

Unleashing Creativity: Crafting Inclusive Career Development Resources with Canva

Introduction

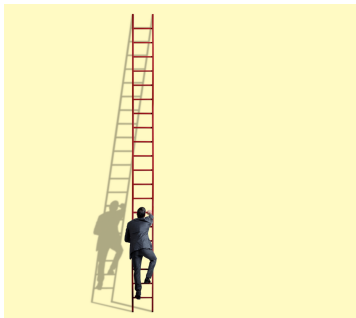


I'm Lis McGuire, a Registered Career Development Professional who provides career guidance and education in schools and charities in addition to working with adult clients in my private practice. I also spend part of my week caring for my 91-year-old Nan.

My experience of working with different clients in different contexts and my personal experience of unpaid work as a parent and carer helped me to create an opportunity awareness card sort resource called Shape of Career. Without Canva, Shape of Career would still be just an idea, so I wanted to share a bit about how I used it and how it helped me to launch my product.

What motivated me to make Shape of Career cards?

In all areas of my practice, I was finding that:



Not all clients relate to the word 'career' – they might not think it applies to them, interpreting it more like a ladder rather than a word that describes how they spend their time and energy. I wanted to help clients see that career is a word for everyone and that they are already on their career journey, whatever their situation or circumstance.

And if they're already on the road, they can take the steering wheel and drive.



It can be tricky to share all the opportunities and models of work (paid and unpaid), learning, and career exploration – they are there on the internet, but I wanted to make them more accessible and help clients get a handle on what is possible.

This is what led me to create Shape of Career, an inclusive opportunity awareness card sort that challenges outdated perceptions of career and helps clients see what career is and that they already have a career. I launched Shape of Career England in May 2023 and have recently launched Shape of Career Scotland in August 2023.

Thank you Canva

Ideas don't just leap from lightbulb moments to finished products. We need to get them down on paper, visualise them, communicate them to others, tweak them, and improve them. I selected Canva as my tool of choice, as it is intuitive, flexible, and allows you to create whatever you imagine, whatever size, colour, shape, or format you need.

Canva helped me create a prototype of the cards, as shown below, that I tested with clients and shared with colleagues. Without their initial feedback and encouragement Shape of Career would still be in the ideas phase. Canva is really useful for making dreams tangible.



Canva also helped me to share the concept with my print team so they could transform it into a print-ready product. Canva does offer a print service, but as this was a bespoke product, I opted to work with my local printer on production.

WHAT MAKES DECENT WORK?
A PSHE activity using **Shape of Career** cards


"Productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity."
https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/topics/employment-and-decent-work_en

Introduce 'decent work'
Introduce the concept of decent work using the quote on the left. Explain decent work as a basic requirement we can all expect in our working lives.

Expand on the concept
By showing the ILO's 1.5 minute video available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZpyJwevPqç> or via the QR code




Select 2 Paid Work cards
Select 2 models of paid work from the Paid Work category of Shape of Career cards. Introduce each model to the group.




Ask students to raise hands

- If they've heard of the model of work
- If they know someone who's done this
- If they would consider it themselves in future



Pros & cons debate
Split into 2 teams. Ask team 1 to find/voice arguments for card 1 and team 2 to find/voice arguments against it. Repeat for card 2.
Summarise and ask the group for their takeaways.



<https://sunrisecareerguidance.co.uk/shapeofcareercards/>

Since launching the cards, I have used Canva to create conference presentations, promotional materials, and infographics (example below) that show how to use the cards in practice. Canva makes it all very easy – the templates are easily adjustable and the resources available save lots of time.

Using Canva to create an accessible and inclusive resource

Here are some tips on how to use Canva to create accessible and inclusive career development resources:

Don't be afraid to play: Before I started to create Shape of Careers, I had used Canva to create quite a few resources and spent quite a bit of time playing around with the functionality. I can easily lose track of time designing things, but it is time well spent as it builds confidence and pushes the boundaries of possibility.

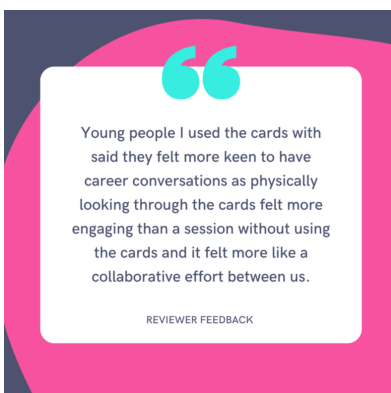
Make it visual: Use colour and images to make the resource engaging and attractive. Canva makes this easy - you can use Canva's colour palettes and add

elements including graphics, photos, and videos to your design. One reviewer of Shape of Career Scotland cards reported that young people testing the cards mentioned the colours made them keen to try and look through them.



Use inclusive imagery: Use images and graphics that help people of all situations and backgrounds to see themselves in the resource and see options as possibilities for them.

Make resources dyslexia friendly: I aimed to design the cards in line with the [British Dyslexia Association's style guide](#) by using dark coloured text a non-white background, a sans-serif font, matt paper, concise descriptions, and images to support text.



Seek feedback from practitioners working with different client groups: Receiving feedback from experienced careers professionals working in schools, universities, in private coaching practices, and community contexts helped me to ensure the cards are accessible and relevant to all client groups.

Access support from people who are experienced in creating resources: The encouragement and support of professionals who have created fantastic career development resources made a huge difference to me. Reach out to people who can help and support you as you bring your idea to reality.

Find out more

Lis McGuire is a registered career development professional (RCDP) and the founder of Sunrise Career Guidance. She spends her time delivering career education and guidance services in schools and a mental health charity, also working with adult clients in her own private practice. Lis has an MA in Career Management and a Level 7 Qualification in Career Guidance (QCG). Find Lis on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lismcguire/>. You can find out more about Shape of Career England here: <https://sunrisecareerguidance.co.uk/shapeofcareercards/> and Shape of Career Scotland here: <https://sunrisecareerguidance.co.uk/shape-of-career-cards-scotland/>.