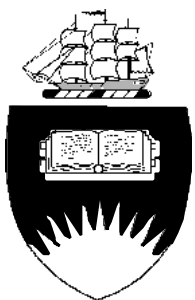

WorkReady

Preparation Program



FLINDERS
UNIVERSITY

ADELAIDE
AUSTRALIA

**Careers and Employer Liaison Centre
Third Floor Student Centre**

Tel: 8201 2832

Fax: 8201 3036

Email: careers@flinders.edu.au

WWW: www.flinders.edu.au/careers

What can I expect during my placement?

Your placement experience is likely to take you through many twists and turns. Here are some of the stages you may experience.

1. Orientation

Your placement is about to begin. You are excited about what you might do and how you might get involved. At the same time, you are kind of anxious about your skills and your role, as well as what kind of relationship you will have with your site supervisor, what you will really be doing each day, and how you will be evaluated.

2. Dissatisfaction

After the first few days you may feel frustrated, angry or disappointed. You may not be completing tasks or getting to know people as you had hoped. Don't give up on the experience yet! Everyone goes through this. Feel free to talk with us about any concerns you might have at this point.

3. Resolution

Things begin to change. You feel more independent, confident and effective because you now understand what tasks and skills are expected of you. At last you feel like you have something to contribute! Sometimes this requires re-evaluating some of your expectations about what will happen during the semester.

4. Production

At this point you are accomplishing a lot each day and have developed a clearer sense of what you want to get out of the placement. You are really experiencing comradely with your supervisors and co-workers.

5. Completion

Expect to focus the last few days on saying "good-bye" to newly found friends and wrapping up projects. Some people will have mixed feelings about their contributions to the organization. Sitting down for a final evaluation with your site supervisor can give you a better perspective on what you accomplished during the experience. -Lacoursiere (1980)

What are some of the things I need to know?

- Make sure you have a neatly prepared, current resume.
- Once you've landed a placement be willing to work hard and open to learning new things. Leave your classroom debating skills back on campus.
- As your experience progresses, carefully observe and listen to your supervisor and fellow employees for cues on how to act in the workplace.
- Maintain a positive attitude, even if you dislike your work. You may learn it's not what you want to do forever, but you'll also learn how to behave in the workplace and develop contacts and references who will be valuable to you in the future.
- Follow the rules of etiquette throughout the placement. When the placement is over, consider writing a thank you note to your supervisor and keep in touch.

Your first few days:

- Know what your organisation does. Be ready to give a 30-second overview to anyone that asks.
- Keep your eyes (and your career) focused on the big picture rather than your own little cube.
- Get a copy of your organisations most recent annual report or visit their website.
- Dress conservatively--at or above the conservative median within the organisation. You should always speak louder than your clothes.
- Remember the names of those you are introduced to. In your first few days on the job, jot down names until you remember them.
- Watch and emulate those who are successful in the organisation. Allow them to be your mentors from afar.

The daily routine:

- Set yourself daily goals
- Be a morning person. Always be on time.
- Plan your day in advance. Ten to fifteen minutes in the morning will equal an extra hour or more of productivity throughout the day.
- Be the first person to say "hello" to others in the morning. And say it with a smile.
- Arrive at meetings on time.
- Don't doodle or daydream at meetings
- Eat lunch in. Network with other staff in the area.

Work ethics:

- Draw a solid ethical line and never cross it. Especially if others are encouraging you to do so.
- Integrity sold cannot be repurchased. Integrity means doing what is right, even if it is unpopular, unfashionable and unprofitable.
- Develop a reputation for honesty and integrity. It is a reputation you must earn over time. And live up to that reputation at all times, at work and everywhere else.
- Don't use profanity, even when others do.
- Never tell inappropriate, racist or sexist jokes. And ignore those who attempt to share them with you.
- Don't lie, cheat, or steal, even when the temptation is great--stand for honesty and integrity in all you do, and you will be amazed how far it sets you above your peers.
- Make good on your promises. If you are not sure you can deliver, don't promise.
- If you are not sure, don't do it. That's your conscience talking. Listen closely.

Interpersonal skills:

- Talk 20% and listen 80%. And avoid those who talk 100%.
- Always take the opportunity to praise others who are worthy of praise.
- When someone is telling you a story, don't interrupt. And don't try to upstage them with a better story of your own.
- Smile. A lot. Even when you feel like frowning.
- If someone is confrontational with you, avoid the confrontation. Take time to cool off before you respond.
- Look for solutions, not problems. Anyone can identify problems.
- When someone compliments you for your work, don't say, "it was nothing" or try to talk them out of it. Just say "Thank you" with a smile and move on. Nothing more, nothing less.
- Don't be a complainer. Every work environment has a person who feels responsible for the role of office complainer. Let someone else fill that role. And ignore them when they attempt to practice their art upon you.

Office politics:

- Show respect for your supervisor. Don't join in when others are 'complaining'. It can be contagious.
- When you are personally complimented for something that was a team effort, always give proper credit to the team.
- When others begin to criticise, fight the urge to join in the slaughter.
- Be a builder, not a destroyer.

Remember

- Learn to match your training with application of what you have learned. Apply it and it's yours forever. Don't apply it and it's lost.
- Learn to become a team player. University rewards individual performance. Employers reward team performance.
- You probably don't know nearly as much as you think you know. It often takes the maturity of a lifetime to come to this realisation, but if you are willing to acknowledge this fact early in life, you will capture a lifetime of learning and growth.
- Beware of office romances. Keep personal matters outside the work environment.
- Listen to your home answering machine message from the perspective of others. If you don't want the office to hear it, change it. Cutesy messages usually don't sound cute when played over a speakerphone at the office.
- Be aware of the work that is going on around you. These are your areas of potential future growth.

- Meet with others in the organisation to learn more about their jobs and their departments. Let them do the talking. You do the listening.
- Be observant--learn from the mistakes of others so that they are not repeated in your life.
- When you do make mistakes, take responsibility for them immediately. Denial will only prolong and intensify the error. Acknowledge you were wrong and move on. And don't make the same mistake again.

What do I wear on Placement?

When you are on placement it is important that you present a professional image in keeping with the standards of your Placement Provider. All work places are different, so there is no clear cut advice for every placement, but as a general rule, you should present yourself in a neat and tidy manner, dressing similarly to those staff in your placement organisation.

- Have your clothes cleaned and ironed
- Be aware of personal hygiene, shower before work each day
- Ensure that your hair is clean and neatly combed – bird's nests are not suitable for the work place
- If you have long hair, it is generally best to tie it back away from your face
- Do not wear excessive jewellery, keep your accessories simple – you are there to work, it is not a cocktail party!
- Keep makeup simple and natural and do not wear excessive amounts of perfume or aftershave. The person sitting next to you should not have to smell your favourite scent all day
- Make sure that your shoes are cleaned every day, without scuffing.

Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare

In the work place, it is the responsibility of both the employer and the workers to ensure that health and safety laws are correctly implemented to minimise the risk of accidents and illness for staff. When you are on placement, you also need to take reasonable steps to ensure your safety.

Typically, you are required to:

- Follow instructions and rules in the work place, and comply with instructions designed to ensure that work is carried out safely
- Work and behave in ways which are safe and do not endanger the health and safety of anyone in the work place. Consuming alcohol or illicit drugs is to be avoided before or during working hours.

If you have concerns about health and safety while you are on placement, it is your responsibility to notify the Careers and Employer Liaison Centre immediately.

Equal Opportunity

In South Australia, it is against the law for you to be harassed because of your:

- Sex
- Pregnancy
- Race (including such things as colour, nationality, ethnic descent and ethnic background)
- Marital status
- Disability (including physical, intellectual, sensory, learning or psychiatric and including actual, perceived, past, present or future disability)
- Sexuality, including homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, transsexuality, and heterosexuality.

In general, harassment is any form of behaviour that is not wanted and:

- Humiliates you (puts you down) or
- Offends you or
- Intimidates you.

The following kinds of behaviour may be harassment and should be avoided when on placement:

- Producing or distributing material that is racist, sexist, sexually explicit, homophobic, which is displayed in the work place, including e-mail, on the internet, fax machine, or circulated in any way
- Verbal abuse or comments that put down or stereotype people because of their sex, pregnancy, marital status, age, transsexuality, homosexuality, or race
- Gestures which are racially or sexually offensive
- Ignoring, isolating or segregating a person or group because of their race or sex etc.
- Staring or leering in a sexual manner
- Sexual or physical contact such as slapping, kissing or touching
- Intrusive questions about sexual activity
- Repeated sexual invitations when the person invited has refused similar invitations.

If you are in a placement and you believe that you are being harassed, it is very important that you advise the Careers and Employer Liaison Centre immediately. The WorkReady Project Officer from the Careers and Employer Liaison Centre is available at any time of the day or night to assist you and will speak with your Placement Provider on your behalf.

What if I run into problems at my work site?

In rare instances, difficulties may occur at a placement work site. If this happens, please contact the Careers & Employer Liaison Centre. In most cases, we can help you resolve any problems.

Contact details

Julia Stott

WorkReady and Industry Liaison Officer
Careers & Employer Liaison Centre
Email: julia.stott@flinders.edu.au

Or

Peter Torjul

Head Careers & Employer Liaison Centre
Email: Peter.Torjul@flinders.edu.au

Tel: 08 8201 2832

Fax: 08 8201 3036