



Work Inspiration

How to Guide

An initiative of

**BUSINESS
IN THE
COMMUNITY**

Introduction

Steve Holliday, Chief Executive, National Grid



A report by the Education and Employers Taskforce made an incredible finding; that young people who had experienced just four or more employer contacts at school were **five** times less likely to be unemployed. As a Chief Executive and as a parent, I'm passionate about making it easier for UK businesses to make these contacts more often and more effectively.

Work experience is a fantastic opportunity to inspire young people about the world of work but quite often work experience placements involve boring mundane jobs. To try and prevent that, we've designed an easy-to-follow flexible toolkit that can help a village store, through to a large multi-national company, transform placements into something inspirational.

Businesses who have used the toolkit have discovered all sorts of unexpected benefits, like lowered recruitment costs and improved management skills in existing staff.

And for the students I believe that any experience of work as long as it's real and inspiring, will raise their ambition and sense of self-worth. So think what you can do to inspire young people to develop the skills, attitude and ambition they need, to move from education into a successful working life.

Steve Holliday,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Holliday', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chief Executive, National Grid
Chair of the Talent & Skills Leadership Team at BITC

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This free how-to-guide forms part of the 'Work Inspiration' Toolkit which contains all the work-books templates mentioned and is available to download at: <http://www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/workinspiration>

1. What five elements make up Work Inspiration?

You don't need a glamorous office to be inspiring. 'Work Inspiration' is about giving students an insight into the real world of work, all its subtle rules and expectations. These will be new territory for a young person and it's this insight into working life and what it takes to succeed there that make for an inspiring placement.

There are five minimum elements that will make sure you transform any work experience into 'Work Inspiration':

1. The 'Three Insights'

The 'Three Insights' are the heart of every 'Work Inspiration' placement. These short, fun exercises get students to think more deeply about what's going on around them and to explore their own strengths and goals (often for the first time). These exercises were developed by businesses to help students to reach those 'light-bulb' moments for themselves. They are available to download at:

<http://www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/workinspiration>

2. Placement Workbook + a 'Buddy'

The process of filling out a 'Placement Workbook' with a Supervisor or 'Buddy' at the end of each day provides a great opportunity to encourage self-awareness. The 'Buddy' can help the students understand the value of non-academic strengths and how what they have learned during the day can enhance their CV.

3. Real-life tasks and team-work

When it comes to tasks, tea-runs and days spent photocopying are banned! Work-shadowing is a good place to start, but where possible, try to set them real-life tasks that get them to think about the priorities for your business, whether that be good customer service or reducing costs. It's even better if these tasks can be worked on as part of a team of colleagues, that way they can get a real flavour of the world of work.

4. Variety

Try to involve as many different teams in the placement as you can so we showcase the variety of roles in your business. Encourage the students to observe what skills and traits people need to succeed in their roles: Is it important to be courteous on the phone? Do they allow people a chance to speak in meetings? How do they speak to their boss or customers? These are often valuable lessons for the students in what for us, are quite everyday interactions.

5. Student-led projects & presentation

Assign the students a project they can really feel they own and be proud of completing during the placement. Students often enjoy making a fun farewell presentation to staff on their project, or a YouTube video of what they have achieved. You can use this farewell as a chance to award 'Certificates of Completion', and Inspiration.

Some ideas for student-led projects:

- ⚙ Survey customers to find out what leads to a positive customer experience
- ⚙ Update the pages of a campaign website
- ⚙ Work as a team to design an internal poster
- ⚙ 'Reverse mentor' a more senior colleagues get to grips with twitter and social media
- ⚙ Basic finance such as data entry, PO & Invoices
- ⚙ Design a professional and well-formatted document
- ⚙ Draft an internal news article about their placement
- ⚙ Mystery shop to compare offers

"If Work Inspiration didn't exist I would be doing a media course at college and not getting the hands on experience with the company like I am now."

ITV Apprentice



"I found helping out with the Work Inspiration Scheme an inspiration in itself!"

Supervisor on ITV Work Inspiration Programme

2. Sample Timetable

Every placement is different but 3 days is a great starting point. The timetable below is just a guide to give a sense of how the key elements come together.

Day 1

- ⚙️ **Welcome and induction:** Safety briefing, introduction to the Supervisor/Buddy, set expectations and outline the days ahead
- ⚙️ **Workplace tour:** Intro to the office and some of the teams they will be working with
- ⚙️ **Insight 1: 'All About me':** Students think about their skills and interests and the Supervisor/Buddy decides what teams/tasks suit them best
- ⚙️ **Student-led project:** The Supervisor/Buddy introduces the project that the students will be responsible for completing during the placement
- ⚙️ **Insight 2 'Look behind the scenes':** Students discover the various roles in your organisation and which ones best match their personality profile
- ⚙️ **Employability task 1:** Students work with a team
- ⚙️ **End of day review:** The Supervisor/Buddy and the students reflect and fill in the 'Placement Workbook'

Day 2

- ⚙️ **Student-led project development:** students work on their project. This is an opportunity for colleagues to lend a hand
- ⚙️ **Employability task 2:** Students work with a team
- ⚙️ **Insight 3 – 'Careers Happen':** Students interview a colleague, mapping out how their career has developed, using the 'Career Board'
- ⚙️ **Employability task 3:** Students work with a team
- ⚙️ **End of day review:** The Supervisor/Buddy and the students reflect and fill in the 'Placement Workbook'

Day 3

- ⚙️ **Employability skills workshop:**
- ⚙️ **Employability task 4:** Students work with a team
- ⚙️ **Student-led project presentation:** Rehearsal followed by fun presentation to staff, and awarding 'Certificates of Completion'. Students hand out their own 'Inspiration Awards'
- ⚙️ **Final review and farewells:** The Supervisor/Buddy completes the 'Placement Workbook', reflects on what has been achieved and learned

The 'Three Insights'

These fun sessions take no more than an hour each but are the key to creating a truly inspiring placement

1) 'All about me'

This exercise puts the focus on the students themselves, giving them a chance to talk about what they're interested in and good at.

The Supervisor/Buddy should lead this one-to-one conversation encouraging the student to consider their preferences and future plans.

2) 'Look behind the scenes'

This Insight ensures that whatever the specific experience of work the student has with you, they are also made aware of the wider variety of opportunities in your business. The workbook enables you to match their profile identified in the 'All About Me' session with roles in your business.

You can really bring this Insight to life simply by giving students the opportunity to meet and talk with as many people from different parts of the business as possible.

3) 'Careers happen'

In this interactive session the students interview a colleague to talk through their career path, highlighting the different jobs and expectations that they may have had along the way. (This is a great opportunity to engage a senior champion). The student then creates a 'career board' a visual representation of that staff member's journey.

This insight illustrates for the student the opportunistic way careers unfold, it teaches students that they will need to be resilient and adaptable to navigate a successful career in the changing world of work.



3. What's the process?

Some programmes run for a day, some for two weeks. Some businesses host one student at a time, some one hundred. Every placement is different, so remember it's YOUR Work Inspiration programme and should be tailored to suit your business. The common goal remains the same: to give the students a real and inspiring taste of what working life is really like.

Before you begin it's crucial that you create the right environment in the business to get your programme off to a good start and ensure long-term sustainability. First you'll need to get everyone on-board...

3. a) Gaining internal buy in

Schools normally organise work experience placements during Year 10 or Year 11, and during June or September, so you should organise your internal planning meeting well in advance of that with any internal stakeholders such as HR, security, reception etc. This meeting should cover:

- Any logistical issues with the placement
- Which teams will be involved
- The best time to host the placement
- What interesting projects the students could get their teeth into

Seize the opportunity to get colleagues excited about the impact the programme will have on young lives by showing them case studies and videos from our website. And use it to engage some senior champions as volunteers, or for shadowing.

3. b) Allocate responsibilities

There are two main responsibilities that will make the placement a success: **The Programme Coordinator** and **The Supervisor/Buddy**. Depending on the size of the organisation, one person could perform all these roles.

The Programme Coordinator role

This is the ambassador for the programme and they are responsible for making it a success. They have the important role of being the primary point of contact with the school or the Education Business Partnership (EBP) and the different teams where students will work. They will also be responsible for:

- ⚙️ Ensuring colleagues understand the needs of students
- ⚙️ Understanding the student's needs and capabilities and tailoring the placement programme accordingly
- ⚙️ Ensuring the student's welfare is maintained whilst in the workplace as a line manager would
- ⚙️ Organising all logistics of the placements internally like recruiting 'Buddies'

- ⚙️ Monitoring the programme and debriefing with the school/EBP after the placement.

The Supervisor/'Buddy' role

Students often lack confidence and feel shy when they start. The Supervisor/'Buddies' is more than a managerial role they act as a friendly face helping the students with the practical things that allow them to settle in. Many businesses use the role of Supervisor/Buddy as a valued management development opportunity for junior staff. The Supervisor/Buddy will be responsible for:

- ⚙️ Holding a debrief meeting at the end of each day to talk about what the students have achieved, pointing out their strengths and building confidence
- ⚙️ Ensuring the student undertakes a variety of tasks during the placement
- ⚙️ Giving positive feedback at the end of the placement, helping the student understand how the experience ties into their education and career plans

Two Top Tips for Buddies

- ⚙️ Be conscious that the student might be nervous, this may be their first time in a work setting. Be welcoming and convey information simply and without jargon.
- ⚙️ Encourage the student to ask questions to clarify anything they are unsure about.



"It's a privilege to have the opportunity to work with young people and make a difference to their career aspirations."

Buddy on the Capgemini Programme

3. c) Finding students

Avoid using informal word-of-mouth networks to connect with students as this may exclude the young people who would most benefit from the opportunity. Contacting your local school or college directly is the most common way to offer work experience to students. If you already have a partnership with a local school through 'Business Class' you should speak to your BITC Education Manager.

Working with a school

When first speaking to the school you should discuss the timing of placement and how it would best complement the curriculum. Most schools have a set week/fortnight for work experience, but ensure this is also a suitable time for the people in your office who will be involved in hosting your student(s).

The school will usually want to know three things prior to the placement:

1. That health and safety risks have been managed - they may ask to see your employer's liability insurance policy
2. What tasks/projects are planned for students
3. When they can arrange a visit during the placement to catch up on how it is going.

Top Tip: During their visit, show teachers the 'student workbook' so they can see all the new skills the students have learned.

Working with a partner organisation

Some businesses find that it is easier to work with a social enterprise or partner organisation to help them offer the placement to students who would most benefit from the opportunity. There are many local charities that will connect employers with young people FOR example: MyKindaCrowd,



3. d) Pre-meeting with students

Whether you choose to work directly with a school or a partner organisation; it is always helpful if you can meet the students prior to the placement. An informal meeting will give you the space to understand the student's previous experience and personal goals. It's

important to set expectations on both sides, particularly if your workplace has specific rules around conduct or dress code. Prior to starting with you many teachers will ask their students to make contact over the phone to confirm final details.

3. e) Evaluate, adapt, improve

Every programme improves with time so debrief with internal stakeholders to share what would improve the programme. Analysing the placement survey results will help you critically evaluate your programme.

5. f) Debrief with partner or school

Hold a meeting with the school or partner to review the programme. Were expectations met on both sides?

Optional Extras

Add variety and depth with these activities:

Mock application process

Get the student to apply for the placement as if it were a real job. This not only teaches them a valuable life-lesson about recruitment processes but it also builds a sense of achievement so they place more value on the placement.

CV and Interview support

Use fun and interactive activities to help the student improve their CVs and interview technique. These sessions do not take much time, yet can have a huge impact on the success of students at interview. Ask them to imagine their dream job, and then get them to draft a CV and cover letter to apply for it.

'Soft' Skills Development

Help the students understand the many 'soft' skills they won't have been exposed to in education which we take for granted. For example: project-management, goal-setting, body-language, phone and email etiquette. Talk about these skills when introducing any projects and tasks and again when reflecting on their experiences.

Team up with other organisations

Many smaller businesses add variety to their programmes by hosting the students with suppliers, partners or clients. This is a great way of exposing students to more roles and skills than that might experience in one workplace.

4. Is there a lot of red tape?

Not nearly as much as you might think...

a) Health & Safety

As an employer you are responsible for the health and safety of the students while they are on the placement with you. However, The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have recently reviewed their guidance making it much clearer and less bureaucratic for employers. There are very few work activities that health and safety law prevents students from doing. Of course you should adequately control any significant risks by:

1. Explaining the risks during induction, checking that the students understand what they have been told and knows how to raise health and safety concerns
2. Ensuring your checks are proportionate to the environment the students will be working and that reasonable adjustments have been made which reflect the ability and maturity of the young people

For the latest advice on health and safety, visit:
www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/placprovide.htm

b) Restrictions on work experience

There are activities that are legally prohibited for young people to do. For a full list of restriction please refer to the HSE site <http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/law/> before offering any placements to students.

c) Risk assessment

The HSE have made it clear that you can use your existing arrangements for assessments and management of risks and they won't need to be repeated for work experience students. Also offices with fewer than five employees won't need a written risk assessment, though it is good health and safety practice to have this in place.

However, if you have not run a placement before or if you do not already work with students, it's important to identify the particular needs of the students and review risk assessments before a placement begins. For the latest advice risk assessments visit:
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/index.htm>

d) Liability insurance

Provided your insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers, students on placements are now covered by your existing employers' liability insurance policy. You will need to let you insurers know you will have young people on site. For more information, visit:
www.abi.org.uk

e) Written consent

If the placement is during term time the school must arrange written consent from the parent before the placement can begin. If you are working with a partner organisation they should make sure that this in place.

f) Confidential information

Explicitly address issues around confidentiality during the induction session. We have built in a simple confidentiality form into the 'Student Handbook' for them to sign.

g) Child Protection

It is good practice to understand the school's child protection policy and define a safeguarding protocol with the school prior to the placement. Supervisors, buddies and host teams will not usually need to have DRB checks. Please see the safeguarding and child protection guidance in below and ensure that anyone involved in the placement has read and understood it.



"The simple formula has made it very popular in our business and across the country. Thousands of placements in all kinds of workplaces have been transformed through this Business in the Community initiative."

Stephanie May, Apprenticeship Programme Manager, Boots UK

5. What else can I do to inspire young people?

We believe as a minimum that every student in the UK should have at least one week's work experience before they leave school. However we know that that the more young people come in to contact with employers whilst they are at school, the less likely they are to become unemployed.

There are lots of additional shorter engagements that you can make both before and after your placements. These support young people to transition successfully from education to work. For example:

Business Class

Business Class is a long term, strategic partnership between secondary schools in deprived communities. They are a powerful mechanism for businesses to cement their existing relationship with the school and work more strategically to develop their future workforce.

Careers Lab

Many Supervisor and Buddys find themselves wanting to do more to engage and prepare young people before they come on placements. A great way to do this is to volunteer to deliver careers education through Careers Lab. This free initiative enables volunteers to work alongside teachers to bring real life careers insight into the classroom. To find out more visit www.careerslab.co.uk



Extended placements and 'Saturday club's

For some businesses it makes more sense to spread the same amount of placement hours over a number of weeks or even months. This approach gives the student has more time to reflect and learn at their own pace.

Open days + Site Visits

Open days and site visits are efficient way of getting large numbers of young people from local schools

(Along with their parents and teachers) to see first-hand, what careers are available in your industry.

Mentoring

Mentoring allows businesses to reach out to and support diverse groups to see your sector as a viable career option. Providing mentoring post placement is an excellent way to keep in touch and it has real benefits in terms of staff engagement. For more information on mentoring visit: [CIPD](http://www.cipd.co.uk), [RFO](http://www.rfo.co.uk), or [Mosaic](http://www.mosaic.co.uk)

Virtual activities

In terms of time, these are a low involvement way of world of bringing the classroom and the world of work closer together. By building fun activities into the curriculum like real-life projects, enterprise challenges or competitions, the students can take what they have learned in school and apply it to a work setting.

Apprenticeships

Traineeships and Apprenticeships are the next logical step for many companies that want to create routes for the students they have worked with to grow talent. Also this provides opportunities for young people who would find university fees a barrier to their career plans. NAS www.apprenticeships.org.uk/

Fairer recruitment & early careers

'Work Inspiration' often prompts companies to reflect upon whether their recruitment policies and career paths would make it difficult for young people to start their careers. For information on how you can make your recruitment practices fairer, visit: <http://www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/generation-talent>

Useful sites

www.plotr.co.uk

www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

www.CareersLab.co.uk

www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/learning-to-work

"To anyone who is hesitating about hosting a 'Work Inspiration' placement I'd say: start with one, you won't regret it." Stephanie May, Apprenticeship Programme Manager, Boots UK

6. ITV CASE STUDY

#ITVinspire

What we do

As a television and online broadcaster, finding ways of engaging with younger audiences in a meaningful way is a business imperative.

ITV's programme allows them to gain insight and understanding into one of their most valuable TV audiences, namely young people, while at the same time providing a broad entry route into media and preventing exclusion for young and diverse talent.

The programme takes young people on a journey of ITV's business from ideas and commissioning, finance, sales, through to making TV programmes. Week one is show-and-tell where employees come along and explain what they do then set the young people a challenge, e.g. coming up with a new storyline for a soap character, learning how to operate a camera or how to interview people. In week two they then put all their skills into practice and create their own five minute TV programme.

Regular updates on a closed social network sites enabled ITV to view the progress of the young people before, during and after the programme. A online community is formed with them prior to starting the scheme and ITV monitors when young people move onto their internal programmes. They measure their understanding prior to the scheme and post to measure the effectiveness as well as the content.

ITV gives young people the opportunity to return a year later as part of the 'crew', running a workshop around leadership and communication skills to equip them to help with the programme delivery. Over 70% continue to engage with ITV via our FB Page

* Figures relate to the number of trainees who responded to our survey in 2014

How did the business benefit?

- ⚙ 85% of colleagues in employee survey said they were proud to work for ITV.
- ⚙ The scheme allows junior members of ITV's workforce to gain skills and experience in leadership and management.
- ⚙ Senior managers commented on how their teams were more motivated after engaging with the programme.

ITV's Top Tips

- ⚙ Create an online social group to enable candidates to network and share their journey this can enhance their experience.
- ⚙ Provide opportunities for candidates to stay in touch after the placement
- ⚙ Social networking is a great tool to communicate and engage young candidates who would not usually consider work experience as an option
- ⚙ To ensure we remain aligned to the needs of the young people and relevant to their development, where possible we enhance the scheme to reflect the changes identified by the young people through the evaluation process.

What did the young people get out of it?

- ⚙ 97% of trainees secured opportunities within the industry
- ⚙ 83% secured opportunities at ITV

* Figures relate to the number of trainees who responded to our survey in 2014

"Attracting and retaining talent is critical to our success. It means ensuring we have an inclusive culture; treating people the right way, listening to their views, and giving them the chance to develop new skills and expand their experience. We know that diversity breeds innovation - vital for the best creative content."

Adam Crozier, CEO ITV



7. Child Protection and Safeguarding guidance

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action companies take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. It's worth remembering that you are required by law to protect students from harm and are responsible for their safety while they are on placement with you.

DBS Checks

'DBS' checks (formerly 'CRB checks') are not usually required for supervisors, buddies or host teams, **however you should make sure that people working with the student have read and understood this document.**

More information on DBS checks can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>

Child protection

'Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm' (Dept. for Education)

Child protection is there for your protection as much as the young persons. Each school has different policies and procedures for child protection, so before the student arrives on their placement, establish who is responsible for child protection at the school. Take time to understand their requirements and work with them to define a simple child protection protocol, so you are both clear what will happen in the event of any issues arising.

Child protection guidance

The common sense guidance below will help you confidently manage the student's safety while on Work Inspiration placements.

Preparation

- Read the schools child protection policy and procedures to inform your planning of the placement.
- Define a simple child protection protocol with the designated teacher/officer at the school responsible for handling child protection issues so you are both clear what will happen in the event of any issues arising.

Environment

- Where possible do not be left alone with a student or group of students. When conducting a one-to-one session use a room which has windows, or a glass panelled door. Always leave the door open and sit at a respectable distance from the student.

Travel

- Advise the school prior to the placement if it is likely that there will be travel involved.
- If the student has to travel alone (to a morning event for example) make sure they are clear on the destination, arrival time and have work mobile number for someone at the venue and for someone back at your main site.
- If you have to travel by car take two students or another adult, alternatively use public transport or a taxi.

Touch

- Never touch a student in any way.
- Even if a student is upset or distressed, do not provide any physical contact for comfort. Instead ask them if they would like to sit down, have a glass of water and provide tissues if necessary. The school should be informed at this point.

Conduct

- Though students will often feel nervous when starting a placement, avoid being over familiar, do not use terms like 'love' or 'darling'.
- Do not enter into conversation or banter that could be misinterpreted by a student or anybody else.
- Do not give out your personal number or social media contacts to a young person.
- Do not arrange to meet the students outside of the placement.

Disclosure advise

Occasionally a student may disclose confidential information that gives rise to concern for their emotional or physical safety or the direction of the relationship. **The golden rule in these situations is that you must not take matters into your own hands.** You must notify HR and the programme co-ordinator who will pass on information or concerns to the schools designated child protection officer.

If a student makes a disclosure, please follow these steps:

- Listen to them, take what they say seriously and offer reassurance without making promises.
- Never stop a young person who is freely recalling significant events.
- Do not question or interrogate the young person directly to gain more information. If the disclosure is correct, any questioning could change the outcome of any action.
- Do not overreact.
- Do not promise you will 'sort it out'
- Do not promise the young person that you can keep secrets.
- Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to tell and why.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event, even if it is information you do not fully understand or like writing down.
- Share your record of the discussion with the placement co-ordinator, HR and your designated child protection officer if you have one. They can take responsibility and contact the school.