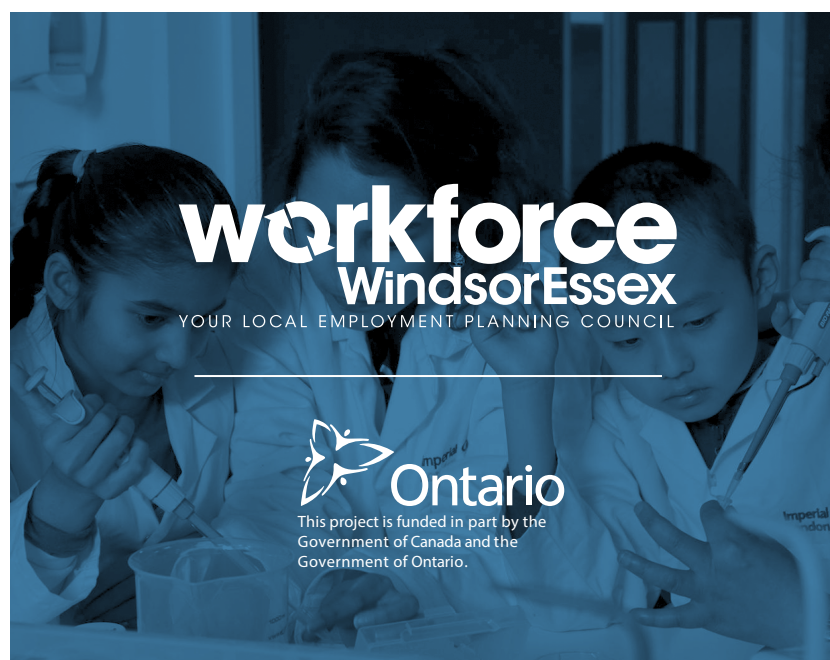
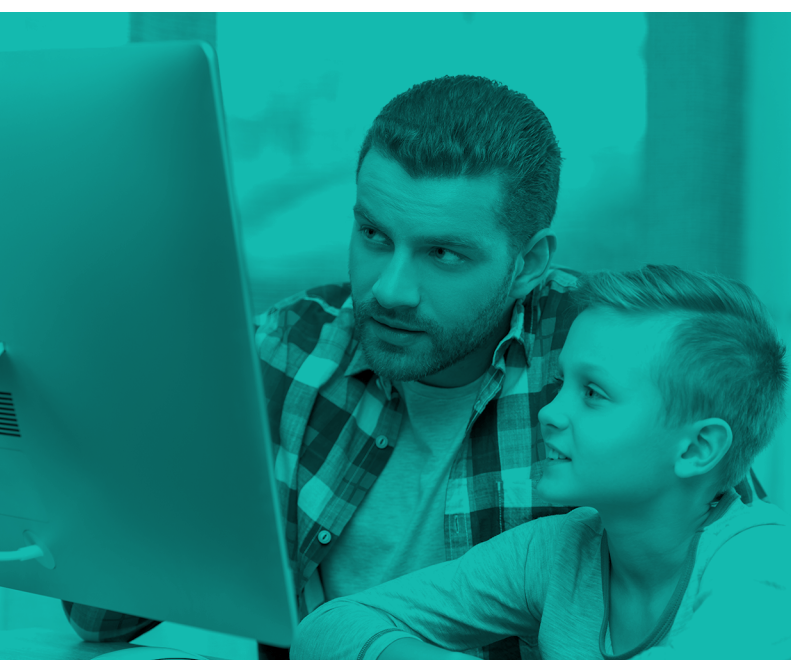
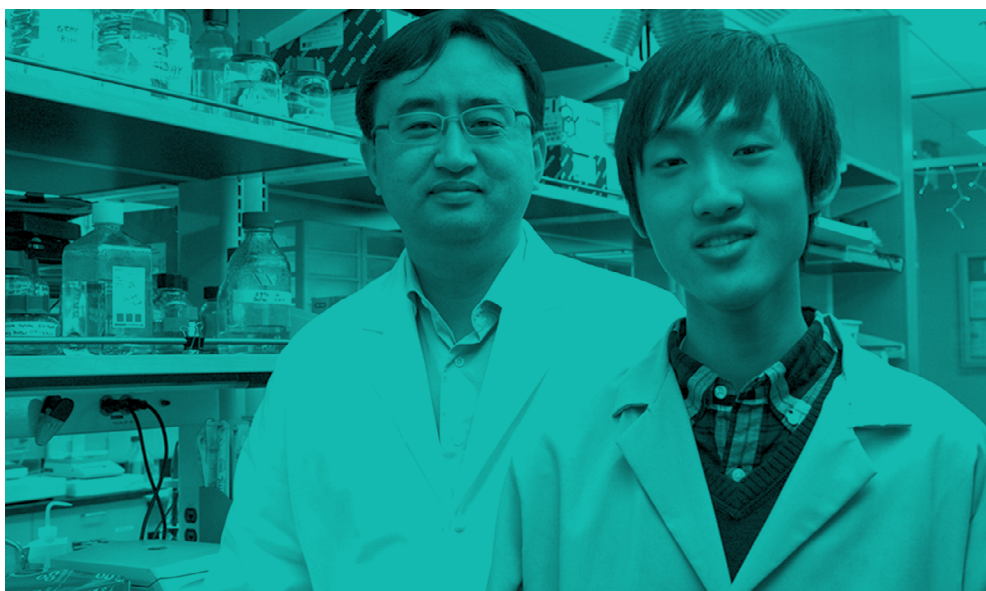


AN EDUCATOR'S TOOLKIT FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING



workforce
WindsorEssex
YOUR LOCAL EMPLOYMENT PLANNING COUNCIL



Ontario

This project is funded in part by the
Government of Canada and the
Government of Ontario.

WHAT IS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

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Experiential learning opportunities are hands-on learning experiences that help students prepare for future employment. Examples of experiential learning could include a co-op placement, an internship, an apprenticeship, an extra-curricular activity, a volunteer experience, an employer presenting to a class, a field trip, or a job shadowing experience. It involves learning by doing, making connections to classroom theory, and reflecting on the experience.¹

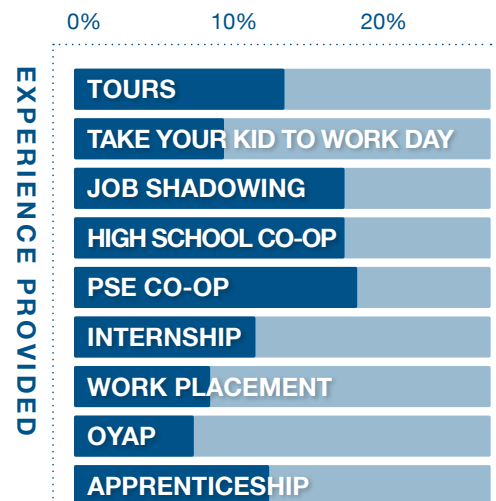
Facilitated reflection activities, whether led by parents, educators, or an employer, ensures students are able to identify their personal strengths, weaknesses, skills, and interests which all contribute to career decision making. Experiential learning can also benefit educators by creating connections with employers in the community to stay current on industry demands and incorporating industry information into classroom activities. This guide will provide you with an overview of the benefits of experiential learning and will provide you with templates for how you can incorporate it with your students.



EMPLOYERS THAT PARTICIPATE

Of 61 local employers consulted, **77% have participated** in an experiential learning opportunity with students.

36% had **hired a student** after their placement.



STUDENT SUCCESS

“I remember receiving a presentation from a co-op/career counselor and thinking I want to be involved in [co-op]. What better way to learn and see if what you think you want to do is what you really want to do?... I had the opportunity to learn how a workplace works without as much pressure as you would face in a regular employment position.”

— Matt, IT professional

¹Linda Lewis and Carol Williams, “Experiential Learning: Past and present,” New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, no. 62 (1994)

²Saul McLeod, “Kolb-Learning Styles,” Simply Psychology, 2013, <https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html>

HOW CAN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING BENEFIT STUDENTS?

Students are able to **gain work experience** before they begin a formal job search.

Employers are often **looking for candidates** who have work experience as it shows that they have been in a work environment and have developed the skills needed to succeed in a job.

Having previous work experience can result in a **higher starting wage**.

Students are able to **learn faster** and better retain information when taught in the workplace.³

Students may further develop **problem solving and analytical skills** resulting in improved classroom performance.

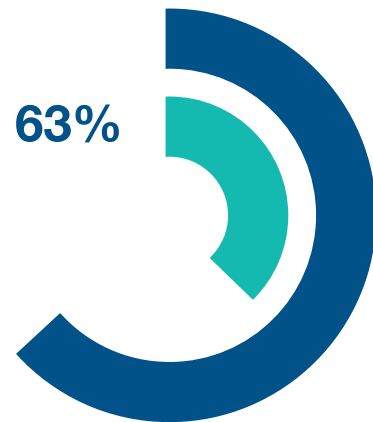
Female students often become increasingly **motivated** in their placement as well as in career decision making, and may be exposed to **non-traditional** career opportunities.⁴

Students are able to learn about **different jobs** and industries of which they may not have previously been aware of.

Students are able to develop **business contacts** and references. This network of people will be helpful for future career opportunities.

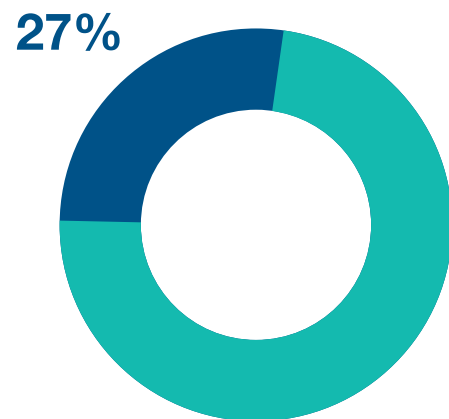
EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

63% of people who took a paid experiential learning placement during their post-secondary education found employment after graduation.⁵



VOLUNTEERING WORKS

Those who have done volunteer work have a **27%** higher chance of getting hired compared to those who haven't volunteered.⁶



STUDENT SUCCESS

“Actually doing water quality monitoring on the Fox Creek...has really opened my eyes to the various...career options...now I am applying for wildlife biology and conservation.”

– Julia, grade 12 student in the Specialist High Skills Major Environment program

³Gary Hoachlander, “Bringing Industry to the Classroom,” Educational Leadership, May 2008, <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may08/vol65/num08/Bringing-Industry-to-the-Classroom.aspx>

⁴Mahmoud Haddara and Heather Skanes, “A reflection on cooperative education: from experience to experiential learning,” Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education 8, no. 1 (2007): 67-76

⁵Carley Casebeer, Sondra Eger, and Rosanne Waters, “Student (Un)Employment in Canada,” Canadian Alliance of student Associations (2017)

⁶Nancy Collamer, “Proof that Volunteering Pays Off for Job Hunters,” Forbes, June 2013. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2013/06/24/proof-that-volunteering-pays-off-for-job-hunters/#1fbae551753a>

HOW TO SUPPORT STUDENTS IN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

STUDENT SUCCESS

“When applying to universities, I specifically only applied to ones that offered co-op programs for my business major... I wanted to gain that work experience that would provide me with the skills and tools that I needed to become a CPA.”

– Shelja, Accountant

AS A PLACEMENT COORDINATOR:

- Make sure that the employer and the student understand the purpose of the program and have appropriate expectations and preparedness.
- Confirm that all necessary paperwork is completed by both the employer and the student.
- Ensure that the job duties and planned tasks for the student are going to be challenging enough that they provide a meaningful learning experience.
- Ensure that participants are reflecting on their experiences. You can have students:
 - Look at curriculum content and identify how it applies to their workplace;
 - Deliver a presentation on what they learned during their placement, including new skills, techniques, and personal career insights (ex. whether they enjoyed the job);
 - Journal and take part in group discussions;
 - Develop a career action plan based on their identified strengths and weaknesses.
- Encourage students to talk to their supervisor and co-workers to learn about what training and education is necessary for their careers.
- Consider the life experiences of the student and determine how you can best support their unique needs and abilities. Recognize barriers that the student may face and appropriately develop strategies to assist the student in overcoming them.

AS A CLASSROOM EDUCATOR:

- Encourage students to explore interests and take advantage of the opportunities that are available to them at school.
- Start small- don't be afraid to try something new.
- Maintain up-to-date industry knowledge.
- Ask for help! There are many resources and supports available in the community to help you.
- Bring real world problems into the classroom with industry related activities.
- Ensure that students understand the learning outcomes of the activities and follow-up with reflective exercises that guide the student to identify their abilities and interests.

RANGE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

GUEST SPEAKER

CLASSROOM PROJECT

TOUR

FIELD TRIP

TAKE YOUR KID TO WORK DAY

JOB SHADOW

HIGH SCHOOL CO-OP

OYAP

PSE CO-OP/INTERNSHIP

APPRENTICESHIP



STUDENT SUCCESS

The most meaningful thing I've done is: “make the animation for [the] Chairman's Award which we won twice... I've used my business and artistic skills.”

– Maria, grade 11 on school robotics team

HOW TO IMPLEMENT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN YOUR CLASSROOM

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS YOU CAN USE TO GET STARTED IN USING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING WITH YOUR STUDENTS:

- ① Show videos of Virtual Reality Workplace Experiences. YouTube *The Learning Partnership* to see the videos they developed.
- ② Arrange to take students on a tour of local companies. If possible, try to have an interactive or hands-on learning component to the day. If you need help in coordinating employers, call Workforce WindsorEssex.
- ③ Volunteer as a class. If you aren't sure where to begin, consider connecting with the United Way Windsor-Essex County to see if there is a volunteer experience that would fit your students' skill sets.
- ④ Provide opportunities for your students to share about their volunteer experiences. Having engaging discussions around the skills they are using and developing through volunteering can help students connect these experiences to potential future career options.
- ⑤ Invite an employer into your classroom to share their career journey or to teach a specific skill to your class.
 - Is there a sector your students are particularly interested in?
 - Is there a unique or new job that they would like to learn about?
 - Would any of your students' parents or your friends be willing to come in and share their career journey with your students?
 - Consider joining with a few other classes and have students rotate between employer talks!



STUDENT SUCCESS

“I believe I made a positive impact on the organization... this class offered a chance to get experience in a real job setting that [I would potentially] be entering in the following year.”

– Sebastian, University student reflecting on his internship



- ⑥ Consider creative ways of partnering with other classes or departments in your school. For example, could a math and construction class partner together to design and build a picnic table? Could a media class work with a music class to develop a music video?
- ⑦ Encourage your students to take part in extra-curricular activities and share their experiences. Examples may include a robotics team, a math club, a sports team, musical groups, yearbook club, etc.
- ⑧ Ensure that your class is aware of the opportunities that are available to them through programs such as co-op, OYAP, and Specialist High Skills Majors. If you are unsure of the details of these programs, see if a colleague can share about them or explore opportunities for a visit from a Learning Consultant at the board level.
- ⑨ Consider hosting an opportunity for your students to share their skills with other students. This could look like an in-class gallery to share art, poetry, construction projects, science experiments, music, etc. This would give your students an opportunity to educate other students.



STUDENT SUCCESS

“I find my role meaningful within the company. My coworkers always make me feel involved in ongoing projects and I believe my input is always appreciated and respected.”

– Corey, University student reflecting on his internship

For help with coordinating experiential learning opportunities, Workforce WindsorEssex can connect you with local employers.

Check out our Experiential Learning Hub to submit a request at: workforcewindsoressex.com/resources/experiential-learning-hub/

www.workforcewindsoressex.com

RESOURCES FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

You may find that the following resources and organizations are helpful to you as you seek to implement experiential learning opportunities. Visit our website for links to access further information online.

WORKFORCE WINDSORESSEX

WEnav | The Top 76 In-Demand Jobs
WEsearch | Experiential Learning Hub

MAESD's Guiding Principles for Experiential Learning

ONTARIO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION:

Community Connected Experiential Learning

University of Windsor Experience Maps

Live Safe! Work Smart!

The Learning Partnership

United Way Windsor-Essex County

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

Province of Ontario- Start an Apprenticeship

Hackforge

Small Business Centre

EPICENTRE

University of Windsor: EPICentre
St. Clair College: EPIC Genesis Centre

Junior Achievement



PREPARING FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Use these tips to help you prepare your students for guest speakers and field trips.



GUEST SPEAKERS



Have students **research** the speaker, looking at their career and projects they have been a part of.



Have students **look up** the topic that will be talked about.



Students should write out **two questions** that they can ask the speaker.



Make sure that students have the opportunity to **ask questions**. If time runs out, provide a list of remaining questions for follow up from the guest speaker.



After the presentation, have students **discuss or write** about what they found to be the most interesting part of the presentation.



FIELD TRIPS

Have the students **research the location** that they will be visiting.

Inform the employer or tour guide of anything specific that you would like covered while on the tour. For example, a female engineer could speak about her job or co-op students could share their experiences.

Check with the location to see if pictures can be taken during the tour.

Inquire about **specific dress codes** that need to be followed (ex. closed toed shoes or safety glasses in manufacturing facilities).

Review **safety rules and guidelines** for respect with your students before the trip.

Have students write out **two questions** that they can ask the speaker.

After the field trip, have students **discuss or write** about what they found to be the most interesting part of the field trip.



PREPARING FOR YOUR PLACEMENT: STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

Identify the skills and interests that can be used to describe **YOU** to an employer on your resume and during an interview.

I AM

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> energetic | <input type="checkbox"/> patient | <input type="checkbox"/> dedicated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> well-organized | <input type="checkbox"/> creative | <input type="checkbox"/> open to new ideas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a team player | <input type="checkbox"/> friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> honest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> resourceful | <input type="checkbox"/> competent | <input type="checkbox"/> adaptable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> punctual | <input type="checkbox"/> enthusiastic | <input type="checkbox"/> capable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a hard worker | <input type="checkbox"/> compassionate | <input type="checkbox"/> bilingual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a quick learner | <input type="checkbox"/> articulate | <input type="checkbox"/> adventurous |

I HAVE

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> managed | <input type="checkbox"/> made | <input type="checkbox"/> improved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> organized | <input type="checkbox"/> supervised | <input type="checkbox"/> monitored |
| <input type="checkbox"/> analyzed | <input type="checkbox"/> worked with | <input type="checkbox"/> invented |
| <input type="checkbox"/> implemented | <input type="checkbox"/> repaired | <input type="checkbox"/> participated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> researched | <input type="checkbox"/> grew | <input type="checkbox"/> guided |
| <input type="checkbox"/> directed | <input type="checkbox"/> judged | <input type="checkbox"/> coordinated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> trained | <input type="checkbox"/> solved | <input type="checkbox"/> developed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> improvised | <input type="checkbox"/> specialized | <input type="checkbox"/> sold |
| <input type="checkbox"/> presented | <input type="checkbox"/> built | <input type="checkbox"/> administered |
| <input type="checkbox"/> planned | <input type="checkbox"/> designed | <input type="checkbox"/> illustrated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> produced | <input type="checkbox"/> created | <input type="checkbox"/> updated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> achieved | <input type="checkbox"/> initiated | <input type="checkbox"/> coached |
| <input type="checkbox"/> accomplished | <input type="checkbox"/> led | <input type="checkbox"/> reviewed |
-

MY HOBBIES AND INTERESTS ARE:



fishing



gardening



presenting



sketching



painting



designing



reading



fundraising



volunteering



photography



coaching



building



nature



experimenting



writing



teaching



playing an instrument



leading a group



talking with people



selling



playing with kids



fixing things



acting



working with computers

REFLECTING ON YOUR EXPERIENCE: CLASS ACTIVITY

Describe the activity in your own words.

What was the most interesting thing you learned?

What is a strength you identified in yourself?

What jobs do you know of that are related to the activity you did?

What part of the experience would you like to do again?

REFLECTING ON YOUR EXPERIENCE: WEEKLY JOURNAL

Describe your week's activities.

What was the most interesting thing you learned?

What is a strength you identified in yourself?

What is a skill that you would like to improve on?

What was valuable about the experience?

REFLECTING ON YOUR EXPERIENCE: FINAL JOURNAL

Describe your experience.

What was your greatest accomplishment?

What was the most interesting thing you learned?

What personal strengths did you develop?

What skills would you like to work on?

REFLECTING ON YOUR EXPERIENCE: FINAL JOURNAL (CONTINUED)

What was the most valuable part of this experience?

How did you add value to the workplace?

Would you consider this work as a future career?

EMPLOYER RUBRIC: MID-REVIEW

Student Name:

School:

Learning Expectations of Student:

Circle the answer that best aligns with the student's performance.

N *needs improvement*

S *satisfactory*

G *good*

E *excellent*

MID-REVIEW OF WORKPLACE PERFORMANCE:

Communication

Expresses ideas clearly through speaking

N **S** **G** **E**

Expresses ideas clearly through writing

N **S** **G** **E**

Asks questions when in need of clarification or direction

N **S** **G** **E**

Interpersonal

Gets along well with coworkers and clients/customers

N **S** **G** **E**

Resolves conflict appropriately

N **S** **G** **E**

Respects the opinions of others

N **S** **G** **E**

Has a positive attitude while working

N **S** **G** **E**

Working Habits

Is punctual

N **S** **G** **E**

Learns new information or tasks quickly

N **S** **G** **E**

Recognizes mistakes and learns from them

N **S** **G** **E**

Willing to continuously learn and develop while working

N **S** **G** **E**

Open and adaptable to change

N **S** **G** **E**

Focuses on tasks and meets deadlines

N **S** **G** **E**

Able to prioritize tasks, responsibilities and time effectively to achieve goals

N **S** **G** **E**

Takes direction and accomplishes assigned tasks with minimal supervision

N **S** **G** **E**

Seeks out and takes on additional duties and assignments

N **S** **G** **E**

Pays close attention to detail and works with accuracy

N **S** **G** **E**

Knows his/her strengths and sets goals to improve weaknesses

N **S** **G** **E**

Seeks help from others if needed

N **S** **G** **E**

Shows innovation and creativity when seeking new approaches

N **S** **G** **E**

Additional Skills:

N **S** **G** **E**

N **S** **G** **E**

N **S** **G** **E**

EMPLOYER RUBRIC: FINAL REVIEW

Student Name:

School:

Learning Expectations of Student:

Circle the answer that best aligns with the student's performance.

N *needs improvement*

S *satisfactory*

G *good*

E *excellent*

FINAL-REVIEW OF WORKPLACE PERFORMANCE:

Communication

Expresses ideas clearly through speaking

N **S** **G** **E**

Expresses ideas clearly through writing

N **S** **G** **E**

Asks questions when in need of clarification or direction

N **S** **G** **E**

Interpersonal

Gets along well with coworkers and clients/customers

N **S** **G** **E**

Resolves conflict appropriately

N **S** **G** **E**

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N **S** **G** **E**

N **S** **G** **E**



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