# A GUIDE TO SEEKING WORK EXPERIENCE

1. You have to get two placements of approx. 10 weeks each. It is not a good idea to have the two placements in the same area/ workplace. In order for the experience to be worthwhile you need to put a bit of thought into your placements. You should try to find this yourself — looking for a job is a valuable experience.

2. Your starting point should expectations. In what area(s) would you like to work?

3. Be realistic about the placement you might get—you won't get a placement as a professional footballer or a psychologist, for example, but you may get something connected with these areas. Certain kinds of job/ employer are very popular with TY students (e.g. Google, Microsoft, sound engineering, so don't be too disappointed if you can't get a placement in these companies or areas. RTE/RCSI/TCD has a lottery system for placements and you will be informed about these in September.

4. Be realistic about what might happen on a placement. You won't be colouring hair on your placement with a hairdresser. Nor will you be treating patients if you work in a hospital. You may also be work shadowing.

5. Now you need to start looking for the placement. A good starting point is the internet. If you are interested in architecture, for example. Type in 'architect/Dublin' in Google and compile a list of practices and their addresses. Print Off your CVs and covering letters and send off at least 10 applications by post.

6. Don't limit yourself to one kind of employer.

7. Don't expect everyone to get back to you. However, if you have included a reply slip and a pre-addressed, pre-paid envelope, it makes it easier for them.

8. You need to be pro-active in your search. If people don't get back to you within two weeks, follow up the written application with a phone call. Be polite, and practise what you are going to say before you make the call — ask a parent/guardian to help you with this.

9. If you are looking for a placement in retail, call to the shop and ask if you can leave in a CV. Dress neatly (better to go in your uniform if you are doing this before the end of the school year). If people don't get back to you within two weeks, follow up with a phone call.

10. Some employers have their own special TY placements — An Garda Síochana, The Army, The Army Equitation School, Temple Street etc. These are usually one-week placements. You will be excused from school if you are accepted on one of these, but you must still have placements organised for the Fridays. If you are considering any of these kinds of placement, get working on them NOW! They get snapped up very quickly.

11. Remember that the employer is obliging you (not the other way around!). Be polite and courteous at all times — they are under no obligation to take you on.

12. Be persistent and keep trying—you will get something (but only if you keep trying).

13. Only as a last resort, should you ask parents/ relatives/ neighbours to find a placement for you or facilitate you - remember they won't be able to give you a real job when you enter the labour market so you need to develop job-seeking skills

14. You should have your two placements organised by the time we return to school in August.

**Be prepared to travel for your placement!**

