

'You're sitting in the reception of a leading international company. Ten other pristine candidates clutching their no doubt outstanding CVs. Anxiety takes hold of you. How can you stand out from the other interviewees?'

The answer could be, **Work Experience**.

The benefits of work experience are many, including acquiring job-specific and transferable skills and also self-knowledge. It gives you the opportunity to test various career sectors and your suitability to them. View it as a head start on all those candidates competing for the job of your dreams.

Check out the Skills Section for some practical help such as writing a letter of application and interview technique.

## The Process

Work experience is designed to give students the experience of applying for and working in a real job. The process we must go through is:

- Find the area that you want to work in.
- Make first contact (this can be by letter or phone)
- Get an agreement that you can do the Work Experience on the dates required.
- Inform the Careers office providing full contact details (form provided on request).
- School will then confirm with the contact in writing.
- Placement confirms with School.
- School sends detail to Connexions Health & Safety department.
- Connexions Health & Safety informs school if the placement has passed or failed.
- Student informed only if placement fails.
- Students will be asked to contact placement before dates to confirm placement.
- A final checklist is provided for students.
- Work Experience booklet handed out and pre-experience sections filled in.
- Out on Work Experience!
- De-brief session back in school.

## The Booklet

The work experience booklet is produced so that the students have a record of their achievements from the week, including personal recollections, evidence of jobs done and skills learnt.

This booklet also includes an employer report, which has all the important employability skills that students will need in the future. The employer, at the end of the work experience, fills in this

report. This booklet is designed for the students, not school, completed correctly and the student's ability to fill in application forms becomes much easier as will progress file and being on interview.

This year the Work Experience will also provide students with evidence for two Units of their CoPE award (Certificate of Personal Effectiveness). The Booklet will be altered to reflect this, which makes it even more important that they spend some time making sure that it is filled in carefully.

## **Employability Skills / Qualities**

When students are at their placement, they need to think about employability skills, sometimes known as qualities. These are the skills / qualities that can be transferable to most jobs and the skills / qualities that employers consistently ask for.

They are:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Manage Situations effectively
- Ability to follow instructions
- Relating to people
- Ability to research, analyse and evaluate Ability to Communicate
- Use of Initiative
- Willingness to learn
- Ability to pick up new skills
- Ability to work unsupervised
- Reliability
- Appearance

How do you match up?

## **Final Checklist**

Before students go out on the work experience they are asked to check up on certain things that they will need to know. Below is a check list:

- Has your information appeared on the school database?
- Make contact with your placement to check and confirm details.
- Do you know what time and where do you go on your first day?
- Do you know what will you need to wear, is there a uniform or specialist clothing?
- Do you need to take any equipment with you?
- Do you know what time will you finish?
- Do you know how to get to your work placement?



- Have you sorted out your travel arrangements?
- Do you know what you will do for lunch?
- Do you know the duties you will perform?
- Do you know anything about the company?
- Do you know about the product?

Is there anything more that you need to know for your particular Work Experience placement? If so then find out before you go!

### **Parent / Carer Information**

A Parent/Carer can have a very important role to play in a student's Work Experience Placement. They can help secure a placement and / or encourage the student during the placement. For more information have a look at the Parents Information Section.

### **Help !**

If it's help you're after then there is plenty to hand. Have a good read of all the information available on these pages and check out the Skills section for practical help.

If your still stuck the see Ms Sirett or Mr Platts for more advice!