

Blocks and Bridges (Career Coaching exercise)

Sometimes in life you may feel that certain factors are stopping you from having the career you want. The objective of this exercise is identify these obstacles so that you can determine what resources you have (or could have) to help overcome them. Often, an increased awareness of blocks can help to minimise their impact.

1. In first column, write down the things you would like to achieve or what your career objectives are.
2. In the first column, write down what you think is stopping/hindering you (blocks)
3. Next consider what resources or steps (bridges) you could use to overcome them. Write these in the last column.

What I want	Block	Bridge
<i>E.g. Due to my back problems, I'd like a job where I could be seated most of the time; perhaps a telephone adviser job</i>	<i>E.g. All the adverts I've seen want experience of giving advice over the telephone, which I don't have.</i>	<i>E.g. Contact employers for informal chat. Enquire what background existing workers have. Volunteer with the Samaritans/other helpline to gain experience.</i>

Bridges can include: developing new skills, education, qualifications, training, experience, shadowing, informal visits, networking, research, knowledge, motivation, joining groups or forums, self-belief, increasing confidence, support from people, or your own personal qualities.

Have a go of the Blocks and Bridges Career Coaching exercise overleaf. You can talk though the Blocks and Bridges with a careers coach, friend or colleague who you feel comfortable talking to. How can you overcome your blocks? Could some of your bridges help you to overcome a block? Are there any blocks that you cannot overcome? If some cannot be overcome, what could you do?

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What I want	Block	Bridge
<i>E.g. Would like to find a job where I could choose my shifts, to fit around my health condition which is unpredictable.</i>	<i>E.g. Not sure about implications of doing ad hoc shifts and worried about not having regular work. Lost my confidence and self-esteem.</i>	<i>E.g. Consider RCN counselling to support with lack of confidence / esteem. Arrange informal chats with agencies / banks. Attend events to network and gain advice/tips from peers. Contact RCN Peer support</i>