

How To Get the Best From Your Work Placement

P - plan how you will get to your placement. If you can, have a trial run of travelling to your placement a few days before you are due to start. This way, you will know exactly where the company is, and roughly how long it will take to get there, so you know how much time to allow for your journey to arrive in time. (Remember - if you are travelling by car or bus, the traffic can be much worse during the morning rush hour, so journeys can take much longer!)

L - work experience is your opportunity to find out what the world of work is really like, and to **learn** more about the type of job you are most interested in. When starting a new job, there is always a lot to learn and the first day or two can often be more about meeting everyone, settling in and finding out about how the company works.

A - ask if you don't understand - your employer will expect you to ask questions and to be curious.

C - communication skills are key to all jobs. Listen attentively, speak clearly and confidently. If you are given documents to read, take time to read them and understand the contents. Ask questions if anything is unclear.

E - remember to find out as much as you can about your **employer** before your placement. Many companies have their own website with lots of information, so do as much research as you can.

M - making a good impression in your placement is vital so please do your best to be keen and interested. Lots of employers use work experience as a way to see if students are suitable for apprenticeships and job vacancies they might have. So, you never know where this experience may lead!

E - the employer needs to get to know you a bit and find out about your abilities and interests, so you may find that it takes a few days to be given any real jobs to do - but be patient! Many employers take on work experience students every year, so will have clear plans in place of what they will want you to do, but for some employers, it will be the first time they have ever worked with a school student, so they will be learning as they go along too!

N - notice what's around you so that you and your work colleagues stay safe. Health, safety and well-being is everyone's responsibility. Speak to your supervisor/manager/colleague if something is troubling you or does not feel right.

T - please remember to give yourself enough **time** to settle in and really give your placement a good try!

Occasionally things don't go according to plan. Here are some circumstances that might happen to you and some suggestions about the action you may want to think about taking:

What if...?

Question	Answer
I am sick and I can't go to work?	Ring your employer Ring the school Do this each day you are unable to attend
Question	Answer
I feel ill while I'm at work?	Tell your supervisor If you go home, ring the school to let them know what has happened
Question	Answer
I have an appointment at the doctor/dentist/hospital etc?	Explain to your supervisor as soon as possible and at least the day before your appointment and show him/her your appointment card/reminder on your phone Ring the school to let them know
Question	Answer
Something goes wrong or I am unhappy?	Talk politely to your employer/supervisor Ring the school work experience co-ordinator if you are still unhappy If your parents/carer(s) are concerned, they must contact the school, not the employer Remember! It's natural to feel nervous or unsettled about work experience. It's usual for all of us to feel this way when meeting new people and going into unfamiliar places and situations. It may be the first time your employer has hosted a student, and they may be just as nervous! It's important to persevere and not give up, as this will help you grow in confidence and demonstrate resilience – both of which will be extremely helpful to you on your path through life.
Question	Answer
The bus/train/my lift doesn't arrive on time?	Check the time of the next bus/train and then ring the employer to explain that you'll be late. Tell them what time you expect to arrive Ring the school and explain what has happened If you were relying on a lift that does not turn up then try your very best to get to your placement using alternative transport, ring the employer and explain what has happened and tell them what time you expect to arrive.
Question	Answer
I don't understand what I have been asked to do?	Explain politely that you do not understand and why. Tell your supervisor how you like to learn so that they can help you.
Question	Answer
What if my placement does not last for as many days as I expected?	You will be expected to go into school or on another placement; and school will let you know what they expect you to do.

Remember

- Most employers will have a clear policy on the use of mobile phones during working hours, and it is very likely that you will not be allowed to use your phone, except during official breaks/lunch times. If in doubt, please politely ask your employer about their mobile phone policy and make sure you follow their guidance.
- Most employers will also have a clear policy on the appropriate use of IT equipment, so please observe their rules and do not use Internet or social media while you are at work. Remember – employers can access social media too, so be careful not to post any comments or pictures from your work experience, unless you have permission from your employer, or this is part of your placement.