannot ignore your application if you do not complete the monitoring form.

You can complete the parts of the form you are most comfortable with and ignore the parts you do not want to answer.

## HOW DO I TELL MY POTENTIAL EMPLOYER ABOUT MY DISABILITY?

You know your abilities, skills and knowledge but not all employers will understand what you can do. It can feel like a challenge to disclose your visible and hidden disabilities. You may think that it is best to wait until you are offered the job before disclosing but there can be advantages to disclosing at the start.

Is the organisation a member of the Disability Confident scheme? If they are you will be guaranteed an interview if you meet the minimum shortlisting criteria. If the organisation has not joined the scheme they may still be using the guidance.

Will you have access to support needs to attend the interview? Disclosing your needs ensures you have the best chance of being given a fair chance to attend an interview as you can discuss your needs with the hiring manager. This might include your interview being held in a different, more accessible, room or additional time given to complete any pre-interview tests.

Will you need any reasonable adjustments like working from home, flexible working or specialist IT equipment? Discussing this upfront can demystify the process for the employer and get them ready to make an Access to Work application:

[gov.uk/access-to-work](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work)

You can find out about your rights at **Disability Rights UK:**  
[disabilityrightsuk.org/careers-and-work-disabled-people](https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/careers-and-work-disabled-people)

## HOW DO I ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT I DID DURING THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS?

Some recruiters may ask you about what you did during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) crisis. Everyone will have learnt something about themselves, about resilience and managing life in a new way. You may have taken on new responsibilities or taken the time to gain more knowledge and learn new skills. However, you may have been furloughed, made redundant, had caring responsibilities or had to shield. Take some time to think about how you can answer the question honestly to present the challenges you have faced, what you learnt and how you can apply that to the role you are applying for.



## LIVED EXPERIENCE



**Martha Awojobi, former Corporate Partnerships Senior Executive at Refuge and Organiser at #CharitySoWhite writes about her entry to and progression in fundraising as black and queer.**

I fell into fundraising when I was 18. I was stopped by a street fundraiser called Sam on Wood Green High Road the summer holiday after I had finished my A Levels. I was too young to sign up, and I didn't have any money. He told me that he could refer me to the agency that he worked at and if I was successful, I could have a job for the summer. I was; we ended up working on the same team.

Over the next two years I worked campaigns for the **British Red Cross, Amnesty International, Break Through Breast Cancer, Cancer Research, World Vision** and many more. Street fundraising was by far the most challenging and rewarding job I have ever had. Not only are you asking busy strangers in London to drop what they are doing, listen to you and give you their bank details in the street, you are also battling the elements: rain, snow, winds, heatwaves. All with a smile on your face and a spring in your step. I will always have so much admiration for street fundraisers – it takes skill, bravery, resilience and grit to do that job.

In those years I was learning how to tell stories, build rapport, problem solve and think on my feet in order to make the ask and walk away successful. I was also talking all day about the truly amazing and innovative work that the charities I was representing were doing. I felt passionately about these causes and the people I encountered in the streets felt inspired by me. Enough

to become regular donors. I fell in love with the third sector; I fell in love with fundraising.

***“More people of colour should become fundraisers; the fundraising industry would be more innovative and authentic if there was a diverse range of people sitting at tables where decisions are made.”***

Fast forward a few more years and I am now a fundraising consultant after being the Corporate Partnerships Senior Executive at Refuge where I worked in the head office. I am also black and queer. This has its benefits, and its drawbacks. In the most meetings I am the only person of colour in the room. I feel a lot of pressure to be successful because I sometimes feel like I am representing my race. That pressure can be exhausting.

I work with some really cool businesses across the country whose values align with my organisation and

## LIVED EXPERIENCE

By Martha Awojobi

I have a lot of fun doing it. I think donors like working with me because I am different to who they usually see representing a charity. I bring a new perspective; I can connect with new audiences. It's refreshing. Donors want connection, and organisations are missing out on a whole pool of potential new donors from communities of colour, who want to give, because they don't have fundraisers in their teams who can connect with them.

***"The work that the #ChangeCollective is doing to reinvent the fundraiser sector and nurture staff of colour and attract a more diverse range of talent is hugely valuable in our sector."***

More people of colour should become fundraisers; the fundraising industry would be more innovative and authentic if there was a diverse range of people sitting at tables where decisions are made. Leaders have their part to play and should be investing time and budget into transforming their recruitment processes, and taking the time to understand BAME candidates and the barriers that we face, where we job search, which recruiters will find us and what language can inspire us to apply.

The work that the **#ChangeCollective** is doing to reinvent the fundraiser sector and nurture staff of colour and attract a more diverse range of talent is hugely valuable in our sector. I urge everyone to read their manifesto for change, learn about the barriers that people like me face and do your part to create truly inclusive environments that give everyone a fair chance at success.

I have always loved being a fundraiser, we inspire people to invest in social change and be part of a collective solutions to some of the most complex social issues of our time. We shouldn't be afraid to speak about our past failures when it comes to equality, diversity and inclusion. In fact, we should be the ones showing other sectors truly inclusivity looks like. All it takes is honesty, humility and hope.

**Twitter: @Martha Awojobi**

## LIVED EXPERIENCE



**Jimmy James MInstF(Dip), Principal Minerva Fundraising Consultancy, and author of *The Volunteer Fundraiser's Handbook* reflects on his entry to fundraising for charities in his forties.**

I came into the profession as a result of chairing a fundraising committee for a local charity – for which I had neither qualifications nor experience!

When I started as a fundraising consultant in 1995, at 43, all the directors of the consultancy and almost all the consultants were men aged 40+. Now that same consultancy has an almost equal balance of male/female directors, and this is reflected in the consultants there I've met too. The age range is greater too.

When I completed my **Diploma in Fundraising with the Chartered Institute of Fundraising**, there was a substantial majority of women among the candidates. This may have been partly the result of some men feeling they did not need qualifications to be effective.

When I first worked in the sector, female CEOs of charities – especially major ones – were very uncommon. Now there are quite a number. Most of the CEOs and many of the Chairs in the small and medium local charities which retain my services are women.

***“When I first worked in the sector, female CEOs of charities – especially major ones – were very uncommon.”***

## **FLEXIBLE WORKING AND JOB SHARING**



***Helen Reed, Senior Trusts Manager at ActionAid talks about flexible working and how it has helped her career to progress***

Flexible working has been hugely important in making it possible for me to balance my career and caring responsibilities.

Over the past four years the **British Red Cross** and **Action Aid** have offered me flexible working in ways which meant I could maintain and progress my career. For the British Red Cross, flexible working meant retaining me for an extra three years and for Action Aid it made it possible to recruit me.

Both organisations have explicit commitments to flexible working that positively shape their cultures and working environments. Action Aid makes this commitment an active part of their recruitment which made them stand out when I was looking for a new role.

***“It is challenging to form job share partnerships and the opportunities for job sharing are sparse.”***

As part of my search for flexible working I have explored the option for job sharing. It is challenging to form job share partnerships and the opportunities for job sharing are sparse. Yet my research shows there is a lot of potential for organisations and individuals if we can make this form of working more readily available.

When I returned to work after the birth of my first daughter, like many parents before me, I made my flexible working request. I requested 21 hours a week and, fortunately, my request was granted. The British Red Cross and my manager were open to flexible working and we soon fitted into the new way of working.

***“Motherhood and part-time working had not dampened my interest in my job.”***

The flexibility worked well for both my employer and me. For me it meant continuing in the job I loved because without it I could never financially or logistically afford to work. For the British Red Cross it meant retaining my knowledge and skills.

Motherhood and part-time working had not dampened my interest in my job, I just couldn't invest 37 hours a week at this point in my life. I continued to learn and grow and after a few years it became time to take the next step in my career. That was when I realised how rare part-time roles are and how difficult it was going to be to progress.

I realised I needed another option.

## LIVED EXPERIENCE

By Helen Reed

At the same time another fundraiser I knew was making a great success of job sharing. She and her partner had not only made one role work but had also successfully applied for a new role together. My friend talked passionately about the advantages of job sharing for both organisations and individuals. I knew that this was a model I wanted to try. But how to do it?

So, I decided to take a two-pronged approach. I would seek out a partner to make applications with and, at the same time, I would contact hiring managers and ask to be considered on a job share basis. Neither approach proved successful or even viable.

I reached out through my networks, seeking individuals whose skills, ambitions and requirements fitted with mine. But networks are limited and finding a partner this way requires a lot of luck. However, on the way I started having conversations with existing job sharers, which were inspiring and informative. I felt each conversation reiterated the same points; job sharing could be hugely beneficial – it helped with continuity, it brought more diverse skillsets and it enabled part time workers to fulfil demanding roles.

I signed up to job sharing websites but I often found myself matched with people working in marketing or sales instead of fundraisers. There just wasn't the critical mass of potential matches.

I also started having the conversation with potential employers. When I found roles that interested me and fitted my skill-set I would phone the hiring manager to discuss flexible working options including job sharing. Sometimes, I was met with polite refusal and sometimes I couldn't get a response. On one occasion I was told that 'it's not convenient' to consider my application (the job went through to a second round of recruitment). On another, I was invited to apply but I was not short listed due to a 'high volume of great candidates'. It was very dispiriting.

This was until I saw a job advert from ActionAid. From the start it was a very different experience. At the top of the job advert it indicated that flexible working and job sharing were positive options. Within the application form there was a section to indicate an interest in job sharing. No worrying about how to broach the subject. It was the first time that I felt I was on an even footing and it was exciting.

***“My requirement to work 21 hours a week didn't need to be a factor. However, it was something I addressed in the interview and I was immediately met with a positive and welcoming response.”***

I was invited to interview. The recruitment process was blind. My requirement to work 21 hours a week didn't need to be a factor. However, it was something I addressed in the interview and I was immediately met with a positive and welcoming response. To my delight I was offered the role at 21 hours a week and have accepted. We have decided to wait until I am settled into the team to decide how to resource the other 40% of the role.

ActionAid's approach means that I am excited to be taking up a new role that will challenge me while making the most of my experience. It makes a huge, important statement about their commitment to being a great employer and feels like it is indicative of a strong organisational culture.

Hopefully, for ActionAid it means having a broader selection of candidates and being able to fill the role quickly and effectively with the right person.

And of course, it means I didn't hesitate to accept the role.

# HOW TO GET INTO A FUNDRAISING CAREER

*This is an adapted version of a blog written by Sanjay Bheenuck, the previous Content and SEO Lead at CharityJob, for the CharityJob career advice blog.*

There are no set career paths when it comes to fundraising. No specific degree or educational pathway is required. Though there are some graduate and **entry level positions**. It may also be worth checking out some courses offered by the **Institute of Fundraising** as these may be expected higher up the fundraising career ladder.

Keep in mind that, although fundraising may seem difficult to get into, the career is highly in demand. Though adverts may seem to have unrealistically high demands ([we've written in more detail about this here](#)) charities are always on the lookout for great fundraisers and great people who have the transferable skills to become fundraisers. One of the skills you'll need to start a career in fundraising is persistence – you really do need to just keep going!

## BE TRANSFERABLE: FUNDRAISING IS SALES (OR MARKETING, OR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, OR PR...)

This is a fact the charity sector is slowly waking up to. Not every fundraiser need be from a fundraising background. The real work of a fundraiser is to secure revenue to keep their organisation running. This is very much like a salesperson. A salesperson's job is to convince a potential customer that their service or product is the right one for them. This is essentially the

same with fundraising. A fundraiser will aim to convince an individual or organisation of the value of their donation, what it could bring and what it will deliver.

***"The real work of a fundraiser is to secure revenue to keep their organisation running. This is very much like a salesperson."***

Much the same can be said for marketing, even PR and business development. These skills are all transferable to the charity sector! Just make sure that you present your skills and experience as being relevant to a fundraising career. Show how your sales/marketing skills match up with the fundraising job description. You'll be much more likely to get a successful response. It's all about making your skills seem pertinent to the fundraising job you're applying for. We know they are; you just need to convince the charity of that as well.

You'll always need to make sure you apply with a unique cover letter and explain your relevant experience. Have a charity sector CV, highlighting how your corporate sector experience is directly relevant to the fundraising position.

## START SMALL

Get experience, then work your way up! Sounds a lot like the corporate sector right? Well in many ways it is. Face to face and street level fundraising positions are almost always available, they often require little to no experience.

Performing well in this level of fundraising can allow you to move into other areas of an organisation, or possibly a management position. Even direct marketing can be a place to start! These may not be the most desirable roles, but recruitment can be quite buoyant for them. A good performance in direct fundraising can be your route to other areas or management.

***“A good performance in direct fundraising can be your route to other areas or management.”***

If you have the time, or maybe if you're still a student, you can start getting some fundraising experience by volunteering. You can even volunteer as a fundraiser! When it comes to making that first paid job application you can include volunteering experience alongside work and education.

This could increase your chances of getting that fundraising job. Volunteering is an excellent way to gain charity sector experience. This is true even if you don't end up pursuing a fundraising career. It's worth remembering that some charities don't advertise their positions on public job boards. So joining in a voluntary role can be a way of getting your foot in the door and seeing what's available.

## CONNECT, INTERACT & SPECULATE

It can sometimes be the case that the charity sector is somewhat of a “who you know” business. Many fundraisers don't apply through traditional means. Often the successful ones will work hard to build a great network in the sector. Sending your CV speculatively is not always a bad idea when it comes to fundraising jobs. The art is to ensure that it finds its way to the right person. Do some research and networking. Make sure you know who your application is going to. Follow up with a phone call or e-mail if possible (but don't pester of course!).

***“The charity sector is somewhat of a ‘who you know’ business. Many fundraisers don't apply through traditional means.”***

Fundraisers and other professionals from all over the sector regularly use CharityConnect, the professional network for the sector, to discuss methods of pursuing a charity career. It's easy to sign up and you can get instant and authentic advice from loads of charity professionals who've all been in your shoes.

Whether it's online or at events (run by the Chartered Institute of Fundraising and others) you should aim to meet, interact and network with as many fundraising professionals as possible. Take a look at what events the Chartered Institute offer, there could be something that's right for you.

Even if you find your way into the charity sector through a non-fundraising role, you can aim to make the transition by building up a great list of contacts and people who could be of help. Fundraisers talk! They are community driven and always interacting with the sector, these are fantastic practices to get into if you're considering the career.

# 5 SKILLS THAT LOOK GREAT ON YOUR CHARITY CV

*This is an adapted version of content provided for the CharityJob career advice blog by Andrew Fennell at [StandOut CV](#), an easy-to-use CV advice service.*

With working towards a meaningful cause, greater responsibility and a **good work/life balance** topping the list of charity job benefits, it's not exactly hard to see why a career in the sector can be highly attractive.

Thankfully, the sheer size of the industry means a steady and **varied stream of jobs are available**. But to get that all-important first step on the non-profit ladder, you're going to need to know how to sell yourself in a well-rounded CV. The good news is, that you've probably got far more transferable skills than you think.

Not sure where to start? Let's break down the five skills that look great on any charity CV.

## 1. DIGITAL KNOW-HOW

Whether you've learnt how to code in your spare time, managed the social media accounts for a previous employer or consider yourself somewhat of an SEO whizz, digital skills can do big things for your charity CV.

The world is driven by digital, so it should come as no surprise that the demand for digitally savvy professionals in the non-profit sector is growing rapidly. Having a strong social media presence and user-friendly website can help charities of any size to reach thousands of supporters and advocates for their cause, after all.

***"In today's digital world, everything is happening online, and fundraising is no exception."***

With that said, learning new digital skills or brushing up on your existing ones is sure to attract hiring managers. Just don't forget to include your digital skills, with examples, results, qualifications or certifications, in your CV. In today's digital world, everything is happening online, and **fundraising is no exception**.

## 2. COMMUNICATION

If there's one charity soft skill you master, make it communication. From preparing the content for a major presentation to speaking to a potential donor over the phone, being able to effectively express your thoughts and ideas both verbally and in writing remains key in numerous charity roles.

***"Remember, it's not just about being good at talking to people, it's knowing how to communicate with tact and empathy in sensitive situations."***

Remember, it's not just about being good at talking to people, it's knowing how to **communicate with tact and empathy in sensitive situations**. Whether you're speaking to donors or directly to beneficiaries, you want to ensure that you're instilling a sense of trust and familiarity that inspires them to keep coming back to your charity.

Being able to portray this skill on your CV shows hiring managers that you understand the nuances of the sector, which can go a long way. And don't forget those all-important listening skills. They'll be key to effectively working with your co-workers and donors in an office role or understanding the needs of vulnerable individuals in a support setting.

### 3. LEADERSHIP

Charities are always on the lookout for candidates with **exceptional leadership skills**, especially in smaller organisations where you'll have to take on more responsibility and lead projects on your own.

They want forward thinkers who can successfully coordinate, manage and motivate a team. Ultimately, it's the leaders who make the critical decisions which drive charities towards positive results.

***"It's the leaders who make the critical decisions which drive charities towards positive results."***

In your charity CV, try to include examples of times you've motivated or inspired others, kept team members on a task or maintained morale in a sticky situation. If you're new to the working world, these examples could be from university or volunteer stints – remember, recruiters just want to see your potential.

If you are searching for some advice, here are some tips to help you gain confidence and start your journey: **Top Leadership Tips For First Time Managers**.

### 4. DATA ANALYSIS

Charities have an increasing need for staff who are able to collect and analyse the data that ever-improving technology brings them. Data analysis can transform a non-profit; helping them make more effective decisions on everything from fundraising initiatives to deciding where their money is making the most impact.

Wondering where to pick up the fundamental data analysis skills? Try the free data science courses from **edX** and **Coursera**. While they may only touch the surface on the big wide world of data, they're sure to add brownie points to your charity CV.

### 5. TEAMWORK

The charity sector is proudly diverse, and you'll need to be able to work collaboratively with people of all cultures, ages and sexes, as well as those with disabilities.

Teamwork and collaboration skills, therefore, will always be a key characteristic of any dedicated charity employee.

Try to find examples of times you've demonstrated good teamwork ability and include them in your CV. It might be when you worked on a group assignment in university, supported people with a challenging workload by offering to take on some of their tasks in a previous job or worked with ten other fundraisers to raise money as part of a volunteering role.

Are employers in the charity sector diverse and inclusive? The sector values diversity but needs to do more to achieve this. You can read the Change Collective strategy on the Chartered Institute of Fundraising website and this blog from ChartyJob:

**Do We Make Everyone Welcome? Diversity in The Charity Sector**.

# THINGS EVERY FIRST TIME FUNDRAISER NEEDS TO KNOW

*This is an adapted version of content provided for the [CharityJob career advice blog](#) by Ayoola Bandele, Executive Assistant in Finance and Operations at Evangelical Alliance, a Christian charity.*

When you think of jobs in the charity sector, fundraising is probably the first thing that comes to mind. Fundraisers are fundamental to the success of any not-for-profit—they drive donations, draw attention to the cause and build trust and loyalty in the organisation. But it's more than just that; it's a calling. A chance to make a difference in the world.

***“Fundraisers are fundamental to the success of any not-for-profit—they drive donations, draw attention to the cause and build trust and loyalty in the organisation.”***

So, let's say you have the right skills and drive to break into the fundraising industry. How much do you really know about what it takes to succeed in this role? Surely, a little bit of guidance and advice could go a long way, especially when you're just getting settled in.

Think fundraising may be the right career path for you? Here are at least five things every first-time fundraiser should know.

## 1. IT'S OKAY TO HAVE FUN

A job is meant to be serious, right? At least that's what we're told when we first start working. But sometimes we're so concerned with coming across as professional that we forget that it's okay to enjoy the work we're doing.

Fundraising has elements of fun, especially when it comes to thinking creatively and challenging yourself to come up with new ways to engage with your donors. Think of it as an adventure, an exciting new landscape you're discovering one step at a time.

Whether you're sharing your story with the public, organising a country-wide bake sale or setting up an interactive competition to gain donations, it's okay (and widely encouraged) to enjoy the work you're doing, especially because you know all that effort is going towards improving an injustice in the world.

Sure, there's still an element of professionalism that's expected in the workplace, but don't forget that you're doing this job because you love it, not just because it pays the bills.

***“Think of it as an adventure, an exciting new landscape you're discovering one step at a time.”***

## 2. YOU'RE NOT ALONE – YOU'RE PART OF A COMMUNITY

Just as much as you are putting yourself out there to help others, you're not expected to do everything on your own. Fundraising is a vast community in the UK, and when you're just starting out you may be on the hunt for a bit of advice and guidance. That's where resources like the **Chartered Institute of Fundraising** and CharityConnect come in. They help connect you to your peers; people who have all gone through the same struggles and experiences that you have.

Got some questions during your first few weeks? Your charity will most likely have plenty of resources to help you settle into the role quickly. If none of their ideas suits your personality or working style, you can always propose fresh ideas and convince them to get on board. In fact, they'll probably quite impressed if you're pitching new ideas right from the get-go.

***“The key to reaching your target is to break it down so that you don't get overwhelmed.”***

## 3. JUST LIKE ANY OTHER JOB, THERE ARE TARGETS YOU NEED TO MEET

Your job is to find the money that keeps your organisation going, and donation targets are the milestones that help you to reflect on how far you've come. If you're smashing your targets, maybe you need to be a bit more challenged. If you're falling short, you need to consider your approach—how can you get creative and push yourself to where you need to be? Benchmarks like these help you to find your inner strength and creativity in achieving your mission.

The key to reaching your target is to break it down so that you don't get overwhelmed. Setting daily or even weekly goals can make the total number seem more manageable. Then, make a list of who to approach and how much you need from them. Before you know it, you'll be not only reaching but surpassing those goals.

***“The more you talk to people about your passion, the more confident you'll become.”***

## 4. THERE ARE ALWAYS POTENTIAL DONORS TO APPROACH

With targets that have to be met, you'll need to be constantly approaching people. But it's not just individual donors, private organisations are often interested in giving back and you can always apply for government grants for your charity.

Don't panic if you don't know where to begin; start with familiar faces like your friends and families to practise and nail down the best way to really drive your message and get people emotionally invested in your cause. The more you talk to people about your passion, the more confident you'll become.

Think about the donors as potential investors. They're willing to listen to your mission and want to know what they can gain from their investment, whether that's personal satisfaction or some sort of incentive for a corporate donation. The better you become at convincing and persuading them, the more money you'll raise.

## 5. YOU'LL GAIN A NEWFOUND SENSE OF PURPOSE

Ready to find that oh-so-rare sense of fulfilment? One of the best ways to do it is through charity work and helping others. Supporting a cause is one of the fastest ways to feel good about yourself and to feel like you've contributed to the development of humanity.

Once you're stuck into your new fundraising role, we promise you won't think twice about your decision. You'll find a new sense of purpose and seeing the results of your hard work will continue to inspire and motivate you in ways you never even imagined.

In other words, it's not as overwhelming as you may think. Once you figure out the right rhythm, you'll be doing good and helping change the world.

# LOOKING BEYOND TECHNICAL SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TOWARDS A DIVERSE AND VALUE-BASED WORKFORCE

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*The 'Get Hired' programme from Prince's Trust places an emphasis on hiring for potential and values – Rebecca Buchanan sets out her approach.*

Recruitment isn't easy, for the employers or employees. It's a complex landscape of reading or writing numerous CVs and cover letters sprouting various educational achievements and employment highlights. However, in an ever-changing world, these skills we now covet are unlikely to be important in ten years' time. So, how do we choose the right person amongst a sea of potentially viable people?

We bring it back to values. Every person, young or old, has values that shape their behaviour. Values that can make them worth investing in.

Value-based hiring is about looking beyond the technical skills and experience listed in someone's CV.

**Prince's Trust Get Hired** have encouraged value-based recruitment by delivering 'Get Hired Live' events. Personal values and behaviours of young people are aligned with the workplace values of the hiring company, something that is not possible through a purely CV-based or competency-based approach.

Whilst, we endeavour not to undermine technical or 'hard' skills, there should be an emphasis on the fact these can be learnt and will vary with importance over time. Additionally, by shifting the focus away from CVs, experience and academic credentials, you can significantly improve the diversity of your organisation.

***"There are numerous reasons why diversity delivers such big returns but two of the biggest reasons are innovation and customer insight."***

Put simply, diversity – whether gender, ethnicity or culture – is great for business.

Endless statistics, some of which can be found in Prince's Trust Get Hired latest whitepaper, show that ensuring your company is diverse creates a winning formula.

There are numerous reasons why diversity delivers such big returns but two of the biggest reasons are innovation and customer insight. Mixing a range of perspectives and life-experiences are the vital ingredients for driving innovation, eliciting new ideas and fostering creativity. All important for fundraising and connection to donors.

Additionally, customers are very unlikely to be one homogenous group. Creating a workforce that is representative of your customer base makes for a more relatable organisation.

## EXPERT ADVICE

By *Rebecca Buchanan*

So, how do you go about creating a diverse, value-based organisation? Firstly, assess your current values. Let them evolve and be clear with any potential hires that you will hold these values high above all else.

Workplace diversity has become a must-have for any organisation looking to grow and compete. However, simply having a diverse workforce isn't enough; it needs to be accompanied by an environment where all employees – regardless of gender, age or ethnicity – feel they can share ideas and are empowered to take them forward. Make sure everyone at your organisation fully understands the benefits and commits to championing a diverse workplace.

It is only when diversity is combined with strong values and corporate culture that the benefits can be fully realised.

***“Make sure everyone at your organisation fully understands the benefits and commits to championing a diverse workplace.”***



## RESOURCES

# COVER LETTER TEMPLATE

[YOUR NAME]  
[ADDRESS]

[HIRING MANAGER'S NAME]  
[HIRING MANAGER'S COMPANY NAME]  
[COMPANY ADDRESS]

[TODAY'S DATE]

[NAME OF RECIPIENT]

Dear Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms [HIRING MANAGERS NAME - IF NOT KNOWN, SIMPLY SIR/MADAM]

I wish to apply for the role of [JOB TITLE], currently being advertised on [WHERE THE JOB IS BEING ADVERTISED]. Please find enclosed my CV/application form for your consideration.

As you can see from my attached CV/application form, I have over [TIME PERIOD] experience in the charity sector/fundraising, and I believe the knowledge and skills built up during this time make me the right/perfect candidate for the role.

**OR**

As you can see from my attached CV/application form this would be my first role in fundraising. I have developed skills and knowledge in [STATE WHAT] that make me a strong candidate for this role.

[IF APPLICABLE]

In my current role as a [JOB TITLE] at [EMPLOYER NAME], I have been responsible for [INSERT A QUANTIFIABLE AND NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT/S], which when coupled [INSERT SKILLS RELEVANT TO THE ROLE - USUALLY FOUND IN THE JOB DESCRIPTION], has helped the business to [MEASURE OF SUCCESS].

I am confident that I can bring this level of success with me to your organisation and help [COMPANY NAME] build upon their reputation as [STATE THEIR POSITION IN MARKET - LEARNED THROUGH YOUR RESEARCH]. With my previous experience and expertise, I believe my contribution will have an immediate impact on the business.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my application further.

Yours sincerely [IF NAME OF RECIPIENT IS KNOWN] /Yours faithfully [IF ADDRESSED TO SIR/MADAM],

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR SIGNATURE]  
[CONTACT PHONE NUMBER]

## RESOURCES

# CV TEMPLATE

[YOUR NAME]

-

[YOUR TITLE]

[YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS]

### EXPERIENCE

Opening text that sets out your experience and skills. Tailor this for each role you apply for.

### RECENT PROJECTS

Set out any recent projects, in paid jobs, volunteering or while studying that show what you have been doing and how this may be relevant to the role you are applying for.

### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

Where

Role, Year

Role, Year

Role, Year

Education

Where

Qualification, Year

### ADDITIONAL SKILLS

- bullet points of anything else you have as a skill, such as IT skills

The Chartered Institute of Fundraising is the professional membership body for UK fundraising. We support fundraisers through leadership and representation; best practice and compliance; education and networking; and we champion and promote fundraising as a career choice. We have over 640 organisational members who raise more than £10 billion in income for good causes every year, and over 6,000 individual members.

For more information, please visit:  
[www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk](http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk)

