



**Cogent** skills  
for science industries

# Careers in Science

**A Guide for Parents,  
Guardians and Teachers**

Do you want your child/pupil  
to have a well-paid and  
exciting career?

# A World Full of Amazing Opportunities



Parents and teachers are key influences in career choices for young people. This guide will explain the benefits of working in science and help you to encourage young people into the industry. There are a variety of rewarding and challenging jobs available, not only based in a laboratory but also office and field based.

## Why the Science Industries?

- ✓ Amongst organisations needing people with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) knowledge and skills, 43% have reported difficulties recruiting staff, hence there is a great demand for more young workers with STEM skills and qualifications.
- ✓ There is an ageing population of workers in the science industries, meaning there is a high replacement demand.
- ✓ Estimates show that the UK science industry has a shortfall of around 40,000 new workers each year, resulting in great job security.
- ✓ On average, those working in STEM occupations earn 20% more than those working in other fields.

# 43%

of organisations have reported difficulties recruiting staff, hence there is a great demand for more young workers

# The Myths



If entering STEM related jobs is such a prosperous career choice then why is it difficult to attract young people? This section will look at dispelling the myths around working in science using jobs.

## ✗ You need to have a degree

A university degree is not the only route into science careers. Apprenticeships and Traineeships are growing in popularity and mean that your child or pupil does not need to be an A\* candidate to enter science. An enthusiasm to learn and hardworking attitude along with 5 good GCSEs is what most employers are looking for.

## ✗ Science careers aren't for girls

There is a gender imbalance in the STEM industries. With women only making up 13% of the STEM workforce. In 2013, girls achieved better or equal GCSE grades compared with boys in virtually every STEM subject. Girls can use their skills to help people and make a difference. With a high demand for women in science, this is an excellent career route.

## ✗ Science careers are boring and laboratory based

There is a stereotype that all science-based jobs involve wearing a lab coat and performing routine mundane tasks. Like any other job some aspects of some STEM positions are repetitive; however many are varied and interesting. Young people will have the chance to be creative and challenge norms.

# 40k

shortfall of new workers within the UK science industry resulting in great job security

# How to Enter a Science Career

There are a number of different routes available to enter the science industries:

## Traineeships

Traineeships help young people who are interested in Apprenticeships but don't quite have the grades or experience required to secure one. A Traineeship consists of a ten week education programme and at least 100 hours of work experience with a local science employer which will help to secure employment or an Apprenticeship.

## Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a fantastic first step on the career ladder for young people. No longer deemed as a second rate option to university, Apprenticeships are high quality work-based training programmes, where young people earn a wage whilst learning in the workplace. An Apprenticeship provides young people with the essential practical skills sought by employers.

## Industrial Placements

Competition in the graduate jobs market has risen dramatically in recent years. Getting a good degree is no longer enough to secure a graduate job. Work experience or industrial placements whilst at university will enhance students CVs and improve their employability by gaining the skills highly sought after by companies.

85%

of apprentices stay in employment after finishing their Apprenticeship

# How to Encourage Young People into Science

There are a number of ways to inspire young people to enter science careers:

- Research the range of opportunities available in science industries and share interesting ones, visit our career navigator tool, [www.cogentskills.com/careers](http://www.cogentskills.com/careers)
- Encourage people to get involved with extra-curricular science clubs or competitions at school. Set up fun interactive science experiments for young people to get involved in.
- Take them to the Big Bang Fairs which showcase exciting opportunities in science and engineering.
- Visit science museums and attend employer open days.
- Look at websites including [www.cogentskills.com](http://www.cogentskills.com) and follow [@cogent\\_students](https://twitter.com/cogent_students) to keep up to date with latest opportunities and vacancies in science.

70%

of learners with work experience are more likely to get jobs

# Employability Skills



Employability skills are the transferable skills needed by an individual in the workplace. Along with good technical understanding and subject knowledge, employers often outline a set of skills that they believe will equip an employee to carry out a particular role to the best of their ability. It is good to help young people improve the following employability skills:

## Communication



The ability to explain what you mean in a clear and concise way through written and spoken means. Practice interview questions and speaking in front of people.

## Problem solving



The ability to understand a problem by breaking it down into smaller parts and identifying the key issues, implications and possible solutions.

## Initiative and self-motivation



Having new ideas of your own which can be made into reality. Showing a strong personal drive and not waiting to be told to do things.

## Organisational skills



Being organised and methodical; able to plan work to meet deadlines and targets.

## Teamwork



Working well with other people from different disciplines, backgrounds, and expertise to accomplish a task or goal.

# 20%

On average, those working in STEM occupations earn 20% more than those working in other fields

“

I love working in science because it allows me to work on research which may affect our healthcare and technology industries. From studying a STEM subject, I feel that I am being equipped with transferrable skills, so I will be able to choose from many career paths.

” **Diki Fundu**

“

I enjoy that I work for a pharmaceutical company, knowing that our company works towards improving the quality of life globally.

” **Leon Jacobs**





If you would like more information about the range of opportunities available in science please visit:

➤ [www.cogentskills.com/careers](http://www.cogentskills.com/careers)

🐦 [@cogent\\_students](https://twitter.com/cogent_students)

📘 [www.facebook.com/CogentStudents](https://www.facebook.com/CogentStudents)

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