

# Why every work experience placement must count



Photograph: Alamy

When you're on work experience, employers don't just want you to make the tea.

I regretted not making the most of my first work placement – so I became determined not to miss another opportunity.

Like many students, the thought of finishing university with a piece of paper saying that I have a degree, but no job to go with it, is disheartening<sup>1</sup>. This fear has encouraged me to go out and get work experience.

When I started my degree I began to search for placements. I wanted as much hands on experience as possible so that I could make myself employable.

Because of this, when I was only two months into my course, I worked in a local radio news room. My lack of experience meant that I was only given admin tasks, but I managed to take in everything around me and watch how a news room operated. However, I regret that I was too shy to ask for the opportunity to get stuck in<sup>2</sup>.

When I finished work at the radio station, despite the lack of hands on experience I gained, I found the confidence to approach other employers and ask for work. I promised myself that I would make the most of every placement from now on and that none of them would be a missed opportunity.

I quickly realized that employers don't want someone who only does what they are asked quietly and makes tea. You need to show them your personality and that you have ideas.

I began taking every opportunity that came my way, even if it wasn't quite what I was looking for. I decided I would embrace every chance I was given. Doing this has allowed me to build on skills I otherwise wouldn't have acquired.

At first I found it difficult to send emails that didn't sound generic and make myself stand out from the crowd<sup>3</sup>. However I've found that if you show that you are willing to get stuck in and push yourself, you are more likely to get the response you want. [...]

<http://www.theguardian.com/education>

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<sup>1</sup> Disheartening: décourageant

<sup>2</sup> To get stuck in: s'y mettre sérieusement

<sup>3</sup> Crowd: foule

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