

Top Ten Tips for work experience **from finding a placement to what to do when you get the job.**

Work placement is an excellent way of gaining confidence, getting noticed by prospective employers and can also help you make one of the most important decisions of your life: what you want to do as well as what you don't want to do!

The following Plumpton College expert tips should help you get the most out of your work experience

- 1) **Research** the companies you are thinking of approaching. You should always be able to find information on a web browser such as Google. For example, search for "dog grooming parlours near me". This will help you find suitable placements that are not too far to travel.
- 2) **Once you have found the company** you wish to apply to, send an email, if there aren't any volunteer or work experience contacts shown on the company website, contact the HR Department.
- 3) **Communication:** If you haven't heard from the employer after a few days of sending your email, give the person a call, it will show that you are keen and a good communicator. When you ring, ask for the person by name (look up the name of the HR person, if they have one)
- 4) **You** need to be in charge! Resist getting your parents to contact the employer, even if it is by email. You are the person the employers want to hear from, you are the person who is going to be working and you are the one who has to pass your course.
- 5) **Once the employer has agreed to take you on** complete the Agreement Form (you can access all the forms on SharePoint, Work Experience) and email it to alison.calimita@plumpton.ac.uk for processing.

6) Once you have your job - make your first impression count!

A first impression is so important and it is not hard to do! Just make sure you are there early/on time, looking clean and smart (dressed suitably for your position – however if in doubt, go smart) and show a keen and positive attitude, remember to smile lots!

7) Try to be confident and open

Always make sure you introduce yourself to everyone you will be working with and don't forget to do it with a smile!

8) Be organised and informed

Listen carefully to all the information and instructions you are given and make notes if you have to. Write down any useful information about particular tasks you've worked on and skills you've picked up. You can look back on these notes to remind you at any time and you need them for your work experience reflection log. They may even help you in your future career!

9) Get involved

The more you put into it, the more you will get out. Be enthusiastic about anything and everything – no matter how trivial a task it may seem – and do it to the best of your ability each and every time.

10) Always ask questions

If you're unsure or have any doubts about what you are doing don't be afraid to ask. Employers will actually respect that you are brave enough to ask. But be resourceful – think twice about asking a really obvious question that you could, work out for yourself, ask another employee or find the answer to via an internet search.

One more thing! Be honest with yourself

It's important to be honest with yourself when you look back on your time spent during your work experience. If you didn't enjoy it, it doesn't mean it's been a waste of time. All experience is good experience, you will have developed lots of really important skills to take you further into other jobs.