

Top 10 Tips whilst your on placement

1. Be Prepared to work hard – give your all for what might seem like little reward or recognition (in the short term). Work that might seem to be menial or serve little purpose will help to build your employability skills and help to get you used to the work environment.

2. Don't turn your nose up at opportunities that might not be your first choice – keep an open mind when choosing a work experience placement and do some research beforehand to see what sort of opportunities that might be available in the future. Working in engineering or so called 'green' jobs might not necessarily be your first option but might offer a steady career path and you never know, you might really enjoy the work.

3. Be punctual – arriving late for an interview or work will give your employer the impression that you are unprofessional or not interested and won't endear you to your colleagues. Work experience placements are often stepping stones for future employment with the employer or elsewhere but if you create a negative impression then don't expect a positive outcome.

4. Be sure of your responsibilities and ask for a review with your Manager – You should have a job description or – at the very least – a list of duties that you'd be expected to perform on a day to day basis. If not, find out what's expected of you as soon as possible so that you're not accused of not doing something that you were expected to do and so you're not left wondering. At the end of the work experience placement, ask for a review of your performance so that you can find out where you've excelled and areas in which you need to improve.

5. Be proactive – Proactive behaviour can give the impression that you're really interested and keen to learn so if you run out of things to do ask if there's anything else that needs to be done rather than sitting there twiddling your thumbs. It won't go unnoticed!

6. Listen to advice and observe – Work experience placements provide the ideal learning environment and you'll be surprised at how much you'll find out from listening to your manager and co-workers. Much of what you learn and observe will be transferable to future work scenarios.

7. Ask sensible questions – don't be afraid to ask questions if you're not sure of something or want to find out more. Your manager will appreciate it and it'll indicate that you're enthusiastic and interested.

8. Follow up at the end of the placement – If you like the job and working environment find out about future opportunities – whilst on placement – and how you might apply for jobs.

9. Don't miss opportunities to network with co-workers – there may be opportunities to mingle with co-workers during lunch breaks or after work so don't miss out. Your ability to 'get on' with fellow workers in social surroundings can sometimes be viewed as being just as important as your ability to thrive in the work place. Building your network will also be a valuable resource for your future job search.

10. **Don't just go through the motions** – Be conscious of what you've achieved and new skills learned and document them in a dedicated note book or log book. Keep the log book up to date as you start new jobs/projects and learn new things and transfer relevant skills and achievements to your CV before making applications to other jobs."

Placements are often the most daunting but most exciting experience of your degree. Most students have yet to venture in the world of work and are sometimes nervous and unsure of their skills and abilities when beginning their first ever degree related work placement. Have belief and confidence in yourself and your abilities – do not underestimate what you already know and what fantastic futures you will have. Grab the opportunity to learn and absorb as much knowledge and skills in the short time you have.