

How Work Experience Benefits the Employer and the Employee

Work experience for secondary school children was once compulsory in England, but in 2012 it was scrapped, under the coalition Government. A study by Ofsted earlier this year found that 75% of schools and further education colleges are failing to provide adequate work experience programmes, claiming they find it too time consuming and too demanding of paperwork. On the flip side, in a 2015 poll conducted by the British Chambers of Commerce, 82% of company managers believed that compulsory work experience for under 16-year-olds should be reinstated.

At Hayward Miller, we are firmly in the latter camp, able to see the benefits of work experience for both ourselves as a company and for the young people undertaking the work experience.



How Can Work Experience Benefit My Company?

- “The Wisdom of Youth” – We have a lot to learn from young people, they can be very intelligent – remember, all those things you may have learnt at school but have now forgotten are still fresh in their minds.
- “The Children are our Future” – Young people can be extremely creative and think about things in completely different ways. When you’ve been working in a particular job role or sector for a number of years, it can be difficult to change, but sometimes it’s worth trying a new perspective to get you out of a rut.
- “Technology is Changing” – In the ever-evolving world of new technologies, it can sometimes be hard to keep up. Teenagers always seem to be up on the latest trends, like a new social media platform, for example. In order to stay ahead of the curve, you need the knowledge of someone tech savvy.

- “A Sense of Community” – Taking on work experience placements from your local school or college helps you stay connected to your community. Having links to local institutions can be very beneficial and can help to promote your business within the area.
- “The Skills Gap” – Some vacancies are hard to fill. You might just find that the young person you’ve taken on for a work experience placement has the right aptitude and potential to become the full-time member of staff you’ve been searching for.

How Can Work Experience Benefit Me as a Young Person?

- “Stand Out from the Crowd” – Having work experience on your CV can really make you stand out to employers when looking for that first job after you finish school or college. It shows employers that you were dedicated enough to take time out of your holidays to get some unpaid experience.
- “Skills, Skills, Skills” – Work experience is a great way to learn new things. Often you will get to spend time throughout different areas of the business to give you a well-rounded experience and a good idea of how each part of a business ticks.
- “A Few Words Go a Long Way” – Companies will often be willing to provide a reference which you can use with prospective employers. This will really help to sell you and back up what you’ve written on your CV.
- “Age is Just a Number” – When you enter the world of work, you need to be able to work with a wide range of people, often including many people much older than yourself. Work experience is a good way to get used to working with people of all ages and seeing them as a peer, rather than like a teacher or a parent.
- “Looking to the Future” – Work experience can help you realise your potential and give you an idea of what you might want to do when you finish school or college. If you perform really well, you might even be offered an apprenticeship at the end of it!

Hayward Miller’s Experience with Work Experience

Over the summer, Hayward Miller took on a work experience person from the local secondary school for two weeks. During the two weeks, she was given the chance to sample all aspects of the business, from telemarketing to admin and from market research to marketing. She shadowed a member of each team before putting the skills she had learnt into practice. She said of her time here, “I’ve really enjoyed being at Hayward Miller, I think it’s a great business to work for and everyone has made me feel welcome. The team here work really hard and I can tell they love what they do.”

HML believe in giving young people a chance and helping them to take the first step into the world of business. Managing Director Andrew Hayward commented, “I’m extremely glad we made the decision to take someone on for work experience. It was very eye-opening and a thoroughly rewarding experience. The young lady who came

to work with us was hardworking, insightful and full of enthusiasm. We thank her for her time and wish her well with her A-levels.”

So, remember, business owners, not all teenagers are rude and lazy and young people, don't be afraid to approach a business for work experience, we don't bite!