

Placements

We have used the term 'placements' to incorporate a range of different types of experiences such as visits, job shadowing, job rotations or job swaps. They are all about spending time with someone in a different role, business area or organisation with the aim of giving a graduate real experience of different areas. You might also wish to consider sending them for a placement outside of your business with a customer or a member of your supply chain. Placements work well when you:

- Want a graduate to really understand the core area of your business well e.g. the shop floor, or the customer complaints area
- Have some great internal people they can learn from
- Have a larger business with distinctly different departments
- Have areas of your business that are complex or difficult to understand without having experienced them first hand
- Want to develop a future leader of your business with broad knowledge/understanding
- Want to build strong relationships through greater understanding
- Want to encourage continuous improvement and sharing of best practice
- Want to encourage innovation and generate new ideas

Some things to consider include:

1. Expectations

Prior to the shadowing both parties should agree what they hope and expect to get from the experience.

2. Time period

The timing and time period will depend on the type of placement, the purpose, the complexity of the role, resource requirements, business needs on both sides and any guidelines you may have about time allocated for development activity. As a general rule:

- Job shadowing lasts between half a day up to 3 days
- Job rotations last between 2 weeks and 6 months
- Job swaps last between 4 weeks and 12 months
- Placement with customers, the supply chain or in very different types of organisations can be hugely powerful experiences but are much more variable in length due to the individual nature of the relationship and agreement you make

3. Reciprocal or not?

It is worth agreeing up front whether or not the experience will be a reciprocal one, with both parties acting as guest and host for one another. There may be good reasons why this is, or is not appropriate but it is worth agreeing up front.

4. Line managers

Once any placement is agreed between the guest and host it is important the relevant line managers know the exact details. It will also be necessary, if the placement period exceeds a consecutive week in one area, to agree any management responsibilities for the shadowing period e.g. health and safety, objectives, 121's or work content.

If you are committing to placements as a team or department activity, it is particularly important that you ask about this impact, in order to ensure has been an effective investment of your time and resources.

Contact NTU directly for further assistance on how to secure placement roles.