



ORMISTON ILKESTON  
ENTERPRISE ACADEMY

# **A Guide to Work Experience**

# **INTRODUCTION**

**This Work Experience Booklet is designed to help you prepare for and get the most out of your Work Experience. The sections are self-explanatory and follow in a logical, chronological order.**

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# SELLING YOURSELF

By now you will have conducted your research, decided upon the kind of work in which you would like to gain experience of and collected the details of potential placement providers within comfortable travelling distance. This section gives a few tips on presenting yourself in the best possible light.

A key ingredient to securing employment is the ability to market yourself to employers. Your efforts to acquire work experience will give you:

- The confidence to sell yourself
- Knowledge of what employers is looking for in the application process.
- Feedback on your own performance
- Practice in writing a letter of application
- Interview experience

## Identifying ways to make contact

Any time you contact an employer you are sending out signals that say something about you as a person. You could contact employers by:

- Telephoning
- Posting your letter of application



When making initial contact by telephone, rehearse what you are going to say. You will need to be clear about the kind of experience you are seeking and how your own skills and personal qualities will be of interest to the employer.

In a large organisation you will probably speak to a personnel officer or somebody in Human Resources. Make sure you make a note of his/her name as you will need to follow up this telephone call with a more formal letter of application.

## Letters of Application



The letter of application is your opportunity to explain to the employer why you are seeking a placement with his/her organisation, what research you have done and who you have spoken to (in other words, how serious are you about this area of work) and what the *mutal* benefits of this work experience will be.

Your letter should be free of spelling errors, neat and tidy (preferably typed with a hand written signature).

## **Following up on your Letter**

You could find out how your application is progressing by calling on the pretext of making sure that the employer has received your letter and asking when you might hear something. Remind them of who you are and state clearly why you wrote in the first place. Ask if they would like you to come in for a meeting, if the employer feels he is able to help.

## **The Interview**

If you have prepared well, your interview should be more of a discussion about the placement. If you haven't done any preparation, you're more likely to find the employer asking you lots of questions. The organisation knows what they can offer, but they want to find out whether you will fit in well with them and what you can offer.

Be prepared to talk about how you are getting on at school academically, socially and in the area of sports and extra-curricular activities. Say what you are thinking of doing when you have completed your GCSEs. This will also probably be the first opportunity for you to explain why you want work experience and what you are hoping to gain from it.

The interviewer will almost certainly ask you some questions to find out more about your motivation and suitability for a placement with the organisation. By no means exhaustive, here is a list of some of the more likely questions:

- Tell me about yourself
- Why do you want a work placement with us?
- Have you approached anyone else?
- What are your career goals?
- How far have you researched your career plans to date?
- What do you think your greatest strengths are?
- Why should we offer you work experience?
- What do you want to gain from this company?
- What will you do if we cannot help you?

Try preparing answers to the above questions. Remember at the interview to be smartly dressed, courteous and serious whilst maintaining a balanced sense of humour.

If you are well prepared, you can approach the interview with confidence.

# EXAMPLE OF A LETTER

Your Name  
and  
Address

Telephone number  
Email Address

Date

Company Name  
and  
Address

Dear Sir/Madam,

Currently I am in Year 10 at Ormiston Ilkeston Enterprise Academy studying for my GCSEs. As part of my Year 10 curriculum I have the opportunity to undertake one week's work experience placement from **8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019**.

I am extremely interested in **(Childcare/Car Maintenance/Construction)** and would like to do some relevant work experience in order to gain a real understanding of what this type of work involves.

Therefore, I would like to ask if it might be possible for me to gain some work experience at **(name of company)** during the dates above.

I look forward to hearing from you and thank you for any help you may be able to give me.

Yours sincerely

**(Sign your name here)**

James Brown

**(NOTE: Please change all print in red to your appropriate details, removing brackets and turning the print back to black).**

# **EXAMPLE OF HOW TO ADDRESS AN ENVELOPE**

**Addressing an envelope properly helps get your letter to the correct destination on time.**

<p><b>Mr R Smith Wilsthorne Travel 4 Chapel Street DERBY DE21 8GH</b></p>	<p><b>Stamp</b></p>
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# TARGET SETTING FOR YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE

**Even before you start your placement you should think about what you really want to Achieve.**

To help you get more out of your placement set yourself some targets. Here are some ideas to help you:

1. To improve my communication skills.
2. To improve my numeracy skills.
3. To improve my teamwork skills.
4. To improve my organisational skills.
5. To make sure I am punctual.
6. To make sure I attend every day.
7. To understand and carry out instructions.
8. To be aware of my own safety and that of others.
9. ....
10. ....

You might like to add some of your own targets in the spaces provided above.

**How do I hope my placement will help me to plan my future career?**

Make a list below and be as specific as possible.

.....

.....

.....

.....

# PRE-VISIT CHECKLIST

You **MUST** contact your employer Before the placement starts.

This interview/informal discussion is particularly important because it gives you the opportunity to:

- Discuss your aims/objectives with the placement provider and to gain a much clearer idea of the variety of opportunities available to you within the organisation.
- Identify the person in the company or organisation who will be responsible for you and to check who and where you should report on the first day.
- Obtain more specific information on:
  - Health & Safety
  - What time you will be starting
  - What to wear
  - What to take with you  
eg. Pens, calculators, protective clothing/boots etc.
  - Lunch arrangements
  - Break times
  - Toilets
- Be briefed about issues such as confidentiality.

# PLACEMENT CONFIRMATION FORM

To be completed and returned to Mrs Wingfield in the Library **only when the placement has been formally confirmed.**

Please note all placement details must be confirmed by **December** in order to allow adequate time for Health, Safety and Insurance to be completed by Derbyshire County Council.

**ALL THE DETAILS BELOW NEED TO BE FULLY COMPLETED**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tutor Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Company/Organisation:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Company/Organisation Address:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Work Experience Job Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone Number (Landline):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mobile Telephone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Department if applicable:** \_\_\_\_\_