

# **Employer Support for Diplomas in Tower Hamlets Resource Pack**

**November 2009**

# Classroom guest speakers

## Introduction

To bring the Diplomas alive, we are inviting employees to schools as 'guest speakers' to talk to learners about a particular topic.

The talk can last 45 minutes to one hour and can be videoed, giving schools the option to re-use it without the need for employees to deliver it in person repeatedly.

These talks provide the opportunity for learners to hear real life experiences from employees in the sector they are studying. They can broaden learners' knowledge of an industry and inspire them to progress in their studies.

## Structuring your talk

The content of the talk will be agreed in advance between employees and teachers. The main content should relate to the specifications for the specific Diploma and teachers will advise exactly what the guest speaker should include. However, learners need to see how their learning relates to business, so wherever possible real life examples from your work should be included. Presenting a work-related problem towards the end of the talk also allows teachers to follow up your talk in future lessons.

## Example breakdown of your talk

These are only suggestions and do not need to be adhered to rigidly!

**5 minutes** Introduce yourself; give a brief outline of your role and the purpose of your organisation. You might include a short ice-breaker activity.

**5 minutes** Give a short outline of your talk and ask the learners what they already know about the topic. This encourages them to become involved early on in the session.

**5 minutes** Explain the learning outcomes of the session (what they will know at the end). Limit this to 3 key points.

**10 minutes** Talk for 10 minutes. You might consider handing around props from your industry to add a tactile and memorable dimension to your talk, or visual aids to keep learners involved, interested and alert.

**10 minutes** Set the learners a practical activity where they work in pairs or groups. Learners like to get involved and be part of the learning experience. They are more likely to be responsive in activities that are interesting and fulfilling. This could include a brainstorming or problem solving activity (such as coming up with slogans, or other advertising ideas).

- 5 minutes** Allow the learners to feed back on their activity.
- 10 minutes** Talk for a further 10 minutes. Consider how to make this interactive and interesting for the learners.
- 5 minutes** Lead a plenary session which includes reflection of the learning outcomes and whether they have been achieved.
- 5 minutes** Leave time for questions.

## Practicalities

On average there will be 20 learners in one classroom and a teacher will be present at all times. The learners will always be between 14 – 19 years old (age and ability of the learners attending your talk will be confirmed beforehand) and talks will usually take place during term time between the hours of 9am and 3.00pm.

Most schools have electronic whiteboards. If you would like to bring an electronic presentation, this can be agreed in advance with the teacher.

It is essential to open up a reliable channel of communication with the teacher during the early stages of planning. Please inform the teacher of the best way to contact you, such as an email you check regularly or a mobile number. It is also useful to find out the most effective way to contact the teacher (in addition to the normal school telephone number) as they can be difficult to reach during school hours).

## Further guidance

### Prior to arrival

- If using slides, avoid using too many words per slides and especially avoid just reading out whatever is on the slides. People find it hard to read and listen at the same time.
- When using visual aids, provide sufficient photocopies for every learner, or ask a teacher to produce these.
- Consider which props from your industry can be handed around during your talk.
- Familiarise yourself with several ice-breakers, so you have these to hand if needed. They can be helpful when starting with a new class, but be sure not to let them take up all your time. (A list of potential ice-breakers is available on a separate activity sheet).

- Arrive with plenty of time to spare to get comfortable with the classroom, adjust the layout of chairs, lighting, etc., and ensure that multi-media aids are working, and can be seen and heard by all.

### **Beginning your talk**

- Let the learners know 'there's no such thing as a silly question'. More often than not there will be another learner in the class thinking the same thing, who isn't brave enough to raise their hand.
- Encourage learners to make notes – these help keep them alert.

### **During your talk**

- Make the experience interactive and fun. Learners like to get involved and be part of the learning experience. They are more likely to be responsive in activities that are interesting and fulfilling.
- Check your assumptions and stereotypes. Most of us bring biases; adults may see young people as energetic and creative or, conversely, non-communicative and disinterested.
- Be careful to limit your use of technical jargon and language that may not be understood. If you do use jargon, check the learners understand and go through definitions as you go along.
- Ask the learners questions to encourage them to be more involved.
- Leave time for learners to ask their own questions at the end.

# Expert in the hot seat

## Introduction

To bring the Diplomas alive, we are inviting employees to become 'experts in the hot-seat' for an hour. During these sessions, an industry expert spends time either online or in person answering questions from learners about the specific topic being studied. This can also be done via video conferencing.

## Structuring the session

Topics of discussions will be agreed in advance. You will therefore have a reasonable idea of the sort of questions that will be asked.

Regardless of whether the session takes place online, in a written or video context, or in person, the teacher will agree the questions to be asked by the class prior to the session. The questions could be presented by the teacher, or this task could be delegated to a learner or succession of learners.

## Practicalities

On average there will be 20 learners in one classroom and a teacher will be present at all times. The learners will always be between 14 – 19 years old (age and ability of the learners in your session will be confirmed beforehand).

Sessions will usually take place during term time between the hours of 9am and 3.00pm.

It is essential to open up a reliable channel of communication with the teacher during the early stages of planning. Please inform the teacher of the best way to contact you, such as an email you check regularly or a mobile number. It is also useful to find out the most effective way to contact the teacher (in addition to the normal school telephone number) as they can be difficult to reach during school hours).

## Further guidance

### Prior to the session

- (If in person) Arrive with plenty of time to spare to get comfortable with the classroom, adjust the layout of chairs, lighting, etc.

- (If online) Test the connection over the Internet as early as possible, to ensure the format is possible. Note that several company internet servers block access to certain instant messaging and video services.
- (If online) Establish the connection with at least an hour to spare and leave it running in the background. This allows for unforeseen problems. Be ready for the teacher 15 minutes before the session begins.
- (If video) If possible, book a room where the above tests and the actual session can take place, where you'll be free from distraction and interruption. Turn off phones, blackberries, etc.

### **Beginning the session**

- Introduce yourself, give a brief outline of your role and the purpose of your organisation.
- Let the learners know 'there's no such thing as a silly question'. More often than not there will be another learner in the class thinking the same thing, who isn't brave enough to raise their hand.

### **During the session**

- Make the experience interactive and fun. Learners like to get involved and be part of the learning experience. They are more likely to be responsive in activities that are interesting and fulfilling.
- Check your assumptions and stereotypes. Most of us bring biases; adults may see young people as energetic and creative or, conversely, non-communicative and disinterested.
- Be careful to limit your use of technical jargon and language that may not be understood. If you do use jargon, check the learners understand and go through definitions as you go along.
- A personal and informal approach works well. Learners normally enjoy stories and anecdotes that employees share.
- Assure the learner(s) that you are interested in their individual opinions and don't expect them to speak for an entire demographic.

# Industry insight visits

## Introduction

Industry insight visits provide an opportunity for learners (maximum 20) and teachers to visit a workplace for approximately 2 hours. Many learners will not have had an opportunity like this before, and it will be an exciting and insightful experience for them.

These visits can broaden learners' knowledge of an industry and inspire them to progress in their studies.

## Structuring an industry insight visit

The industry insight visit should begin with a welcome session, including a brief overview of the company, safety rules, introduction of personnel and information about the schedule for the visit. It could include a tour of departments, and a chance for learners to meet and talk to employees about their roles and career paths. Prior to the visit, the schools can advise what could be included in the tour.

## Example schedule

These are only suggestions and do not need to be adhered to rigidly!

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>9.30am</b>  | Meet learners and teachers in reception.  |
| <b>9.40am</b>  | (In meeting room) Make introductions and explain safety procedures. Provide refreshments. Run through schedule and explain what to expect.    |
| <b>10.00am</b> | Toilet break.   |
| <b>10.05am</b> | Tour of the key departments, which include the opportunity for learners to speak with employees about their experiences in the world of work. |
| <b>11.15am</b> | Tour finishes, back to meeting room to invite feedback and questions.   |
| <b>11.30am</b> | Escort the learners and teachers to reception.  |

## Practicalities

The learners will be between 14 – 19 years old (age and ability of the learners in your session will be confirmed beforehand).

The visits will usually take place during term time between the hours of 9am and 3.00pm.

It is essential to open up a reliable channel of communication with the teacher during the early stages of planning. Please inform the teacher of the best way to contact you, such as an email you check regularly or a mobile number. It is also useful to find out the most effective way to contact the teacher (in addition to the normal school telephone number) as they can be difficult to reach during school hours).

## Further guidance

### Prior to the visit

- Agree the date and duration of the tour in writing with the school / Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership (THEBP).
- Agree with the school what the content and purpose of the tour will be.
- Assign at least one person to act as a guide throughout the visit, getting the learners from one place to the next. Learners should be accompanied at all times.
- Ensure that all employees involved in the visit are aware of what their roles are and what is expected of them. If applicable, confirm with Department Heads if they (or another employee) will speak and explain the role of their department to the learners.
- Confirm a list of learner and teacher names with the school or THEBP.
- Ensure that security and reception have a list of learner and teacher names, and that they are aware of the visit date and arrival and departure times.
- Produce an outline of the tour including approximate timings.
- If possible, carry out a practice run prior to the learners' arrival.
- Send a map and directions to the school / THEBP.

- Share a copy of these guidelines with anyone likely to come into contact with the learner(s).

### **Beginning the visit**

- Learners will need to follow all safety procedures used by the business while visiting the workplace. Explain all relevant procedures to the group, including:
  - What to do if the fire alarm sounds.
  - That you will be their guide for the visit and they must stay with you throughout the visit for security purposes.
- Be particularly vigilant if escorting learners between different buildings. Their teacher will count the learners in and out of the buildings.
- If the lifts need to be used during the tour, it is best to avoid the morning and lunchtime rush!
- Aim to be friendly but assertive while guiding the group around the building.
- Let the learners know 'there's no such thing as a silly question'. More often than not there will be another learner in the class thinking the same thing, who isn't brave enough to raise their hand.

### **During the visit**

- Make the experience interactive and fun. Learners like to get involved and be part of the learning experience. They are more likely to be responsive in activities that are interesting and fulfilling.
- Check your assumptions and stereotypes. Most of us bring biases; adults may see young people as energetic and creative or, conversely, non-communicative and disinterested.
- Be careful to limit your use of technical jargon and language that may not be understood. If you do use jargon, check the learners understand and go through definitions as you go along.
- As you walk around, talk to learners about your own career path, education background and why you chose to work in the sector. Explain the main skills that you use in your role.
- A personal and informal approach works well. Learners normally enjoy stories and anecdotes that employees share.

- Encourage the learners to ask questions as they observe the working environment.
- Should the fire alarm sound, accompany the learners out of the building following the usual evacuation procedure and join the other learner groups at the meeting point.
- If you have a problem during your tour, please contact the school directly or THEBP.

# A workplace challenge

## Introduction

These one-day events are designed to introduce learners to a business enterprise. They help learners test themselves against a realistic problem (perhaps based on a real life case study).

The challenge can be aimed at individuals or groups of learners.

Hosted at a school or your workplace, the challenges are designed to highlight practical issues that face companies such as staffing, marketing, production and finance.

The learners are given the opportunity to use their individual talents and teamwork to find a solution to a task and to present their results to a panel of judges. The challenge may include leadership, problem-solving, taking risks, decision-making, practising presentation skills, financial capability, and the application of other practical skills.

## Structuring a workplace challenge

The theme of the challenge will be agreed in advance between employees and teachers, and should relate to the specifications and learning outcomes for the specific Diploma. Teachers will be able to advise you on the challenges which might be appropriate for specific groups of learners.

Examples of challenges might include stimulation exercises based on:

- Developing a new product, from factory floor to supermarket shelf
- Marketing of a new mobile phone, music download website, or energy drink

## Practicalities

The learners will be between 14 – 19 years old (age and ability of the learners in your session will be confirmed beforehand).

The events will usually take place during term time between the hours of 9am and 3.00pm.

It is essential to open up a reliable channel of communication with the teacher during the early stages of planning. Please inform the teacher of the best way to contact you, such as an email you check regularly or a mobile number. It is also useful to find out the most effective way to contact the teacher (in addition to the normal school telephone number) as they can be difficult to reach during school hours).

## Further Guidance

### Prior to the challenge

- Produce an outline of the challenge including approximate timings and agree these with the school / Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership (THEBP). Agree who will be facilitating the event.
- Ensure that all employees and teachers involved in the challenge event are aware of what their roles are and what is expected of them. Share a copy of these guidelines with anyone likely to come into contact with the learner(s).
- If the event is taking place at your workplace, confirm a list of learner and teacher names with the school or THEBP, and ensure that security and reception have this list. Everyone should also be made aware of where and when the event is taking place, including arrival and departure times of learners and teachers.
- If the event is taking place at your workplace, send a map and directions to the school / THEBP.

### Beginning the challenge

- If the event is taking place at your workplace, learners will need to follow all safety procedures used by the business while visiting the workplace. Explain all relevant procedures to the group, including what to do if the fire alarm sounds.
- Introduce yourself; give a brief outline of your role and the purpose of your organisation.
- Tell everyone the objectives of the challenge, and the schedule for the day.

### During the challenge

- Make the experience interactive and fun. Learners like to get involved and be part of the learning experience and are more likely to be responsive in activities that are interesting and fulfilling.
- Remember to give praise when the learners are doing something well.
- Check your assumptions and stereotypes. Most of us bring biases; adults may see young people as energetic and creative or, conversely, non-communicative and disinterested.

- Take the time to develop a good relationship with learners before expecting too much. Remember, too, that this work is often new to learners; take the time to explain why particular actions are being taken.
- Be careful to limit your use of technical jargon and language that may not be understood. If you do use jargon, check the learners understand and go through definitions as you go along.
- A personal and informal approach works well. Learners normally enjoy stories and anecdotes that employees share.
- Talk to learners about your own career path, educational background and why you chose to work in the sector. Explain the main skills that you use in your role.
- When having a discussion with a group of learners, let only one person talk at a time.
- Encourage the learners to ask questions.
- Assure the learner(s) that you are interested in their individual opinions and don't expect them to speak for an entire demographic.
- Practice good communication. It's easy for adults to interrupt, and that can be discouraging for learners, as it shows that you're not listening.
- If a learner is making a mistake, encourage them to work out where they have gone wrong and try to get them to correct the mistake themselves, or to ask you for help.
- Be careful of the body language you use. Even when you think what you said didn't show how you really felt, your face and body may have done so.
- Should the fire alarm sound, accompany the learners out of the building following the usual evacuation procedure and wait at the meeting point.

# Judging competitions and work-related presentations

## Introduction

Learners like to compete, and competitions and presentations are a good opportunity for learners to work as a team and on their own. These are often organised by schools, and employers are invited to school or college premises to give constructive feedback to learners.

The competitions and presentations can be on a wide variety of subjects and areas.

## Structure

The structure will vary from event to event, depending on a variety of factors such as topic, location, school and so on. You will be provided with specific information about the structure of the event in which you are participating.

## Practicalities

Prior to arrival, you will be sent relevant background information on the competition or presentation.

Most events last approximately 2 hours and, on average, there will be a maximum of 20 learners split into groups.

The age of the learners will be between 14-19 years. Prior to the event the school or Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership (THEBP) will inform you of the age and ability of the learners.

It is essential to open up a reliable channel of communication with the teacher during the early stages of planning. Please inform the teacher of the best way to contact you, such as an email you check regularly or a mobile number. It is also useful to find out the most effective way to contact the teacher (in addition to the normal school telephone number) as they can be difficult to reach during school hours).

## Further Guidance

### Prior to the event

- Read all background information on the competition or presentation. You might also like to carry out your own additional research on the topic.
- Come to the event prepared to give a brief explanation of yourself and your organisation, to establish your credibility for being involved. The school or THEBP will clarify the extent of your involvement (including speaking) so you can prepare accordingly.

### **During the event**

- Check your assumptions and stereotypes. Most of us bring biases; adults may see young people as energetic and creative or, conversely, non-communicative and disinterested.
- Remember that this may be one of the first times learners have been subject to public scrutiny. Be positive and encouraging when giving feedback to all learners.
- Listen carefully to what the learners have to say and jot down the key points after each presentation. Showing interest and remembering what they have said and done is the best way to build rapport with the learners.
- Be careful of the body language you use. Even when you think what you said didn't show how you really felt, your face and body may have done so.
- Be careful to limit your use of technical jargon and language that may not be understood. If you do use jargon, check the learners understand and go through definitions as you go along.

# Work shadowing for learners

## Introduction

Most learners have little experience of a daily routine at work. Work shadowing provides an opportunity for them to experience a workplace and gain insight into a work environment, and the different and varied roles therein. It involves a visit from learners to your workplace for approximately half a day. Learners are given the chance to observe skills in action and have access to employees who can explain their role.

## Structuring a placement for learners

We suggest that learners spend approximately 4 hours shadowing during the working day – ideally between 9.30am and 3.00pm.

Assign one person to act as a guide throughout the visit, getting the learners from one place to the next.

The work shadowing experience should begin with a welcome session, including a brief overview of the organisation, safety rules, introduction of personnel, and information about the schedule for the visit.

## Example schedule

These are only suggestions and do not need to be adhered to rigidly!

- 9.30am** Meet learner(s) in reception.
- 9.40am** (In meeting room) Make introductions and explain safety procedures. Provide refreshments. Run through schedule and explain what to expect.
- 10.00am** Toilet break.
- 10.05am** Tour of the building explaining the different departments within the organisation. Introduce the learner(s) to your colleagues during the tour so they can practice their communication and networking skills.
- 10.30am** Back to your work station for a more in-depth explanation of your role and what it entails. In relation to your job, if possible, ask the learner to complete a small task at your work station (i.e. data entry, photocopying, etc.).
- 11.15am** Ask one or two colleagues from other departments to explain their roles to the learner. Perhaps the learner could complete a small task in relation to your colleague's job.

- Midday** If possible ask the learner(s) to join you and your colleague(s) for a meeting so they can experience different types of communication and how meetings are conducted.
- 1.00pm** Lunch (ideally with you and 2-3 colleagues). This gives the learner(s) a chance to ask any further questions.
- 2.00pm** Deliver learner(s) to reception and close.

## Practicalities

The number of learners to whom you can offer shadowing is entirely up to you. We recommend no more than 3 learners to one employee.

The learners will be between 14 – 19 years old (age and ability of the learners in your session will be confirmed beforehand).

The visits will usually take place during term time between the hours of 9am and 3.00pm.

It is essential to open up a reliable channel of communication with the teacher during the early stages of planning. Please inform the teacher of the best way to contact you, such as an email you check regularly or a mobile number. It is also useful to find out the most effective way to contact the teacher (in addition to the normal school telephone number) as they can be difficult to reach during school hours).

## Further Guidance

### Prior to the visit

- Agree the date and duration of the visit in writing with the school / Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership (THEBP).
- Agree with the school what the content and purpose of the visit will be.
- Assign at least one person to act as a guide throughout the visit, getting the learners from one place to the next. Learners should be accompanied at all times.
- Ensure that all employees involved in the visit are aware of what their roles are and what is expected of them. If applicable, confirm with Department Heads if they (or another employee) will speak and explain the role of their department to the learners.
- Confirm a list of the learner's name(s) with the school or THEBP.

- Ensure that security and reception are informed of the learner's name(s), and that they are aware of the visit date and arrival and departure times.
- Produce an outline of the visit including approximate timings.
- Send a map and directions to the school / THEBP.
- The work shadowing experience should allow learners to explore the world of work; it should not overwhelm learners with too many details of the job they are shadowing.
- Share a copy of these guidelines with anyone likely to come into contact with the learner(s).

### **Beginning the visit**

- Learners will need to follow all safety procedures used by the business while visiting the workplace. Explain all relevant procedures to the group, including:
  - What to do if the fire alarm sounds.
  - That you will be their guide for the visit and they must stay with you throughout the visit for security purposes.
- Make learners feel welcome and part of your team. Little things like having a company name badge made up for them, or providing them with a company notebook with company materials can go a long way to making them feel valued.
- Get to know your learner(s). Asking questions and offering information can establish trust and put everyone at ease. Suggested topics include:
  - The purpose of the organisation (do they already know?)
  - The structure of the organisation and your role
  - Where they traveled from and their journey
  - What subjects they enjoy most at school and why
  - What the learner(s) would like to do when they leave school
  - Hobbies and interests
- Let the learner(s) know 'there's no such thing as a silly question'. They may be intimidated by the new environment.

### **During the visit**

- Check your assumptions and stereotypes. Most of us bring biases; adults may see young people as energetic and creative or, conversely, non-communicative and disinterested.
- Be particularly vigilant if escorting learners between different buildings.
- Make sure learners are aware of a common area they can ask for directions to if they get lost, and they know how to contact you from there.
- If the lifts need to be used during the visit, it is best to avoid the morning and lunchtime rush!
- Be careful to limit your use of technical jargon and language that may not be understood. If you do use jargon, check the learners understand and go through definitions as you go along.
- If you are comfortable doing so, encourage the learners to call you by your first name and not 'sir / miss'.
- A personal and informal approach works well. Learners normally enjoy stories and anecdotes that employees share.
- Encourage the learners to ask questions as they observe the working environment.
- Learners learn by doing. Wherever possible, give learners a hands-on experience of performing the actual job that they are interested in. The experience is most meaningful to learners when they are engaged in activities.
- If the shadowing occurs during lunch, arrangements need to be made to provide a facility for eating at the site. Learners may bring along their own lunch. However, please liaise with the teacher at the school if you would like to provide a lunch for the learners.
- Should the fire alarm sound, accompany the learners out of the building following the usual evacuation procedure and join the other learner groups at the meeting point.

# Work shadowing for teachers

## Introduction

Teachers often have little recent experience of the world of business. Having an opportunity to shadow allows teachers to update their knowledge and skills of the Diploma they are teaching. Work shadowing allows a teacher to see how an organisation is structured and some of the key processes involved in business.

Teachers can gain a huge amount from being able to talk to employers about the requirements of the curriculum, and to gain knowledge of areas that are new to them.

## Structuring a placement for teachers

Work shadowing for teachers involves a visit from one or more teachers to your workplace. This placement would usually last 1-2 days.

The visit should begin with a welcome session, including a brief overview of the organisation, safety rules, introduction of personnel, and information about the schedule for the visit.

## Example schedule

These are only suggestions and do not need to be adhered to rigidly!

- 9.30am** Meet teacher(s) in reception.
- 9.40am** (In meeting room) Make introductions and explain safety procedures. Run through schedule and explain what to expect. Inform the teacher(s) where they can find toilets during the visit. You might like to provide refreshments at this point.
- 10.00am** Getting to know each other. Explain the purpose of the organisation and your role. Ask the teacher(s) to share their role within the school and to give you some more information on the Diplomas.
- 10.15am** Tour of the building explaining the different departments within the organisation. Introduce the teacher(s) to your colleagues during the tour.
- 10.45am** Allow the teacher(s) to shadow you at your workstation for a more in-depth explanation of your role and what it entails. Ask one or two colleagues from other departments to explain their roles to the teacher(s).
- 12.30pm** Lunch (ideally with you and 2-3 colleagues). This gives the teacher(s) a chance to ask any further questions.

- 1.30pm** If possible, ask the teacher(s) to join you and your colleagues for a meeting so they can experience different types of communication and how meetings are conducted.
- 2.30pm** Teacher(s) to meet with Human Resources to discuss the following:
- The recruitment process
  - What skills the organisation is looking for
  - What training is offered once employed
  - The benefits of working for your organisation
  - The types of Curriculum Vitae that are normally considered
  - Examples of interview questions for employees at entry level
- 3.30pm** Closing session. A chance for the teacher(s) and employees to ask further questions.
- 4.00pm** Escort teacher(s) to reception.

## **Practicalities**

A good time for teachers to be released from school is during the month of July. However, schools can be flexible so please contact Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership (THEBP) or the school directly to discuss dates.

It is essential to open up a reliable channel of communication with the teacher during the early stages of planning. Please inform the teacher of the best way to contact you, such as an email you check regularly or a mobile number. It is also useful to find out the most effective way to contact the teacher (in addition to the normal school telephone number) as they can be difficult to reach during school hours).

## **Further Guidance**

### **Prior to the visit**

- Agree the date and duration of the placement in writing with the school / THEBP.
- Agree with the school what the content and purpose of the placement will be.
- Assign one person to act as a guide throughout the day, getting the teacher(s) from one place to the next.

- Ensure that all employees involved in the visit are aware of what their roles are and what is expected of them. If applicable, confirm with Department Heads if they (or another employee) will speak and explain the role of their department to the teacher(s).
- Ensure that security and reception are informed of the teacher's name(s), and that they are aware of the visit date and arrival and departure times.
- Produce an outline of the placement including approximate timings and send it to the teacher(s) prior to the visit.
- Send a map and directions to the school / THEBP.
- Share a copy of these guidelines with anyone likely to come into contact with the teacher(s).

### **Beginning the visit**

- The teacher(s) will need to follow all safety procedures used by the business while visiting the workplace. Explain all relevant procedures, including what to do if the fire alarm sounds and the usual evacuation procedure.

### **During the visit**

- Make sure the teacher(s) are aware of a common area they can ask for directions to if they get lost, and they know how to contact you from there.
- Be careful to explain any technical jargon and language with which teachers may not be familiar.
- Please liaise with the school if you would like to provide a lunch for the teacher(s).

# Work Experience

## Introduction

Work experience is a key feature of all Diplomas. Each Diploma requires a minimum amount of time in the workplace of 10 days (across the programme at each level) except Society Health and Development, which is 20 days at level 3 only. Wherever possible, this work experience should be directly related to the Diploma being studied, but the focus will be on developing employability skills so it could be undertaken with any employer.

Work experience offers the opportunity for learners to spend time with an employer, carrying out a range of work related tasks or duties. Through a hands-on approach, learners learn about roles and structures in the workplace.

Work experience is also an opportunity to bring home to learners the attitudes, skills and knowledge they need to succeed throughout their working lives. Enhancing these employability skills through work experience and ensuring that learners make the most of the opportunity involves a 3 way partnership between schools, learners and employers.

The report by CBI, Time Well Spent, has some useful advice about how to embed employability in work experience: <http://www.cbi.org.uk/pdf/timewellspentbrief.pdf>

The school should set the tone, creating positive expectations and briefing the learners about the objectives of work experience. The learner should engage with the process and make the most of the opportunity. The role of the employer is to provide well structured placements and create the right balance of briefing, tasks, activities and feedback. The school should then develop the skills after the placement through suitable feedback and reflection activities.

For more information (including contact details of the work experience team at Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership (THEBP) please visit <http://www.thebp.org>

## Structuring work experience

All placements must be arranged via THEBP. Each placement should last 10 consecutive days, except level 3 Society Health and Development which should last for 20 days.

THEBP provide all learners with a work experience record book to complete before, during and after the placement. Learners are asked to take this to work and record what they have done, observed and learnt daily during the placement.

The record book includes preparation for the placement, guidance on keeping records during the placement, information on skills, qualities and attitudes employers expect, an attendance record, and a diary with daily tasks to complete.

Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) are an important part of the Diploma curriculum. PLTS include six areas of skill development:

- independent enquirers
- creative thinkers
- reflective learners
- team workers
- self managers
- effective participators

Learners will be looking for opportunities to develop these skills and to review their own progress at regular points through the work experience placement. You may need to give the learner(s) some guidance with this and provide support when they are completing their record books.

In addition to completing this record book, the learner(s) may have some additional questions to research provided by their school. These will relate to specific learning outcomes for the Diploma they are studying and will increase their understanding of the relevant sector. The teacher will provide you with the relevant Diploma learning outcomes before the placement .

All Diploma learners have a substantial project and many learners will choose a topic that is related to the workplace. Most projects will be organised around a trigger question. Find out whether your learner is working on a project and how their time with you might support that work .

Learners should also be able to help you with a range of other tasks including: writing reports, filing paperwork, data entry or compiling information packs. Some employers provide a short research or marketing project for the learner to complete alongside observing and assisting members of staff.

All learners will be assigned a supervisor (employee) for the duration of the placement. The supervisor will be their main point of contact and the person the learner can go to for support and advice.

Example diary and daily tasks (taken from the learner record book)

**Day 1**            Completing an induction session. This includes signing a learner/employer contract, discussing working arrangements and Health and Safety issues and touring the building.

**Day 2**            Completing a skills, attitudes and qualities record after undertaking tasks set by the supervisor.

- Day 3** Completing a task on Business and Customer Awareness.
- Day 4** Completing a skills, attitudes and qualities record after undertaking tasks set by the supervisor as well as completing a short review of the placement so far.
- Day 5** Completing a task on the Enterprise Process (planning and evaluating a project).
- Day 6** Completing a skills, attitudes and qualities record after undertaking tasks set by the supervisor.
- Day 7** Planning an interview with a colleague to find out more about their career.
- Day 8** Conducting and evaluating an interview with a colleague.
- Day 9** Completing a self awareness questionnaire.
- Day 10** Completing a learner and employer evaluation.

## **Practicalities**

A representative from THEBP will visit your workplace prior to the placement and give a comprehensive briefing on issues such as Health and Safety and Employer Liability Insurance.

The learners will be between 14-19 years old (the age and ability of the learners in your session will be confirmed beforehand).

The placements will take place during term time and it is recommended that learners work the usual seven working hours, i.e. 9am and 5pm, with an hour for lunch.

Work experience is unpaid work. However, some businesses offer support to learners with lunch and travel costs.

It is essential to open up a reliable channel of communication with the teacher during the early stages of planning. Please inform the teacher of the best way to contact you, such as an email you check regularly or a mobile number. It is also useful to find out the most effective way to contact the teacher (in addition to the normal school telephone number) as they can be difficult to reach during school hours).

## **Further guidance**

### **Prior to the placement**

- Assign one person to act as a supervisor throughout the placement. It is essential to have one person the learner can go to for support and advice, and to help them complete their record book.
- Agree the dates and timings of the placement in writing with the THEBP. They will pass this information on to the school.
- Agree with the school what the content of the placement will be.
- Arrange to have an interview with the learner(s). The teacher or learner will normally make contact with you in order to do this. The interview is an opportunity for you to get to know the learner(s) and for them to ask questions about your organisation prior to the placement.

Possible questions to ask the learner(s):

1. Why did you want to come to this placement?
  2. Are you thinking of this type of work as a future career?
  3. What subjects do you enjoy at school?
  4. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
  5. What do you want to do when you leave school?
  6. What did you want to learn from the placement?
- It is important that employers invest time and effort in planning the placement in order that learners gain the maximum benefits and the placement runs smoothly. Teachers will be able to offer advice on the areas of the Diploma specification that could be covered during the placement.
  - Employers are expected to offer learners the opportunity to carry out meaningful work, along with an overview of different aspects of the organisation.
  - Ensure that all employees involved in the placement are aware of what their roles are and what is expected of them.
  - Ensure that security and reception are aware of the learner's name(s) and the dates and timings of the placement.
  - Send a map and directions to the school.
  - Consider what tools the learner(s) may need during the placement (e.g. computer, login details, and phone) to undertake the tasks you have planned.
  - Share a copy of these guidelines with anyone likely to come into contact with the learner(s).

## Beginning the placement

- Begin with an induction session for the learner(s). This should include:
  - Reading and signing the work experience contract (outlining what is expected of the learner(s) and what to expect from you, the employer). This contract can be found in the learner record book.
  - A health and safety briefing. The learner(s) will need to follow all safety procedures used by the business while at the workplace. Explain all relevant procedures to them, including what to do if the fire alarm sounds.
  - An overview of working arrangements.
  - An introduction to colleagues working with the learner(s).
- A tour of the building is a useful introduction to the business and a good ice-breaker. Be particularly vigilant if escorting the learner(s) between different buildings.
- Let the learner(s) know 'there's no such thing as a silly question'.

## During the placement

- Check your assumptions and stereotypes. Most of us bring biases; adults may see young people as energetic and creative or, conversely, non-communicative and disinterested.
- Provide appropriate supervision of the learner(s) and a suitable working environment.
- Learners should behave and be treated as if they were in a real job. They normally work the same hours and accept the same discipline as others in the workplace. If a learner is not performing to your requirements, the placement can be terminated. Please contact the work experience team at THEBP if you have any concerns.
- Be careful to limit your use of technical jargon and language that may not be understood. If you do use jargon, check the learners understand and go through definitions as you go along.

- Talk to learners about your own career path, education background and why you chose to work in the sector. Explain the main skills that you use in your role.
- If you are comfortable doing so, encourage the learners to call you by your first name and not 'sir / miss'.
- A personal and informal approach works well. Learners normally enjoy stories and anecdotes that employees share.
- Encourage the learners to ask questions as they observe the working environment.
- Remember to give praise when the learners are doing something well.
- If a learner is making a mistake, encourage them to work out where they have gone wrong and try to get them to correct the mistake themselves, or to ask you for help.
- Take the time to develop a good relationship with learners before expecting too much. Remember, too, that this work is often new to learners; take the time to explain why particular actions are being taken.
- Encourage the learners to complete their record books. Some of the daily tasks require input and support from the placement supervisor.
- Should the fire alarm should sound, accompany the learners out of the building following the usual evacuation procedure.
- A teacher normally visits the workplace during the placement to offer help, advice and to monitor progress.
- If you have a problem during the placement, please contact THEBP or the school directly.

# Planning Meetings

## Introduction

For each of the 17 Diplomas there will be a consortium that meets once or twice a month (for 1-2 hours at a time) to discuss challenges, swap ideas, brainstorm and agree strategic direction. Each consortium consists of representatives from Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership (THEBP), The 14-19 Partnership (The Hub) and schools and colleges delivering the Diplomas.

It is hoped that occasionally a local employer will attend these planning meetings to inject job profiles, case studies and scenarios into the syllabus. The meetings provide an opportunity for employers to shape the syllabus, ensuring that learners develop the skills employers need.

## Structure

The structure will vary depending on the consortium organising the meeting. You will normally be sent a copy of the agenda prior to the meeting.

## Practicalities

It is hoped that you will attend a planning meeting once or twice a year (or more often if you are happy to do so) for 1-2 hours per meeting.

## Further Guidance

You will be representing your industry and it is therefore important that you allow time beforehand for sufficient preparation. You may be asked to provide relevant job profiles, case studies and scenarios – and even if you are not asked, it may be worthwhile offering them. It is also worth finding out whether there are any updates or amendments to legislation that you can pass on. Ask your HR department for their guidance on where best to find this information.

# Learner Mentoring

## Introduction

Learner mentoring gives learners an insight into the world of work by providing positive adult role models from a business environment. It can broaden learners' horizons, raise aspirations in relation to careers and further education, increase self confidence and enhance key skills such as communication, teamwork, CV writing, interview techniques and time management.

Mentors benefit by learning about the education system and testing their own skills in a new and challenging way. They have the opportunity to experience something new, make a positive impact on the development of a local learner and give something back to the community.

If you are interested in becoming a business mentor (with an emphasis on Diploma learning), please contact your company volunteer coordinator to find out if a scheme already exists with your business. Alternatively, for more information (including contact details of the business mentor coordinator at Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership (THEBP), please visit <http://www.thebp.org> .

## Structure

You will join THEBP's ongoing business mentoring scheme. Before being matched with your mentee(s), you will receive training and guidance on how to ensure you get the most out the mentoring sessions. You will be given a Business Mentor Handbook which contains session plans and activities to help you structure your sessions. You will also be invited to attend a matching and launch event at the school.

Mentors are usually matched with a small group of learners (up to 4). One-to-one mentoring is only available in some schools.

## Practicalities

You are expected to meet your mentee(s) at least once a month to ensure a relationship develops. Each meeting will last approximately one hour or the length of one school period (about 50 minutes). They take place out of school hours, usually around 3.00pm, or during a set school Diploma lesson, depending on school policy.

For insurance purposes, meetings are held at either your place of work or the mentee's school.

We ask for a minimum commitment of 12 months (minimum of 12 sessions) to the scheme.

You will make meeting arrangements directly with your mentee(s) or through the school coordinator, depending on school policy.

You will also have to complete a Police Check Form, which THEBP will provide for you. Information disclosed remains confidential to the mentoring scheme and is not available to the applicant's employers.

It is essential to open up a reliable channel of communication with the teacher during the early stages of planning. Please inform the teacher of the best way to contact you, such as an email you check regularly or a mobile number. It is also useful to find out the most effective way to contact the teacher (in addition to the normal school telephone number) as they can be difficult to reach during school hours).

## **Further Guidance**

### **Prior to each mentoring session**

- Confirm the session is happening with your mentee(s) (or with the school coordinator) the day before and check where the session will take place (at school or at your workplace).
- It is important that employees invest time and effort in planning the mentoring sessions in order that the learner(s) gain the maximum benefits and the sessions run smoothly. Please refer to your Business Mentor Handbook for ideas. Also note that learners will be studying their Diploma within a business context. There may be business projects they are working on that you are able to offer support with.
- If the session is at your office, ensure that security and reception are aware of the learner's name(s) and when to expect them. Also ensure that mentees know your surname!
- Send a map and directions to the school coordinator and your mentee(s) prior to the first meeting at your workplace.
  - Refer to your notes from the previous session. Showing interest and remembering what your mentee(s) have said or done is the best way to build trust and a strong relationship.

### **Beginning the sessions**

- Learners will need to follow all safety procedures used by the business while at the workplace. At the beginning of the first session at your workplace, explain all relevant procedures to them, including what to do if

the fire alarm sounds (if the alarm should sound, accompany the learners out of the building following the usual evacuation procedure).

- Take time to develop a rapport with your mentee(s).
- Let the learner(s) know 'there's no such thing as a silly question'.

## During the sessions

- Check your assumptions and stereotypes. Most of us bring biases; adults may see young people as energetic and creative or, conversely, non-communicative and disinterested.
- Interact with your mentee(s) on a level playing field. Encourage the learners to call you by your first name and not 'sir/miss'.
- Be positive and encouraging, and give praise when the learners are doing something well.
- Be yourself (not a teacher, parent or best friend). A personal and informal approach works well. Learners normally enjoy stories and anecdotes that employees share.
- Talk to learners about your own career path, education background and why you chose to work in the sector.
- When having a discussion with a group of learners, let only one person talk at a time.
- Practice good communication. It's easy for adults to interrupt, and that can be discouraging for learners, as it shows that you're not listening.
- Listen carefully to what your mentee(s) have to say and jot down the key points after each session.
- If a learner is making a mistake, encourage them to work out where they have gone wrong and try to get them to correct the mistake themselves, or to ask you for help.
- Assure the learner(s) that you are interested in their individual opinions and don't expect them to speak for an entire demographic.
- Be careful of the body language you use. Even when you think what you said didn't show how you really felt, your face and body may have done so.
- Take the time to develop a good relationship with learners before expecting too much. Remember, too, that this work is often new to learners; take the time to explain why actions are being taken. Expect gradual progress and be realistic about the impact you can make.
- If you have a problem, please contact the school directly or THEBP.

## Ice-breakers

Getting started on any presentation can be stressful and, at times, awkward. Using one of the ice-breakers below or improvising one on your own will help get the learners involved in your presentation, making it more successful. Ice-breakers can help to relax learners (and teachers!), and that makes them more receptive to listening and participating. An ice-breaker can also help to create a team atmosphere and motivate learners to work with others in a cooperative manner.

When leading an ice-breaker it can be helpful to remember the following:

- Be enthusiastic! This will rub off on the learners.
- Choose volunteers carefully and don't cause embarrassment.
- If something is not working, move quickly on to the next activity.
- Timing is important. Use only 1 or 2 ice-breakers as a 10 minute introduction to your session.

If you do not feel comfortable using an ice-breaker, you can always start your presentation with a story. It can be humorous, but it will be most effective if it is true and relates to you and your topic.

The following are ice-breakers that might work well with a group of learners you are meeting for the first time:

**Three things about me:** Ask learners to write down 3 things about themselves which may not be known to the others in the group. Two are true and one is not. Give some examples for yourself (i.e. I have a dog called Boris, I was born in Scotland and I don't like brussel sprouts!). Taking turns they read out the three 'facts' about themselves. Other learners then guess which fact is the lie. The correct guesser goes next.

**Opinions:** Write the words 'agree', 'disagree', 'strongly agree' and 'strongly disagree' on large pieces of paper. Put each poster in an obvious spot in the room, preferably on a wall. You can then make statements such as 'we all like chocolate' and ask the learners to stand by the poster that matches their opinion. This can be used to get learners to think about opinions that relate to the theme of the session, e.g. 'I feel confident making presentations in public'.

**This is me:** Ask the learners to introduce themselves positively with one adjective beginning with the same letter as the initial of their first name. For example, Sociable Sally.

**Guess who:** Give every learner a post-it note and ask them to write down one thing about themselves that no-one else knows. Collect the post-it notes and pick a few at

random. Read them out and ask learners to guess who the answer may apply to. You can also save a few for later in the session.

**Communication:** Explain that this is an exercise to make us think about communication. Give each learner a sheet of paper and make sure everyone has the same size. Explain that they are to follow instructions precisely and that they are not allowed to ask questions. They are also going to do the entire exercise with their eyes closed. State the following instructions in order and do not allow anyone to ask any questions:

1. Fold the paper in half.
2. Rip off a corner.
3. Fold in half again.
4. Rip off a corner.
5. Fold again.
6. Rip off a corner.

Ask the learners to open their eyes and compare their finished product with others. You can then point out that one-way communication is never as effective as two-way communication; it gives different results. You can use this point to stress that you welcome questions from them during the session.

**Castaway:** Divide the learners into groups with an equal number of participants (if possible). Tell the groups that they have been marooned on a deserted island. On a sheet of paper, they are to write five items they would have brought with them. Note that the five items are for the entire group, not per person.

After 15 minutes, ask each group to list the items they would have brought and to give a reason for each one. Allow learners to question the items brought to the deserted island. Compare the lists between the different groups.

## References

CBI Report: Time Well Spent – Embedding Employability in Work Experience, March 2007