



LIFE MAGAZINES

MONTHLY A5 LOCAL LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES

WORK EXPERIENCE - A Taste of the Wide World

Work experience started this week for me and for many teenagers across the country who have finally finished their GCSE's. I decided to reward myself by doing absolutely nothing after an exhaustive month of revision and exams, which was absolute heaven - but now it's time for my work experience.

For anyone who is unsure what work experience is or involves, it's the chance for 15 to 18 year olds to get an insight into the world of work. Teenagers get to see how companies and organisations are run and see how stresses and problems that occur are dealt with and maybe help with them too. They get to be part of the work team and get to experience what work is really like.

But is work experience a good idea? I think the answer is yes. We, as teenagers, get to experience a real work environment with employers and employees where you will also discover and acquire skills you never even knew about. Nowadays, school work seems to monopolise many teenagers' lives, but work experience draws you out of those recurring pressures and gives you fresh, new, exciting ideas and people to work with.

Work experience is a fantastic way to discover and improve life skills, for example business and communications, which are needed for any type of job, but it will also develop your confidence and self-esteem whilst making you think more seriously about future careers. It is also a great way to improve your CV, helping to separate you from the crowd when applying to universities and for future jobs.

However, the idea of work experience can seem a little daunting, especially if you are not sure what career you want to do. But I've been told that nobody really knows what they want to do which is slightly comforting. And there are plenty of great websites out there if you are unsure of where to go

and who to ask about gaining a work placement. They advise you that word of mouth is the best way of finding what's out there by asking friends, family or teachers, giving you plenty of ideas and opportunities to work with which - I've found out - works.

Most work placements differ up and down the country; they can last from one week to three or they can just be one day a month for a number of months, but most of them are unpaid. If you are really lucky you can go abroad where you will not only learn about work but you get a taste of a different culture as well.

Nevertheless, any type of job, whether it's related to your chosen career path or not, will give you an idea of how companies, schools or organisations are run. Furthermore it will either help reduce your job search or broaden it; or you may find that your work experience role is the job you've been looking for.

As for my own work experience, I joined the team at Southwell Life - something which I am incredibly appreciative of, as I am sure they and other companies do not need the stress of providing work for teenagers on top of the pressures of the current economic climate. However, I have seen how the magazine is put together and the pressure of deadlines as well as last minute amendments. I was given many different jobs, for example writing my own article for the magazine which has been great fun and a good experience for me. So a big thank you to Penny, Howard, Ian and Jessica for putting up with and having me there.

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Age 16