



Work Experience Fact Sheet

Work Experience

A Work Experience is a Career Preparation activity in which a learner² is at a worksite doing real work for pay. The learner is held to the same expectations as all employees and is evaluated by the worksite supervisor based on workplace expectations and performance.

Work experiences range from regular, paid employment in summer and/or year-round jobs to subsidized employment and learning-rich work experience. They include both “found” jobs and those arranged by the school or program. There are also a range of education and training linked work experience program types defined at the state and federal levels.

Work experiences are one activity in the continuum of authentic work-based experiences provided to all learners engaged in career-related programs or course of study in the Earn and Learn community.

Work Experiences are designed to:

- Promote hands-on, real-world experience in a field of interest.
- Provide productive value for the employer.
- Offer opportunities to develop, practice and demonstrate work-readiness skills.
- Build occupational knowledge.
- Create awareness of the education needed to be successful in the industry.

Work Experiences are structured to:

- Enable learners to practice and prepare for work, potentially in an area of career interest.
- Help learners develop and demonstrate Work-Readiness Competencies.
- Build knowledge about the education and training needed for a particular job, career path and advancement in the industry.

Work Experiences are supported by:

- Classroom preparation, including research on the industry and participating businesses.
- Employer orientation and support.
- Opportunities to reflect upon the experience verbally and in writing.

Work Experiences are connected to:

- Individual career development/training plans.
- Future work-based learning activities.
- The learner’s next steps.

² Learners include: K-12, community college and college students; youth and young adults engaged in workforce development programs; and adults participating in career development activities.

Work Experience Support Materials

Checklists, Tip Sheets and Fact Sheets:

- Connector Work Experience Checklist
- Learner Work Experience Checklist
- Teacher/Faculty Work Experience Tip Sheet
- Employer Work Experience Tip Sheet
- Employer Work Experience Fact Sheet

Implementation Tools:

- Work Experience Research Activity
- Work Experience Learner Reflection
- Remote and Virtual Fact Sheets

Remote Work Experience Resources:

- Digital Summer Youth Employment Toolkit 2.0
<https://aspencommunitysolutions.org/report/digital-summer-youth-employment-toolkit-2-0/>
- The Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions released the 2.0 version of our Digital Summer Youth Employment Toolkit December 16, 2020. This resource builds on the initial toolkit from June 2020, and is informed by implementation lessons from 2020's "summer like no other" from communities across the Opportunity Youth Forum (OYF) network and national partners.

Tips for Success **Work-Based Learning Essential Elements**

Effective Work Experiences include structured activity before, during and after the experience. Pay attention to these tips to ensure meaningful experiences that result in enriched learning.

- ✓ Conduct Effective Planning
- ✓ Prepare for Success
- ✓ Identify Learning Objectives.
- ✓ Create Authentic and Engaging Experiences
- ✓ Connect to Careers
- ✓ Support Learner Growth
- ✓ Ensure Activities are Safe and Legal
- ✓ Provide Ongoing Support
- ✓ Provide for Reflection, Presentation and Feedback
- ✓ Connect to the Learner Next Step
- ✓ Assess and Document the Experience

Sustaining and growing Work Experiences and all other work-based learning activities depend on maintaining positive relationships with the participating employers. These employers should be treated as valued customers and partners with frequent check-ins to address their needs and support their participation.