

Work Experience

Selling Your Work · By Simon Townsend · 1 min read

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I do not like so-called "work experience".

Firstly, it isn't "work".

Almost no one will let you "work" since the law does not allow an employer to have someone truly working who is not paid.

Also, there are union and insurance problems that ensure your "work experience" will never really involve any work.

Secondly, it often is a lousy, disappointing "experience".

No one cares about you.

You are amongst a team of busy, over-worked, worried, deadline-pressured people who simply want to get their jobs done and done well.

YOU are a bloody nuisance, someone in their way.

You get to make the coffee, clean up, answer phones, make tea, buy the biscuits, run messages, collect people's lunches and other demeaning tasks.

During this time of so-called "work experience" you are supposed "soak up the atmosphere" and "see what people actually do".

What nonsense.

By watching a person say, typing . . . how do you get any idea of what he is doing?

By watching a person say, talking on the phone . . . how do you get any idea of what he is doing?

Sure, if you have the chance to do some "work experience", by all means grab the opportunity, and see what comes of it.

You could get lucky, and prove me just a Grumpy Old Man.

Reprinted from The Wonderful World of Journalism. Written in the spirit of Simon Townsend's journalism craft advice. Visit simontownsendjournalist.com for the full archive.