

WHY ARE...


EXPERIENCES OF THE WORKPLACE SO IMPORTANT?

Experiences of the workplace are a great way for you to gain vital knowledge of a wide range of different job roles and industry sectors as you begin to plan your own career pathway. Workplace experiences can also provide you with a real understanding of how a workplace looks and feels.

While getting experience of the workplace you can learn all about the different job roles being undertaken there, what equipment, systems and tools employees use to undertake their job role each day and meet the people who work there.

As you continue your journey through education your school should support you to undertake some experiences of the workplace, but this doesn't mean you can't explore some more of your own.

Experiences of the workplace may enhance your CV, enable you to demonstrate your knowledge of the workplace or a specific industry during an interview with an employer or even just help you finally decide which career pathway you wish to take in the future.



WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW WHAT CAREER I WANT TO DO WHEN I LEAVE SCHOOL?

The most important thing is not to panic. It is very common for young people to be unsure about where they see themselves in the future, especially when you are asked what job you see yourself doing. Always remember that there is an option out there to suit everyone you just need to find it.

Experiences of the workplace are a good way for you to identify some job roles or industry sectors which you may wish to explore further. They may also be a way for you to decide that a certain job role or industry is also not the right one for you. Remember that deciding if something is not for you actually takes you one step closer to choosing the career path which is right for you.

WHAT COULD AN EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE LOOK LIKE?

There are a few ways in which you can gain experiences of the workplace. Here are a few examples which might help you:

- 1) Face to Face Work Experience
- 2) Workplace or Site Visits
- 3) Job Shadowing
- 4) Virtual Work Experience
- 5) Social Action and Volunteering

Before we look at these in more detail on the next page here is a quote from one of our local employers who speaks about the benefits of workplace experiences.

1 FACE TO FACE WORK EXPERIENCE

Face to Face work experience is a great way for you to work out if your particular "Dream Job" is the right one for you. We often think we like the look of a job role, but can we really be sure unless we experience it for ourselves.

Face to face work experience can be undertaken in a solid block, for example one full week, or could be spread over several weeks. During any period of face-to-face work experience you will be given the opportunity to meet the people who are undertaking the role, learn more about the workplace itself and gain valuable practical experience of the world of work. During your face-to-face work experience you may be given your own project tasks to complete which will not only enhance your existing skills but also help you obtain new skills, learn how to communicate in the workplace and learn a business really operates.

EMPLOYER TOP TIP:

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As an HR Manager I often receive CVs from young people who are looking to secure their very first job role within our industry. We totally understand that many of these young people have never actually been employed before but the majority of young people fail to include any work experience or workplace experiences they have undertaken while they were at school. By listing these experiences you are giving a potential employer a lot of useful information about the skills you may have obtained and that you may actually have an understanding of the world of work

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2 WORKPLACE OR SITE VISITS

A workplace or site visit is an effective way for you to experience the workplace for yourself. During a visit to the workplace you may be given a tour of the facilities, learn about all of the different departments which help the business operate and meets lots of employees who are undertaking a variety of different job roles within the business.

During a workplace visit you will be given the opportunity to ask lots of questions and hear the answers from employees who have a lot of knowledge of these job roles or the wider industry sector.

3 JOB SHADOWING

Job Shadowing, sometimes known as Work Shadowing, aims to give you a deeper insight into a particular job role. You can gain knowledge by observing an employee who is undertaking the role in the workplace. These shadowing sessions may take place over one full day or take place over a longer period of time. While shadowing the employee you can begin to understand the tasks they undertake on a day-to-day basis, the equipment, software, or tools they use and how they interact with other colleagues as part of their role.

During this experience you could ask the employee questions about their own careers journey and learn more about the skills and qualifications they need to undertake the job role.

5 SOCIAL ACTION AND VOLUNTEERING

Social Action and Volunteering are often something that young people are already undertaking as part of their after-school clubs or activities. But often many young people don't realise that these activities can provide you with additional employability skills which will enhance your CV.

You should consider volunteering and participating in activities outside of school as you can meet people from the world of work who you may not have otherwise met, hear about their experiences, make a difference to your local community as well as meet new friends.

4 VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Much like face-to-face work experience completing Virtual Work Experience can be very beneficial. Apart of the obvious difference in not actually visiting an employer in person to conduct your work experience you can still obtain the same benefits from participating in the activity. Virtual work experience allows you the opportunity to hear from industry experts and complete mini activities linked to a specific sector or job role from the comfort of your own home or while at school.

SPEAK TO A MEMBER OF THE CAREERS TEAM WITHIN YOUR OWN SCHOOL TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT WHAT EXPERIENCES OF THE WORKPLACE MIGHT BE RIGHT FOR YOU.