



# Mothers Looking Ahead

Induction - Setting Expectations



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## Module Aim

### Module 0: Induction - Setting Expectations

The aim of this module is to introduce the training programme and the topics included and how these relate to supporting mothers in re-entering the workforce or making career transitions. It also looks at the importance of motivation and soft skills in one's career development. The module provides learners with an opportunity to determine where their existing skillset is and what are the next steps for improving it. Learners are also supplied with tips and additional resources to further expand their knowledge on the above mentioned topics.



## Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this lesson, participants gain the following

### Knowledge:

- Factual knowledge of the topics included in the programme
- Factual and practical knowledge of the importance of motivation and soft skills
- Factual knowledge of the available resources and support systems

### Skills:

- Identify personal learning needs and goals
- Reflect on personal learning needs and career aspirations
- Define realistic expectations for participation and learning

### Attitudes:

- Willingness to feel comfortable and supported within the learning environment
- Openness to new ideas and collaboration
- Openness to foster a positive attitude towards collaboration and learning



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# What is the MOLA Training Programme?

This training programme is designed to support mothers in re-entering the workforce or making career transitions. It's important to set **realistic expectations** so that you can stay motivated and achieve meaningful progress. Here's what you can expect from the training programme:

## Practical Career Tools and Strategies

You'll be introduced to value tools, such as SWOT analysis, Career Model Canvas, and Skills Gap Analysis, which will help you evaluate your strengths, identify areas for growth, and create a structured plan for your career.

These tools will provide a step-by-step approach to help you take control of your career planning.

## Soft Skills Development

Soft skills like communication, problem-solving, and time management will be key focuses of the programme. These skills are critical for any job and developing them will improve your employability and work-life balance.

## Goal Setting

You'll learn how to set SMART goals, helping you break down your long-term aspirations into clear, manageable steps. Whether it's returning to work, starting a new business, or pursuing education, the focus will be on creating goals that are both realistic and achievable.

## Work-Life Balance Support

One of the main concerns for mothers returning to work is balancing career demands with family responsibilities. The programme will provide you with strategies for managing both work and home life efficiently.

# What is Motivation, and Why Is It Important?

- To stay motivated throughout this journey, it helps to understand **why** we do what we do. Motivation theories can shed light on what drives us to succeed, especially in the face of challenges like balancing work and family life.
- One of the most well-known theories is **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**. This theory suggests that human motivation is based on a pyramid of needs, starting with basic physiological needs and moving towards self-actualisation.
- Let's see how this applies here:

*What drives you to succeed?*

**Self-Actualisation:** Ultimately, you might be striving for personal growth, using your skills to their fullest potential, and doing something you are passionate about.

**Esteem Needs:** Gaining confidence and recognition for your work can be a powerful motivator, especially after a long break.

**Social Needs:** A sense of belonging is crucial. Many returners are motivated by the desire to regain a social network or feel part of a professional community.

**Safety Needs:** For mothers re-entering the workforce, job security or flexible working arrangements that fit with family life might be a primary motivator.

**Basic Needs:** If you're concerned about financial stability, your immediate motivation may be to find a job to cover living expenses.

# Intrinsic v Extrinsic Motivation



## Intrinsic Motivation

**Intrinsic motivation** comes from within. You might feel motivated because you enjoy learning new things, you want to grow personally, or you want to set a good example for your family and friends.



## Extrinsic Motivation

**Extrinsic Motivation** is driven by external rewards, such as earning a salary, receiving recognition, or achieving work-life balance.

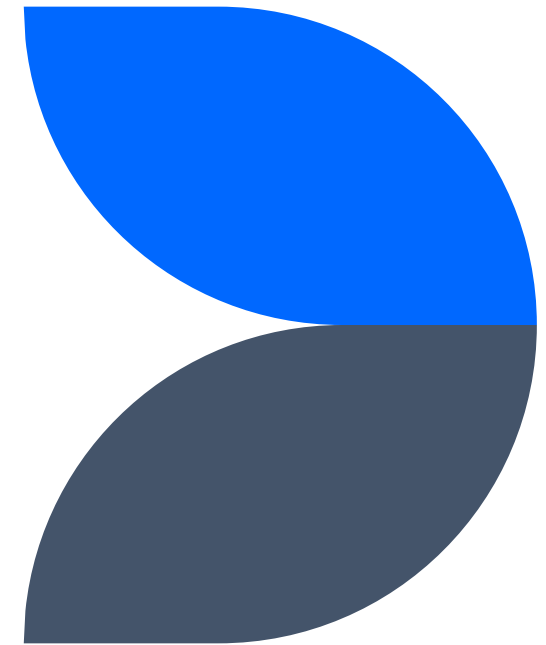
*Understanding your personal motivators can help you stay focused during the programme and identify which aspects of your career drive you the most.*



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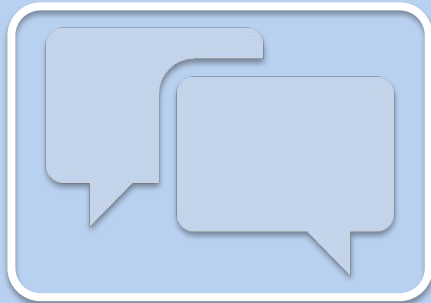
# The Importance of Soft Skills Development

**Soft skills** are the non-technical, interpersonal skills that influence how you interact with others, manage your time, and solve problems. They are equally – if not more – important than hard skills in today's workplace. Employers increasingly value candidates who demonstrate strong soft skills because they contribute to a positive, productive, and collaborative work environment.



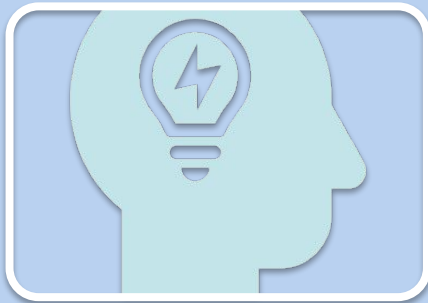


# Soft Skills Development



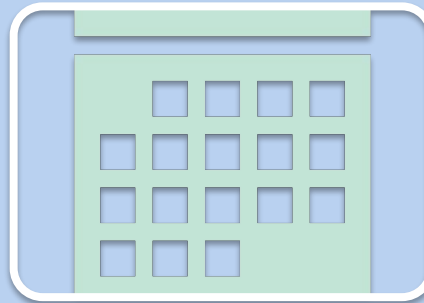
## Communication Skills

- Effective communication—whether verbal, written, or non-verbal—is critical in every career. It allows you to express your ideas, listen to others, and resolve conflicts professionally. Developing communication skills will help you feel more confident during interviews, team meetings, and client interactions.



## Problem-Solving & Decision-Making

- In any career, you'll face challenges, whether it's managing tight deadlines, handling work-life conflicts, or addressing unexpected changes. Learning how to think critically and make informed decisions will equip you to solve these problems effectively. This programme will offer tools to improve your problem-solving skills, so you can tackle workplace challenges with confidence.



## Time Management

- Balancing work and family life often comes down to how well you can manage your time. By improving your time management skills, you'll be able to prioritise tasks, meet deadlines, and reduce stress. This is especially important for mothers who need to juggle multiple responsibilities.



## Adaptability & Flexibility

- Returning to the workforce after a career break often requires flexibility. You may need to adapt to new technologies, work environments, or expectations. Employers highly value individuals who can adjust quickly to change, making this an essential soft skill for career success.



## Teamwork & Collaboration

- In most workplaces, you'll need to work well with others. Whether you're collaborating on projects, working with clients, or managing a team, teamwork skills are essential. Developing the ability to cooperate, resolve conflicts, and contribute to group success will make you a more valuable employee.



# Activity 1 Skills Assessment Checklist

The most important part of any training is to develop knowledge and skills. But to do this, we must first understand where our existing skillset currently is.

In this activity, you are going to assess your skills using this handy skills checklist.

This checklist will help you evaluate your current soft skills before starting the training programme. Soft skills are essential in the workplace, especially when transitioning back to a career. For each skill listed, assess your ability by marking the appropriate box: "Strong," "Needs Improvement," or "Not Sure."

**Take the time to accurately reflect on these statements.**



## Activity 1 Skills Assessment Checklist

**Communication Skills** – the ability to convey information clearly and effectively in various professional settings.

Skill – Communication Skills	Strong	Needs Improvement	Not Sure
I can express my ideas clearly and concisely in writing			
I feel confident speaking in group discussions or meetings			
I can actively listen and respond appropriately to others			
I can handle constructive criticism professionally			

**Conflict Resolution** – The ability to resolve disputes and disagreements in a constructive manner

Skill – Conflict Resolution	Strong	Needs Improvement	Not Sure
I am good at staying calm when faced with conflict			
I can mediate disputes between family and friends			
I approach conflicts as opportunities for positive change			
I can communicate diplomatically in emotionally charged situations			

## Activity 1 Skills Assessment Checklist

**Collaboration & Teamwork** – The ability to work well with others, contribute to a team, and achieve common goals

Skill – Collaboration & Teamwork	Strong	Needs Improvement	Not Sure
I enjoy working in a team and contributing to group goals			
I value input and feedback from team members			
I am good at resolving conflicts and promoting a positive dynamic			
I can cooperate with different personalities and work styles			

**Adaptability & Flexibility** – The ability to adjust to changes in the workplace and handle unforeseen challenges

Skill – Adaptability & Flexibility	Strong	Needs Improvement	Not Sure
I am open to learning new skills and techniques			
I can adapt to unexpected changes in schedules or plans			
I handle stressful situations calmly and maintain focus			
I am able to adjust quickly to new technology or systems			

## Activity 1 Skills Assessment Checklist

**Emotional Intelligence** – The ability to recognise, understand, and manage your emotions, and the emotions of others

Skill – Emotional Intelligence	Strong	Needs Improvement	Not Sure
I can recognise my own emotions and how they impact my work			
I am empathetic and understanding of others' feelings and perspectives			
I handle conflicts diplomatically and calmly			
I maintain positive relationships with friends and family			

**Leadership & Initiative** – the ability to lead and motivate others, as well as take initiative on tasks & projects.

Skill – Leadership & Initiative	Strong	Needs Improvement	Not Sure
I feel comfortable taking charge of a project or team			
I take initiative to complete tasks without being asked			
I can provide constructive feedback and guidance to others			
I motivate others to achieve team goals			



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## Activity 1 Skills Assessment Checklist

**Time Management** – The ability to manage time efficiently and balance various tasks effectively.

Skill – Time Management	Strong	Needs Improvement	Not Sure
I can prioritise tasks to meet deadlines			
I am good at managing multiple responsibilities at the same time			
I am able to stay focused and productive, even when distracted			
I regularly use tools (calendar, planners) to organise my time			

**Problem-solving & Decision-making** – The ability to analyse situations, make informed decisions, and solve problems effectively.

Skill – Problem-solving & Decision-making	Strong	Needs Improvement	Not Sure
I can break down complex problems into manageable parts			
I am confident in making decisions under pressure			
I explore multiple solutions before choosing the best one			
I feel comfortable evaluating the pros and cons of a decision			



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## Activity 1 Skills Assessment Checklist

Now that you've completed your skills assessment, answer these questions:

1. Which soft skills do you feel are your strongest?
2. Which areas need the most improvement for you to feel confident returning to work?
3. What steps can you take during this training program to develop your weaker areas?
4. How will improving your soft skills help you balance your career and family responsibilities?

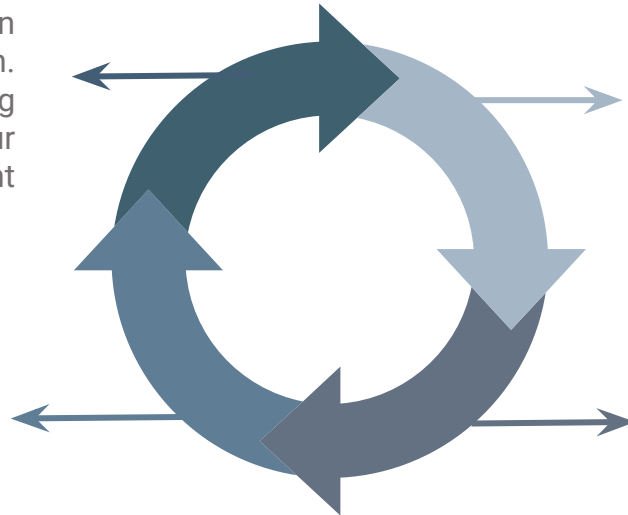
# Top Tips

## Be Open to Learning and Growth

Approach the programme with an open mind and a willingness to learn. Embrace challenges as learning opportunities and stay proactive in your personal and professional development

## Set Clear and Achievable Goals

Remember, progress doesn't happen overnight – small, consistent steps lead to lasting results



## Engage Actively and Collaborate

Take full advantage of the resources and activities afforded to you through this programme. Learning from others' experiences can offer valuable insights, and collaboration builds a strong support network

## Balancing Learning with Self-Care

Balancing work, family, and personal development can be challenging. Make sure you manage your time effectively and practice self-care throughout the programme.



## Additional Resources

*Take some time to check out these resources to further your knowledge before engaging with the rest of the training programme resources!*



### **Developing Soft Skills**

This is a helpful article with many additional resources to help you develop your soft skills



### **What are Soft Skills?**

This article gives a great overview of soft skills and their importance in the workplace



### **What is Self-Motivation?**

Learn how to push yourself towards your goals by reading this helpful article



### **What is Personal Development?**

This article introduces the concept of personal development and how it can help empower you in the long-term

# Conclusion

As you prepare for the programme, remember that **soft skills development** and **motivation** are key ingredients for success. By understanding what drives you, setting realistic goals, and improving your interpersonal skills, you'll be better prepared for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

## Takeaway Questions to Reflect On:

- What are your primary motivators for returning to the workforce or changing careers?
- Which soft skills do you think you need to develop the most?
- How can improving your soft skills make balancing work and family life easier?

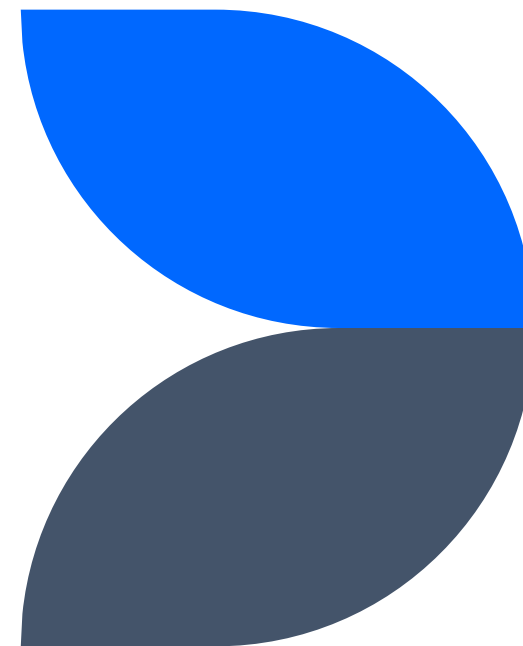
Your journey starts with self-awareness and the desire to grow. The programme will provide you with the tools and strategies you need to succeed—but your commitment and effort will determine how far you go.

***Good luck, and we look forward to supporting you on this exciting new chapter!***



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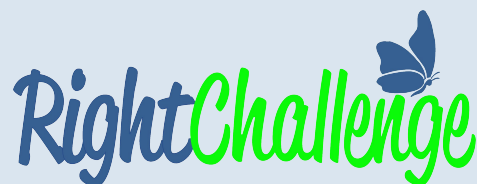
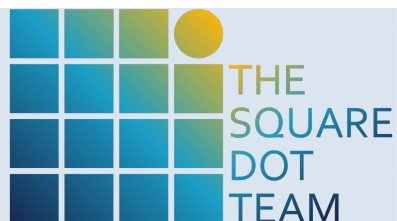
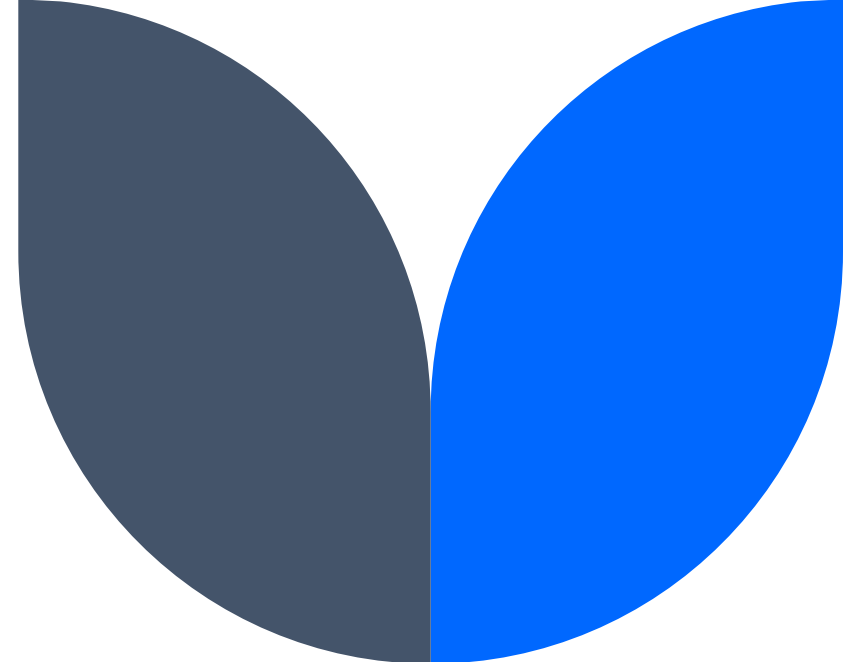
# Congratulations on completing this Module!





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