

Why is work experience important to get employed?

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You need work experience to get a job but you need a job to get that experience. Most people are said to be educated since they hold a lot of degrees and diplomas. Without work experience, it becomes very difficult for them to get to their dream jobs in the short term. This is because at tertiary institutions they focus more on theoretical aspects of a domain hence most graduates come out with less of practical experience, which makes them very new to the domain when they get employed. Unfortunately, some universities and degree programs do not include attachment year. Normally in Zimbabwe Where labor supply is too high, companies recruit graduate trainees with an average of 26 years cut off age. According to Glassdoor's Employment Confidence Surveys of 2014 and 2015 (Q1), close to 70% of the employees feel the need for specialized on-the-job training even with their degrees. Nearly 48% of the people said their degrees were not relevant to their current jobs.

Employers value experience over education

While all the theories of the world might help you put things in frameworks and analyse them, it is experience alone, which guides you to decisive action. Experience teaches you about how to apply learnings to produce favorable outcomes regardless of any concepts you might have learnt. The obvious reason to look for people with experience is that managers are often risk-averse and believe that hiring someone with experience is safer than hiring someone without it. If you have done this exact job three times before, then you must know how to do it by now.

The job market is a competitive place, so much so that a degree alone is often not enough to impress a potential employer even if that degree happens to be a PhD in engineering. Not that that will not help you stand out a little bit from the crowd, but still, employers place far more importance on experience than they do on good grades and diplomas. Therefore, whether you are still in high school and want to get a head start over your future competition or you are taking the next steps in your career development, completing some work experience can be your ticket to full-time employment. However, how exactly does work experience benefit your career? In addition, why is it so important?

You will Develop Your Transferable Skills

Around 75% of work experience participants said it had provided them with new skills and increased their confidence according to research UK government. Whether it is a short work placement or a longer internship, you will equip yourself with certain transferable skills that are highly sought after by employers. As the name suggests, these skills can be transferred across one role or industry to another, and this is what makes them more valuable. Not only do these types of skills demonstrate your cultural fitness for a company and work environment, but they also show what you are able to bring to the table. They are also great for when you need to overcome a lack of real-world professional experience. In

addition, they look good on a well-written CV and accompanying cover letter too, so make sure you include them.

You will get to test things out

The beauty of work experience is that it allows you to test the waters before you fully commit yourself to a specific role, industry or even company. This is especially true for school leavers who are at a loss as to what they should do next, what should they study and should they even go to university. Essentially, doing some experience can help you avoid making some very costly mistakes such as spending thousands of dollars and four years at university studying something that, ultimately, you do not even care about. Of course, there is nothing wrong with changing careers further down the line if you realise that your true passion actually lies in designing handmade wedding invitations and not investment banking, for example. Nevertheless, the sooner you know whether a particular career path is the right one for you, the better off you will be once you are on the road. That is because you will be able to better focus on working your way through the ranks of your chosen profession, rather than second-guessing every career decision you have made so far.

It Makes You More Employable

According to [David Game College](#), 29% of employers say experience is critical when recruiting young people and a further 45% say it is significant. Leading on from the previous point, gaining an understanding of the ins and outs of a sector or company will certainly give you an edge over the competition. Consider this little scenario, two recent graduates apply for the same job. They have the exact same qualifications from the same university and their CVs are practically identical the only difference is that one of the applicants completed an unpaid internship in the industry they are applying to get into. Suddenly, that applicant looks a lot more attractive to the hiring manager. The bottom line is that having some work experience shows employers that you are motivated to develop yourself and learn new things and this drastically improves your employability in the process. It gives you something to put on your CV and makes for a great conversation piece in a job interview. More than 80% of young people felt they were more attractive to employers following work experience or an employer-led placement according to research by UK government.

It could lead to a full-time Job

According to research by the UK government, 42% were offered a job at the end of their placement – around two-thirds of people who got a job with a different employer said the sector-based work academies helped them get the job. One of the biggest benefits of completing a work experience placement or internship is that it often leads to a full-time job offer if you performed well in the role. That is because employers are far more willing to employ people who already know the ins and outs of the company than having to train someone new from scratch. In other words, do not discount the opportunities that even working free can provide you with further down the road. In fact, students taking internships were three times more likely to secure a job than those without any form of work experience, according to a study by High Fliers Research back in 2013. This means you will have little chance of

getting a job if the only thing in your job search arsenal is a degree, as you are more qualified and experienced peers will snap up all the top jobs from right under your nose.

It introduces you to the world of work

Another way work experience is important to your long-term career is that it offers you the opportunity to learn skills and processes that you will only ever be able to learn in a workplace setting. You will get a real feel of how people work together, how things get done and how work differs from university, and this essentially prevents any surprises when you finally go from student to full-time employee. It is also a great way to become work savvy and learn the dos and don'ts of the workplace. This includes learning how to navigate your way through the jungle of office politics, like avoiding workplace gossip.

You will broaden your network

Networking is one of those things that you either love, hate or at least tolerate. It is also probably the most important thing you can do to help yourself in your job search. In your work placement, you will meet and work alongside a variety of professionals. They can also prove incredibly useful when you are looking for a job by pointing you into the direction of suitable vacancies or directly recommending you to their clients or business partners who are looking for someone with your knowledge and skillset. Even if they cannot help you find a job, you will still be able to pick the brains of industry professionals and get a better understanding of the ins and outs of your target sector.

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