Making the most of your Virtual Work Experience

Age range: 11-14, 14-16, 16-19 and 19+

BARCLAYS | LifeSkills

Session overview

Time	Key learning outcomes	Resources
60 mins	By the end of the activity students will be able to: • Get a feel for the work that goes on at an innovative organisation by seeing an office in action and meeting the people that work there • Begin to understand the skills needed for the world of work regardless of industry, such as resilience, communication, proactivity and creative thinking • Recognise the range of roles and opportunities on offer across an organisation	• **Virtual Work Experience tool**

The interactive Virtual Work Experience tool is a film (approximately 30 minutes long) that places students into a virtual work environment and provides the opportunity to interact with people from a range of departments within a workplace.

This activity allows you to work through the Virtual Work Experience tool as a group in a classroom setting. The film features multiple pause points on screen that present either an interactive challenge for the young person to consider, or a selection of questions that invite them to explore the skills and motivations of the different employees. The young person will also be asked for their input in certain scenarios and will receive feedback on the choices they make.

The company in the film are a digital transformation agency. They help their clients to move faster, think differently and increase the use of their digital products. This is done through creating tools, workshops, events, campaigns and content that get people embracing digital products and skills.

As an alternative to this lesson, the tool can be used independently by young people aged above 14 years old.

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Activity one

## Using the Virtual Work Experience interactive tool

1. Get started

- Open the **Virtual Work Experience tool** on the screen at the front of the group

- Work through the tool from start to finish exploring the chapters below. Please note that you can pause the tool at any point, but due to the interactivity it's not possible to go back without restarting

- Each character in the tool poses challenges for the group to consider and will automatically pause until you're ready to continue; the group can decide which questions they want the workplace team to answer

- There are also top tips which can be used for discussion and links to relevant content on the LifeSkills website

- Depending on the ability and interests of your group, you may wish to pause at additional moments to highlight skills or contexts which you feel would benefit from a more in-depth discussion

2. Meet Lucy
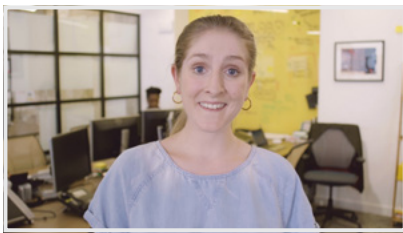
- The first person you will meet is Lucy, who will help students navigate their way through the day, introducing them to each of the departments and making sure they get the most from the experience

- You may wish to discuss in more depth issues around planning for your work experience placement and the importance of showing interest and enthusiasm when speaking with colleagues

3. Meet Spencer
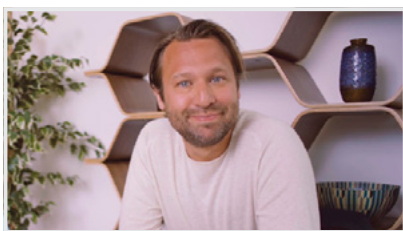
- Next you will be introduced to Spencer who is involved in product development and planning, and a discussion with him touches upon the importance of communication and proactivity

- There is an interactive challenge in this section where the group can ask the following questions;

Can you tell me more about this department?

How did you get to where you are now?

What's it like working here?

Activity one

Using the Virtual Work Experience interactive tool (cont'd)

4. Meet Lewie and Kai

- During your meeting with Spencer, Lewie and Kai who also work in planning will enter the room, offering an opportunity for the group to put forward ideas for an upcoming coding event
- This is an opportunity for the group to discuss topics including online safety and evaluating a project, with an interactive challenge covering the following questions:

How should 16-24 year olds stay safe online?

What do you think would be interesting for young people to learn to code?

Is it better to use data or just trust your instincts when evaluating a project?

5. Meet Marta
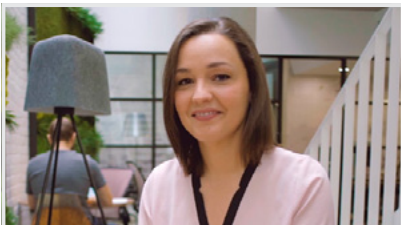
- Next you will get the chance to meet Marta from marketing who explains what this department does. She focuses on transferable skills, such as communication and resilience, and the future job market
- There is an interactive challenge featured in this section which includes the questions like:

What does marketing mean?

How does your past experience apply to what you do here?

If you were advertising an event to people aged 16-24, how would you reach them?

What would be the best way to measure performance of a social media post?

Activity one (cont'd)

Using the Virtual Work Experience interactive tool (cont'd)

6. Meet Ayo and Dolly

- Ayo and Dolly are trainers, delivering digital transformation workshops. Students have the opportunity to consider how to improve presentation skills and how employers can support with personal skill development

- The interactive challenge in this section allows the group to explore the following questions:

> **What does a trainer do?**
>
> **What qualifications do you need to work as a trainer?**
>
> **What does your career progression look like?**

7. Catch up with HR
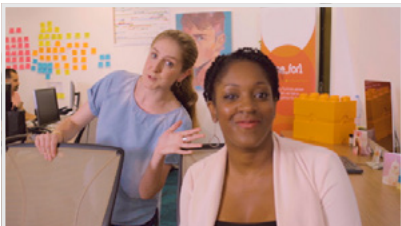
- Finally, there is another opportunity to speak with Dolly as she also works in HR. She will run through quick tips on job applications, preparing for an interview, and social media presence

8. Saying farewell

- Once the group has finished working through the tool, ask them to reflect on the impression that they may have left on the company following their work experience placement

- Ask them to consider how they could ensure they leave any work experience placement with a positive impression

- Now ask what they might do following the placement to ensure they have got the most out of their time with the company. For example, sending a follow up email, updating their CV or LinkedIn profile, or staying in touch with the organisation