WORK EXPERIENCE

Conversation starters

Questions to get you talking on your placement

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Making the most of this guide...

Not sure what to say when you meet someone new on your placement? Don't worry, use this guide to help get the conversation flowing.

- Pick your favourite questions from each section.
- Listen carefully and ask a follow-up question.
- It's OK to be curious, most people enjoy talking about their job.
- If it goes quiet, that's fine. Take a breath and try the next question.
- Smile and make eye contact when you ask.
- Say thank you once they've answered.

Remember: you don't have to use all the questions or ask them in order. Go with what feels natural.

Good luck - you've got this

This guide was made by students from **The Hewett Academy**

Making conversation...

- ❑ What's your name?
- ❑ Would you like a cup of tea?
- ❑ Is there anything I can help you with?
- ❑ Do you have any hobbies?
- ❑ What is your favourite film?
- ❑ Do you have any pets?
- ❑ Do you play any video games?
- ❑ What was your first job?
- ❑ What's one thing you wish someone had told you when you started?

Getting into a career

- ❑ How did you get into this career?
- ❑ Have you always wanted to work in this field?
- ❑ Are there school subjects that are especially useful for this career?
- ❑ What advice would you give to someone my age looking to go in a career like yours?
- ❑ What qualities do employers look for in young people?

About the job

- ❑ What does a normal day look like?
- ❑ What do you enjoy most about your job?
- ❑ What's the most challenging part of your role?
- ❑ What's the most interesting project you've worked on?
- ❑ What makes someone good at working here?
- ❑ Was it easy to get this job?

Working here

- ❑ What are your workplace values?
- ❑ How would you describe the workplace culture?
- ❑ How do different teams work together?
- ❑ What differentiates this company from others in the industry?
- ❑ What does career progression look like here?

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Getting Ready

Top tips for getting ready for your placement

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Why prepare?

It is always better to be prepared and ready for your placement than not.
Spending time preparing can help you feel less anxious, more confident, and ready for anything!

So, here are some useful tips to help you prepare for entering your first work experience placement.

Before you go...

In the months before:

- Find out who will be looking after you: what is their name and contact information.
- Research the company. What do they do? Who are their customers?
- Look up the venue, where is it? Is there an accessible entrance?
- Plan how you'll get there, walk, bus, cycle?

The week before

- Double check your route and travel time. Aim to arrive 10-15 minutes early.
- What will you wear? Get it ready – washed, dried, ironed.

The day before

- Charge your phone (but keep it away during the day).
- Get a good night's sleep beforehand!

Making a good impression

As young people ourselves, we know it can be stressful when entering new spaces and meeting new people.
Here are our top tips to make a good impression.

- Be polite and say hello to everyone you meet.
- Get to know who you are working with, be inquisitive and interested.
- Show initiative - offer help if you're not sure what to do next.
- Pay attention to the space and people around you, what is the vibe?
- Say thank you and goodbye at the end of each day.

What to bring

What you'll need at work is probably like what we need at school.

- A pen and notebook.
- A packed lunch or money to buy food.
- A water bottle.
- Photo ID or paperwork if needed.
- Any special items requested by the employer, i.e. work boots.

Something wrong?

- Running late or feeling unwell? Call the placement before you are meant to be there.
- It's always OK to ask if you don't understand something.
- Remember your school is still there for you - if you ever feel unsafe or uncomfortable, let them know straight away.