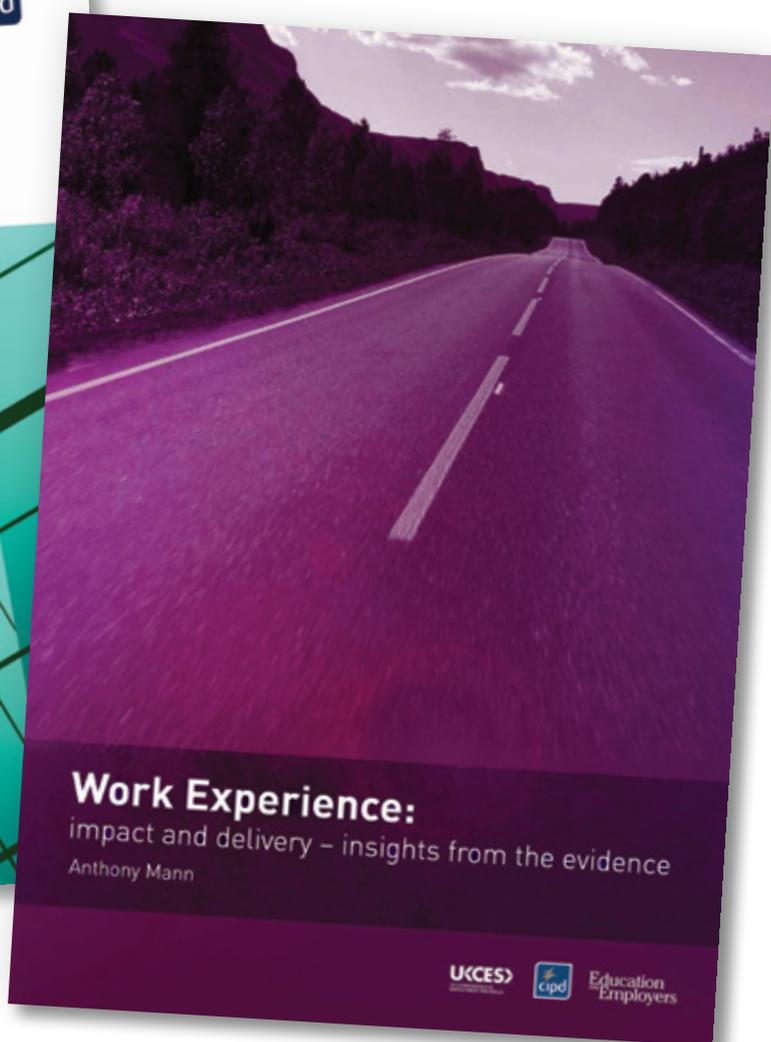
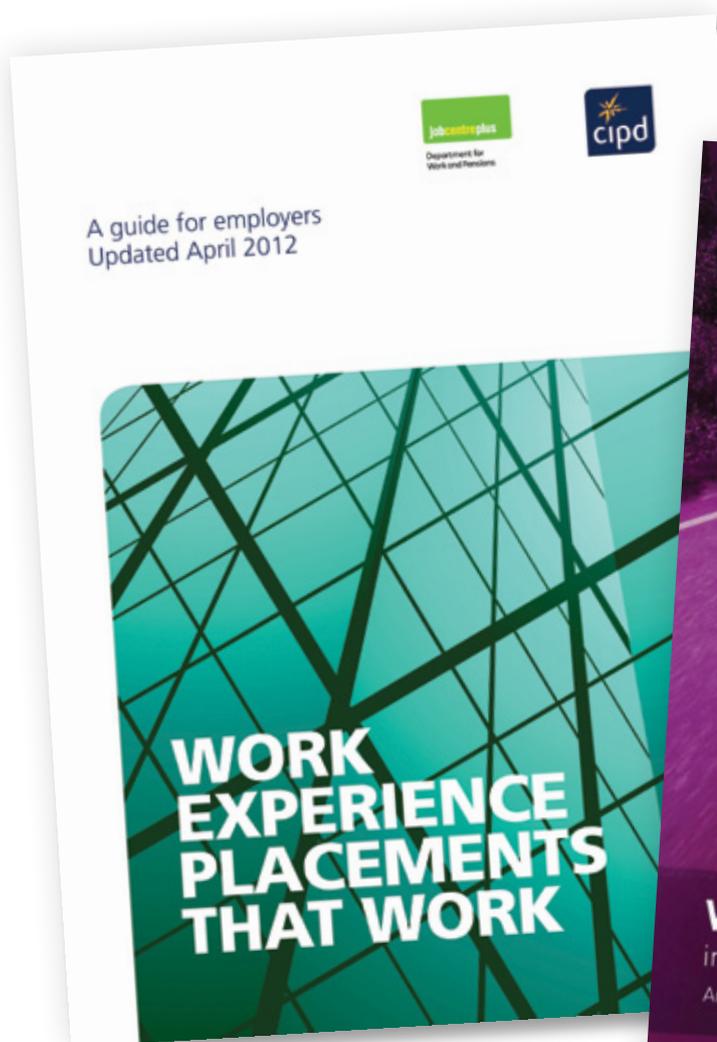


MAKING WORK EXPERIENCE WORK



WHY WORK EXPERIENCE MATTERS

Work experience is vital to young people at school, college and when they enter the labour market. It is good for **young people** as it helps them to make the transition from education into working life by giving them:

- experience of the workplace and an insight into jobs/sectors
- increased confidence and employability skills
- experience to build their CVs and access to networks
- an understanding of how recruitment works.

Work experience is good for **employers** as it helps them to:

- engage with their local community
- access a wider range of talent for recruitment
- develop and motivate their staff
- raise their company profile and brand.

Work experience is good for **society** as it helps to tackle youth unemployment and youth employability issues.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Young people are among the most disadvantaged groups in the labour market because they lack the experience of the workplace and the job-specific skills that employers ask for.
- Over the last generation there have been unprecedented changes with traditional jobs and industries disappearing and being replaced by a more varied landscape in an increasingly global economy.
- With the increase in cost of higher education, the financial penalties for making the wrong career decisions are higher than ever before.
- The problem is exacerbated by lack of careers information in schools, particularly in more disadvantaged schools which also may not have access to parental and alumni networks. Such advice is particularly crucial to the 1.9 million young people who live in workless homes.

Work experience can help to challenge employer perceptions of young people's skills and attitudes, give young people access to networks and help them to make more informed career choices.

Research by the Education and Employers Taskforce, *It's who you meet* (2012) shows that the more contact young people have with employers, the better their chances of finding themselves in employment. This is a win-win situation for everyone:

- employers get the skills they need
- young people gain access to the labour market
- society can avoid the negative consequences and long-term scarring of high youth unemployment.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF EMPLOYERS IN THIS?

Employers have a key role to play in facilitating young people's transition from education to work. They need to invest in young people to grow their workforce.

WHAT MORE CAN YOU DO? PRACTICAL STEPS AND TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS

Employers and schools both have a role to play in building the transition from education into the world of work. An understanding of the world of work should be built into the delivery of education and research shows that state schools and colleges are keen to work more closely with employers.

As an employer you can:

- contact your local school or college directly
- contact your local business and education partnership who can broker the first step for you and put you in touch with your local school or college, or arrange activities for you to get involved in.

You can also take part in:

- **Inspiring the Future** – where employees give ‘career insight’ talks. This initiative matches volunteers with state schools and colleges. Employee volunteers go into schools to talk about the job they do, the education or training route they took and the careers in their sector. Volunteers can choose to do ‘career insight’ talks. It’s a free service being rolled out across England for employers of all sizes and sectors, and for staff at all levels, from apprentices and graduate recruits to CEOs. Register for free on the secure website: www.inspiringthefuture.org
- **Career Academies** offer volunteering opportunities, visit: <http://www.careeracademies.org.uk/pages/employers.html>
- Business in the Community offers the **Work Inspiration** programme. For more information, visit: http://www.bitc.org.uk/workplace/talent_skills/work_inspiration/

WHY IS THIS GOOD FOR EMPLOYERS?

Offering work experience is beneficial for employers for a number of reasons.

- **Recruitment opportunities:** work experience placements enable employers to access a wider range of talent and engage with their local community. Offering work experience placements can also make a useful contribution to strategic talent management and workforce planning.
- **Fresh ideas:** young people offer new ideas and ways of thinking, reflecting the interests and needs of the next generation of customers and consumers.
- **Staff development:** supervising and coaching young people, with potential for management opportunities.
- Contribution to **local economic development** by helping to tackle some of the issues around deprivation, social mobility and youth unemployment.
- **More engaged workforce:** providing work experience sends a positive message to the wider workforce about the values of the organisation.

WHAT YOU NEED TO CONSIDER WHEN OFFERING WORK EXPERIENCE

Offering quality work experience is simple if you follow some basic guidelines.

- Ensure clarity about how the young person will be **supported, supervised and mentored** during work experience.
- Allocate a **‘buddy’** with ring-fenced time.
- **Expectations** need to be managed. Young people need to know what they will and won’t be doing and if there might be a job or further contact with the employer afterwards.
- Ensure the young person is introduced to the **structure of working life**.
- Plan a **schedule** saying what they will be doing each day.
- Think **‘tasks not tea’**. They need to gain transferable skills.
- Give the young person **constructive feedback** on how they did.

'I strongly support the concept of work experience because of the significant impact it can have on job prospects for young people through giving them an insight into the world of work, together with practical skills and knowledge based in a real world environment. The work undertaken by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, and the Education and Employers Taskforce lends valuable support to the view that work experience brings with it real benefits, in a number of ways, for all concerned. I have no hesitation in encouraging employers that are thinking about offering work experience to young people, to do so, and this leaflet provides the advice you will need to make it a success.'

Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling MP

Minister of State for Employment

'Engaging with young people should be a priority for all employers and is key to maintaining a vibrant and sustainable NHS. One of the most effective ways to do this is through providing work experience and this has long been of great importance for the NHS. Through work experience, local NHS trusts can and do play a key role in educating and exciting young people about the wealth of career opportunities that the NHS offers. We will have a better prepared, compassionate workforce of the future if more employers commit to running high-quality work experience placements and recognise the difference these placements can make to people's lives.'

Dean Royles Chartered FCIPD

Chair of the CIPD Board and Director, NHS Employers

'As responsible employers know, giving young people the chance to look beyond their immediate horizons to the world of work is vital. Work experience is one simple, practical way of doing this, and it's something that virtually all employers can get involved in. A successful work experience placement brings tangible benefits to the young person, the employer and society as a whole. This guide gives some practical tips to make sure work experience really does work, and I'm delighted to support it.'

Charlie Mayfield

Chairman of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills and the John Lewis Partnership

WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE?

Here are some examples:

- *Work experience placements that work*. A guide for employers (April 2012).
Visit www.cipd.co.uk/workexperience
- *Work experience: Impact and Delivery – insights from the evidence* (April 2012).
Visit www.educationandemployers.org
- Business in the Community Work Inspiration
- The **Employers Guide** is a one-stop-shop for free advice on education and employers working together, visit: <http://www.employers-guide.org/>



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