

Employability Skills, Self-Assessment and Personal Development Plan – Landscape Gardener

Task 1 – Comparing Job Advertisements and Identifying Key Skills

I chose two job advertisements for landscape gardening roles in London to show the skills and knowledge needed. The first is for a Head Gardener/Landscaper in Central London, and the second is for an experienced Landscaper/Gardener at a luxury residential estate in South Croydon. Both roles are permanent and full-time. The first offers £33,000–£40,000 per year, while the second pays £40,950 per year.

The first advertisement outlines several key skills. The employer seeks strong leadership experience alongside knowledge of horticulture and landscape maintenance. The position also requires delivering a high standard of presentation and managing a team. This suggests that a Head Gardener needs more than practical ability; they must organise others, maintain standards, and take responsibility for the appearance and upkeep of a landscape. The second advertisement outlines an experienced Landscaper/Gardener for a luxury residential estate. It requires an experienced candidate and sets working hours from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, totalling 37.5 hours per week. Although the extract omits full duties, the call for an experienced gardener reflects the importance of practical knowledge and prior experience in this field. Common ground emerges between the two roles. Both require experience in gardening or landscaping, practical horticultural knowledge, reliability, and the ability to maintain outdoor areas to a high standard. The Head Gardener position further emphasises leadership and team-management skills. Such abilities would be especially useful when moving from a general gardening role to a supervisory one. One key skill I could use in future employment is teamwork and leadership. In a future landscape gardening role, I might apply this by communicating clearly with colleagues, helping organise daily tasks, and ensuring work is completed safely and to the required standard. Developing leadership skills could also support progress toward a Head Gardener or supervisory position. Overall, the advertisements suggest that successful employment in landscaping requires a blend of practical horticultural knowledge, experience, responsibility, communication, and interpersonal skills.

Task 2 – Self-Assessment and Evidence of Readiness

SWOT Self-Assessment

A SWOT analysis helps me identify my current strengths and weaknesses, along with opportunities and threats that could influence my future career as a landscape gardener. Completing this review allows me to understand what I can already offer an employer and which areas need improvement.

Strengths One main strength is my readiness to learn. Landscape gardening is a practical field, and there are always chances to expand knowledge of plants, maintenance methods, equipment, and outdoor space management. I am prepared to learn from experienced colleagues and accept constructive feedback. This is important because job advertisements show that employers value experience and knowledge of horticulture and landscape maintenance. Another strength is my ability to collaborate within a team. Gardening and landscaping projects often involve several people carrying out different tasks. Effective teamwork depends on clear communication, supporting colleagues, and meeting responsibilities promptly. I also value reliability and a professional attitude at work. I am eager to develop my practical skills. Outdoor work demands physical effort, concentration, and consistency. I expect that my willingness to work hard and improve my practical abilities will help me adjust to employment in the landscaping sector.

Weaknesses

One area I must develop is my leadership experience. The Head Gardener advertisement calls for strong leadership and notes that the successful candidate will manage a team. I therefore need more experience organising people, delegating tasks, and taking responsibility for a team's output.

Another weakness is my need to keep developing professional horticultural knowledge. Experience matters because the second advert asks for an experienced Landscaper/Gardener. I should continue gaining practical experience and learning

about different plants, seasonal maintenance, and landscape-management techniques.

I also need to strengthen my confidence when communicating in professional settings. Good communication is vital when receiving instructions, asking questions, reporting problems, and working with customers or colleagues. Improving this area would make me more assured when applying for jobs and attending interviews.

Opportunities Several opportunities are available to me. Two advertisements describe permanent, full-time landscaping positions in and around London. The first offers £33,000–£40,000 per year, while the second lists £40,950, suggesting potential for career progression and financial growth. I might also gain experience through volunteering, work placements, or entry-level gardening roles. These options could help me build practical skills and strengthen my CV. Working alongside experienced gardeners would allow me to learn techniques that are not always taught in a classroom. Another possibility involves advancement: I could start as a gardener or landscaper and later aim for a senior role such as Head Gardener. Developing leadership skills and horticultural knowledge would support this path.

Threats

One threat is competition for roles. Employers may favour applicants with substantial practical experience, especially for senior positions. The second advert's requirement for an experienced Landscaper/Gardener highlights the value of relevant background.

Another threat is that limited leadership experience could hinder immediate access to a senior role. Without addressing this gap, I might struggle to move into team management.

Evidence of Readiness for Employability

My readiness is shown by my willingness to develop skills and take responsibility for my learning. My education has helped me build transferable skills such as communication, organisation, meeting deadlines, and working with others. These can be applied in a

workplace. I can also show employability by drafting a professional CV, preparing for interviews, and researching employers before applying. I recognise that employers look beyond practical skills; they also value reliability, a positive attitude, teamwork, and the capacity to learn. My openness to feedback strengthens my readiness. If a mentor, tutor, employer, or colleague points out an area for improvement, I can use that input to create an action plan. For instance, if I am told I need more confidence in communication, I can deliberately practise speaking clearly, asking questions, and contributing during group activities. Overall, my SWOT analysis suggests a positive foundation for employment, though I still need to develop practical experience, leadership, and professional communication. The job advertisements have shown me that progress in landscape gardening requires continuous development rather than relying only on existing skills. My aim is therefore to gain experience, improve my weaknesses, and gradually take on greater responsibility.

Task 3 – Employment Goals and Personal Development Plan

Employment Goals

My short-term goal is to secure an entry-level or experienced gardening or landscaping role where I can build practical horticultural knowledge and workplace experience. This goal matters because the job advertisements suggest employers value relevant experience and horticultural knowledge.

My long-term goal is to advance into a senior role such as Head Gardener or Landscape Supervisor. The Head Gardener advertisement indicates that such a position requires leadership experience, horticultural and landscape-maintenance knowledge, and the ability to manage a team. Achieving this goal would allow me to take greater responsibility and develop my career within the landscaping industry.

Personal Development Plan | Development area | Action | Timescale | Resources needed | Measure of progress |

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| Horticultural knowledge | Study plant care, seasonal maintenance, and landscape techniques, applying them in practice. | 6–12 months | College resources, gardening

books, and experienced colleagues | Improved practical knowledge and feedback from tutors or colleagues |

| Practical experience | Apply for gardening jobs, placements, or volunteering opportunities. | Within 6 months | CV, job websites, and employer contacts | Number of applications and successful work experience gained |

| Leadership | Volunteer to organise small group tasks and gradually take responsibility for coordinating work. | 6–12 months | Feedback from supervisors and colleagues | Ability to delegate tasks and receive positive feedback |

| Communication | Practise professional communication and interview skills. | 3–6 months | Tutor or mentor feedback and interview practice | Greater confidence during interviews and workplace communication || Career progression | Build experience and work towards a senior gardening or landscaping position. | 2–3 years | Workplace experience, training and professional development | Promotion, increased responsibility or successful application for a senior role |

By following this plan, I can address the weaknesses noted in my SWOT analysis while strengthening my current skills. Regular reviews will allow me to adjust my goals as needed and keep my progress directed toward a successful career in landscape gardening.



 Easy Apply

Head Gardener / Landscaper



8 July by This is Alexander Faraday
Recruitment

£ £33,000 - £40,000 per annum

 London

 Permanent, full-time

Apply now

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Full job description

HEAD GARDENER

Our client has an exciting opportunity for a Head Gardener to join them in Central London. We are looking for someone with strong leadership experience and knowledge of horticultural and landscape maintenance. If you love being outdoors and are on the lookout for a new role, then this may be the job for you.

Main duties of the Role:

- Responsible for delivering a high level of presentation

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Landscaper/Gardener

9 July by PMR



£ £40,950 per annum

 South Croydon, Surrey

 Permanent, full-time

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Full job description

Our Client are looking for an experienced Landscaper/Gardener to join their team at a luxury residential estate based in Croydon.

Working Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm, 37.5 hours per week.

Salary is £40,950 annually.

Duties include:

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