

Comparing Job Adverts

To explore the current job market and understand the essential skills for different career paths, I selected four job adverts from various industries: a *Full-Time Stylist*, a *Restaurant Manager*, a *Front of House Receptionist*, and a *Digital Content Creator*. These adverts represent different professional areas, but all require effective communication, customer service, and organisational skills.

The *Full-Time Stylist* role focuses on customer service, creativity, and teamwork. It requires someone who can manage time effectively, understand client needs, and achieve sales goals while keeping store standards. This position highlights the importance of communication, visual presentation, and commercial awareness.

The *Restaurant Manager* advert emphasises leadership, decision-making, and the ability to manage people and operations. It requires strong interpersonal skills, confidence in leading a team, and the capacity to perform well under pressure. Creativity is also important for planning events and keeping the venue's image.

The *Front of House Receptionist* position values professionalism, flexibility, and strong interpersonal communication. It requires multitasking, problem-solving, and maintaining a positive attitude in a fast-paced environment. Attention to detail and confidentiality are also key.

Finally, the *Digital Content Creator* advert focuses on creativity, planning, and technical knowledge. The role requires skills in social media management, video editing, and collaboration with marketing teams. It also involves meeting deadlines and producing engaging content that reflects brand values.

Across all adverts, the most common skills are *communication, teamwork, time management, adaptability, and creativity*. These skills are essential for employability in today's market, regardless of the sector. Employers also value a proactive attitude, customer focus, and the ability to work under pressure while maintaining professionalism.

Self-Assessment and Evidence of Readiness

To better understand my current strengths and areas for improvement, I conducted a **SWOT analysis** (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). This helped me to reflect on my personal development and readiness for employability in the fashion industry.

Strengths

I have developed strong *time management*, *communication*, and *teamwork* skills during my two years working in fashion retail at Zara. My ability to stay organised and meet deadlines allows me to complete tasks efficiently and keep high standards. I am also *creative*, which helps me contribute ideas for styling and visual merchandising. I learn quickly and adapt easily to new environments. These strengths align well with the skills required in the *Stylist* and *Digital Content Creator* roles, where creativity, organisation, and interpersonal skills are crucial.

Weaknesses

One of my weaknesses is *lack of confidence in leadership*. Although I can work effectively in a team, I sometimes hesitate to take charge or make decisions when managing others. Additionally, English is not my first language, so I occasionally experience a *language barrier*, especially in professional discussions. I am working to overcome this by practicing communication with colleagues and taking part in class discussions.

Opportunities

Living and studying in London gives me access to *many opportunities for career growth* in the fashion and creative industries. I also have the chance to improve my English and develop leadership skills through university projects, short courses, and networking events.

Threats

The main threats I face are *stress*, *cultural barriers*, and *strong competition* in the fashion field. These factors can affect my confidence and motivation if not managed well. However, understanding these challenges helps me to prepare strategies to reduce their impact.

Evidence of Readiness

I have demonstrated my readiness for employability through my work *experience*, *academic learning*, and *personal motivation*. At Zara, I have shown reliability and commitment by consistently achieving sales goals and supporting my team. I received positive feedback from my manager for my professional attitude and problem-solving skills when dealing with clients.

In university, I have improved my critical thinking and reflection abilities through assignments and group work. These experiences helped me to understand how to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings. I also engage in activities that help me learn about trends, branding, and styling — all of which contribute to my future goal of becoming a *Commercial Manager* or *Fashion Stylist*.

Overall, my self-assessment shows that I already have many skills that employers value, such as communication, time management, teamwork, and creativity. At the same time, I recognise areas that require development, including leadership confidence and advanced English proficiency.

Employment Goals and Personal Development Plan

Based on my SWOT analysis, I have identified clear short-term and long-term goals to guide my professional development and career progression.

Short-Term Goals (Next 6–12 months)

1. *Improve leadership skills* – I plan to take a short online course or workshop on management and leadership to build confidence in guiding others. I will also volunteer to lead small tasks or group projects at work or university to gain practical experience.
2. *Enhance English communication* – I will join a conversation club or attend language support sessions to improve my fluency and vocabulary in professional contexts. My goal is to feel more confident when speaking with clients, colleagues, and managers.
3. *Expand fashion knowledge* – I will follow fashion industry publications, attend styling workshops, and learn more about visual merchandising to stay up to date with trends and techniques.
4. *Develop networking skills* – I will attend at least two networking events in London related to fashion or retail management to connect with professionals and learn from their experiences.

Long-Term Goals (Next 2–5 years)

1. *Become a Commercial Manager or Professional Stylist* – My ultimate goal is to progress to a management or creative leadership position in the fashion industry. I aim to combine my creativity with business awareness to lead visual and styling projects.

2. *Obtain further education or certification* – In the long term, I would like to study a professional course related to fashion styling, branding, or management to increase my knowledge and credibility in the field.
3. *Develop a strong professional portfolio* – I plan to document my best styling and merchandising work, both from my job and personal projects, to highlight my skills and creativity for future opportunities.

Personal Development Plan (PDP)

To achieve these goals, I created a Personal Development Plan that includes clear actions, timelines, and resources:

Goal	Action	Timeline	Resources	Process Measurement
Improve leadership skills	Attend leadership course; take initiative at work	Within 6 months	Online courses, feedback from manager	Positive feedback, increased confidence
Improve English	Join speaking club; practice presentation	Continuous	Conversation club, English tutor	Improved fluency and confidence
Expand fashion knowledge	Attend workshops, read trend reports	Ongoing	Fashion magazines, webinars	Increased styling quality and ideas
Network in the industry	Attend networking events	6-12 months	Eventbrite, LinkedIn	Number of contacts and collaborations
Built professional portfolio	Collect styling photos, document projects	12-18 months	Canva, photography tools	Portfolio completion

Regular reflection every three months will help me track progress and adjust actions if needed.

Alignment with Career Aspirations

These goals align closely with my career aspiration to become a *Commercial Manager* or *Stylist* in the fashion industry. Strengthening my leadership, language, and creative skills will help me stand out in a competitive market. By combining my experience in retail with formal education and self-improvement, I will be prepared for advanced roles that require both creative and business-oriented thinking.

This Personal Development Plan will also help me manage stress and cultural challenges, as it provides a clear structure and direction for growth. Following it will increase my employability, confidence, and overall readiness to achieve long-term career success in the dynamic fashion industry.