

5th Year Work Experience: Preparation & Planning

Steps:

1. Making an application for work experience:

Whether you are making application by phone call or letter, it is important to ensure that you include the following points in any communication:

- Your name
- Your school & the year that you are in
- The reason you are making contact, i.e. enquiring about work experience opportunities
- The dates you are seeking a placement
- Your contact details-postal address, email address, tel. no.
- A copy of your **CV**

2. Identify Key Skills for the World of Work (Work Experience)

A work placement offers you the opportunity to get a 'feel' for the world of work. An employer will be looking for you to 'fit in' with the rest of the employees and they will evaluate you on the basis of how well you do.

Your employer will also assess you on how well developed your current or future '**employability skills**' (transferrable skills) are.

The following are some examples of possible **transferrable skills** that an employer would value in their employees:

PEOPLE SKILLS (Interpersonal skills)

- #Sensitivity to others
- #Insight into others
- #Openness to others
- #Respect
- #Good communication skills: verbal & non-verbal
- #Team 'player' & Leadership skills

TASK SKILLS (Technical skills)

- #Planning / Organising
- #Time management
- #Practical skills
- #IT skills
- #Problem solving skills
- #entrepreneurial skills
- #Customer focus

PERSONAL SKILLS (Intrapersonal skills)

- #Learning skills
- #Adaptability
- #Goal setting
- #Initiative
- #Independence
- #Motivation
- #Dependability
- #Professionalism

Which of these skills do you have already and which do you need to develop?

3. Identifying Work Experience that is meaningful and relevant to your chosen career

In order to gain the best from your upcoming work experience and to benefit your career planning, it would be advisable to have work experience with an organisation whose type of work is closely related to your own future career hopes. This way you will gain useful insight into this type of career/occupation.

Choosing a Work Placement

As part of your work experience, you are about to enter the world of work.

The following are some possible reasons why someone might choose a particular job/choose a particular company/organisation for work experience:

- ~ Being happy in a job
- ~ Having security in your job
- ~ Doing a job well
- ~ A chance of promotion
- ~ Wanting to work with people
- ~ Being independent
- ~ Wanting variety in a job
- ~ Working on your own
- ~ Getting paid well
- ~ Having a nice boss/manager
- ~ Enjoying the job that you do
- ~ Wanting to develop new skills
- ~ Wanting to learn something new
- ~ Being able to use your own ideas

Choose 4 of them which you consider to be most important to you:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What employers want/expect from their employees?

Employers want you to gain as much as possible from your time working with them. Remember, if you impress your employers now, you may gain paid part-time/full-time work in the future!

Tips for work placement!

1. Show **good time management** –arrive on time each day
2. Make sure to **dress appropriately** for the organisation, make sure you are always **neat and tidy**.

3. Be **respectful** to your colleagues and their clients/customers at all times.
4. Respect any issues of **confidentiality**..
5. Be **friendly** and smile, even when you're nervous.
Good eye contact is important (remember the verbal & non-verbal communication skills that you learned about..)
6. Use your **initiative** and show a willingness to learn new things and to take direction when necessary. Accept constructive criticism and adjust your work methods if necessary
7. You should **aim to learn appropriate skills** that are in line with your course of study/choice of career
8. If you're not sure of something, it is always best to ask!

4. Getting the most out of your work placement

The best way to get the most out of your work experience is to set yourself some personal targets and goals.

Remember the top 3 skills for improvement that you set yourself on the skills audit test..