

## Tips for successful work experience

Work experience is designed to help you build essential employment related skills and confidence in the workplace. It can also help you make more informed decisions about your future by showing you what working in a particular industry is really like.

### Finding a host employer

- Work out what jobs/industries you are possibly interested in for your future.
- Do you know anyone who works in the job/industry that you can talk to?
- Do you have a particular employer you would like to work for? Who and why?
- Try searching online for local businesses operating in your chosen industry
- Think a bit creatively about where you could get work experience eg:
  - if you are interested in a career in fashion, work experience in a small local boutique may be a great way to get a sense of the fashion world.
  - If you are interested in medicine, work experience in a medical centre as a receptionist would give you a good insight into all areas of healthcare
- *NB: you cannot be supervised by immediate family and for your safety, there must be at least three people employed at the workplace.*

### Contacting employers

You might feel nervous about approaching an employer to ask about work experience. However, contacting employers directly will improve your confidence and make it easier to find work experience opportunities in your chosen field. Don't ask your parent to do it for you – employers prefer to see you are confident enough to contact them yourself.

- You can contact an employer by phone, email or in person
- Know the dates that you will be available for work experience
- If visiting in person, make sure you dress appropriately
- Do some research first and prepare your pitch.
  - If the business has a website, check it out to get an understanding of what they do.
  - If they don't have a website, think about other ways you can find out more about them. Check out their social media channels, google them or ask people who work there about the business.
- Be friendly, respectful and polite when you contact employers, whether it's by email, in person or by phone. Remember, you are placing yourself in the middle of a paid worker's busy day.

- Introduce yourself. Briefly state your name and give overview - you are a high school student seeking work experience because you are interested in that industry as a possible future career. Ask who is the best person to talk to.
- State why you have chosen them. Use your research about them to show you know what they do and why they are a good fit for you.
- Do they seem interested? How did the employer respond to your pitch? Did you feel a positive response?
  - **Yes:** ask for their contact details so school can prepare the paperwork
  - **No: thank them** for their time and **ask if they could recommend anyone** else who might be able to host you

### **Make sure paperwork is completed accurately**

- Complete your details first, then ask the employer to fill out their section.
- Write your parent/guardians name beside Emergency Contact and then list their phone number in the Out of School Hours section
- Make sure your employer has stated what time you are expected to start and finish in the section titled Hours
- Check the key workplace activities you will be doing
- Ask your employer about special requirements so you are clear

### **On your first day**

- Arrive early – at least 10 minutes before you are scheduled to start. This shows employers you are organised and keen to be there
- Dress appropriately for the workplace – ask the week before if you are unsure
- Listen carefully and ask clarifying questions if you do not understand something
- Make sure your phone is switched off and put away safely
- Take a packed lunch on the first day. Don't assume there is a microwave in the workplace or a cafe nearby or that you will have enough time to wait in a queue for your food
- **Smile!** Have fun and learn lots along the way.

### **On your last day**

- Make sure your employer has filled out the Work Experience Report and sent it via email to [dheem1@eq.edu.au](mailto:dheem1@eq.edu.au)
- Thank everyone for their support throughout the week
- Ask if your employer or supervisor would be happy to be a referee on your resume. Make sure you have their contact details to add in to your CV.

