

An Employees Guide to . . .



blakemore
.....branchingout

For information on the Branching
Out programme, please contact
Community Affairs Officer Liz Bell:

Telephone: 0121 568 2910, or

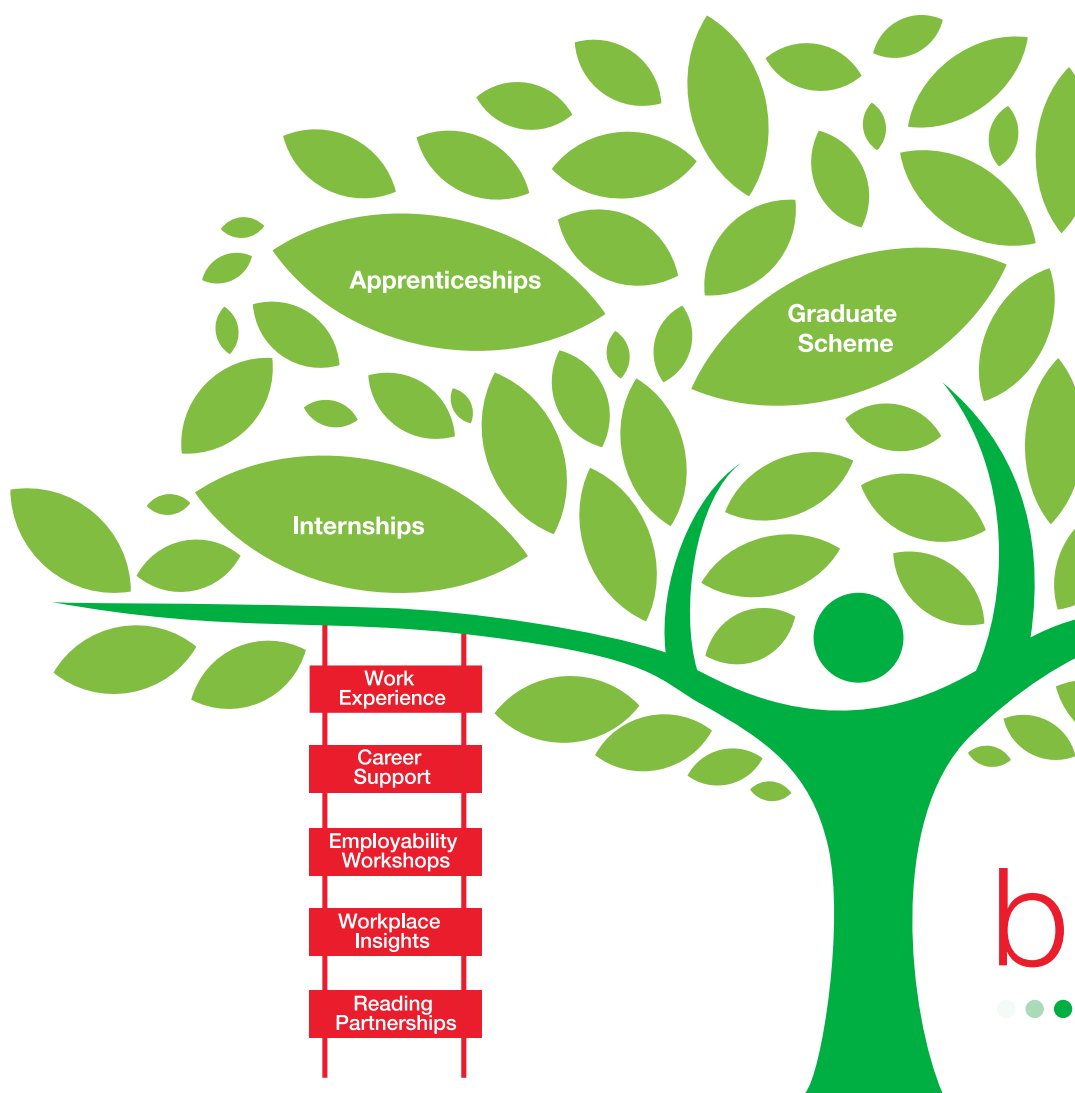
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An Employees Guide to Branching Out...

This guide is designed to give you an overview of the wide range of activities colleagues can get involved in as part of A.F. Blakemore's Branching Out educational programme.

The Branching Out programme has been created to help bridge the gap between education and employment. It is estimated that around 60% of young people are leaving school without the necessary skills to enter the world of work, while The City & Guild Group predicts that by 2020, there will be a requirement for 40,000 additional skilled workers across the UK economy.



Full-time
Employment

Part-time
Employment

The activities listed within this guide are designed to inspire, promote and engage young people in developing successful careers and helping meet the skills gaps of the future. Studies show that working with a young person on four or more employability interactions makes a real difference to their perception of the world of work and future prospects.

The A.F. Blakemore Branching Out programme will allow young people to grow, flourish and become the leaders of tomorrow.



How to get involved

Supporting the Branching Out programme is a great employee development tool and can help colleagues improve or learn new skills to take back to the workplace in addition to inspiring and engaging the future generation of employees.

Before you begin, please take a look at the top tips below:

- Speak to your line manager to gain approval for your activity. Make sure that your line manager is aware of the time commitment and any potential support you may require from colleagues.
- Contact Community Affairs Officer Liz Bell to discuss the AFB menu of opportunities and our list of community partners.
- Keep in regular contact with your community partner leading up to the event. Find out how many young people you will be working with, what their expectations are from the event and most importantly, agree dates and timescales.
- Make sure you have read and understood the **Safeguarding** section at the end of this guide, it will provide you with advice and guidance when working with young people.
- Consider carrying out a risk assessment, this is especially important if you are planning to bring young people onto company premises.
- You may require funds to purchase materials for your activity such as paper or pens. The Blakemore Foundation will fund this up to £250. Speak to Liz Bell when you are ready to apply for your funding.

Above all we hope that your Branching Out activity is enjoyable and provides young people with an exciting insight into A.F. Blakemore!

Reading Volunteering

What is it?

Spending one hour each week for 12 weeks with a school pupil to help improve their reading age by at least six months.

Reading support not only substantially increases a child's reading level but it also builds a child's self-esteem, aspirations and presents children with positive role models from business.

Business Benefits

Becoming a reading support volunteer improves staff motivation and can cultivate a 'feel-good factor' in the company. The company also benefits from increased publicity and public profile, and the knowledge that it is contributing towards a future generation of literate employees and consumers.

Time Commitment



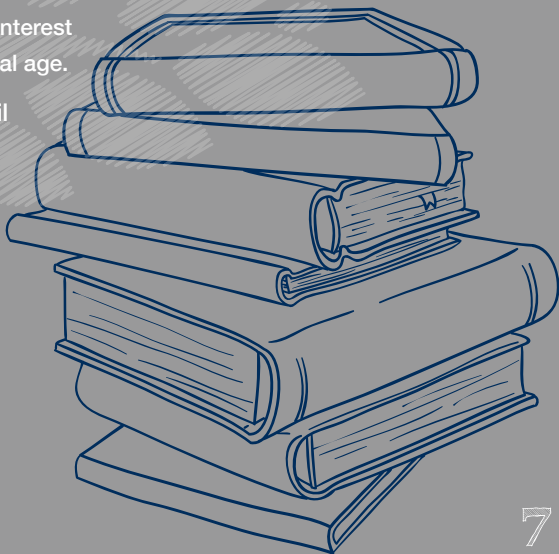
HOUR
every week for
up to 12 weeks

Employee Development

Communication Organisational Skills Confidence Time Management

Community Benefits

- This activity can help to improve the interest and reading age of children at a crucial age.
- Improve confidence of school pupil
- Provide young person with an insight into the world of work from business supporter
- Can help improve a school pupil's reading age by at least six months



Workplace Insights Career Workshops



What are they?

Career workshops provide students with an insight into the wide variety of careers available at A.F. Blakemore.

Time Commitment



DAY

with a small amount of
preparation time beforehand

Employee Development:

Confidence

Communication

Organisational Skills

Knowledge of the Business

Presentation Skills

Time Management

Examples of workshops we could offer

- Career Insight - roles and jobs that are of interest and link to A.F. Blakemore.
- One-to-one question and answer session with an A.F. Blakemore employee. It would be useful to discuss what qualifications and experience are needed for the role, how long you have worked at A.F. Blakemore and what roles you have undertaken along the way.
- A workshop discussing what a student's strengths and skills are in preparation for a job interview.

Study Tours

What are they?

A one off event where a tour of our site and facilities are offered to local schools. This could involve sharing examples of best practice or helping support an element of the curriculum.



Time Commitment:



DAY

Employee Development:

Communication

Organisational Skills

Confidence

Benefits to Students

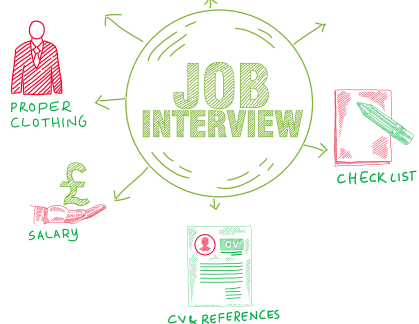
Students are given an insight into the world of work and have the opportunity to experience first-hand how a particular part of the business operates.

Examples of Study Tours:

- Tour of warehouse facilities demonstrating the operation from start to finish
- SPAR store tour

Employability Workshops

CV Writing Workshops



What are they?

CV writing and interview technique workshops provide students with practical support and advice to help them enter the world of work successfully.

Time Commitment:



with a small amount of preparation time beforehand

Employee Development:

Presentation Skills

Time Management

TEAM LEADING

Knowledge of the Business

Confidence

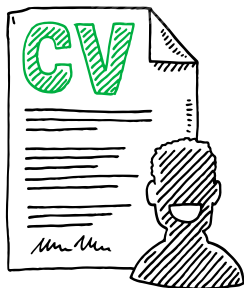
Communication

Benefits to Students

CV writing workshops help students to understand what employers are looking for, how to prepare a CV and tips for a successful interview.

Top Tips

- Discuss the basics of writing a CV- what you should include and what should be left out.
- Ensure that you discuss the do's and don't's of preparing a CV and applying for a job - cover off the importance of good grammar, a personal statement and highlighting achievements.
- Discuss A.F. Blakemore's recruitment process with the student and what happens at each stage of the application process.



Practice Interviews

What are they?

One-to-one mock interviews between employee volunteers and students. Interview sessions last approximately 15 minutes followed by feedback on performance to allow individuals to reflect on and review their employability skills.



Practice interviews are a great way to attract future talent to the business plus a development tool for future managers.

Time Commitment:



Employee Development:

Interview Skills
Communication
Confidence

Benefits to Students

Young people are given vital experience in developing employability skills and interacting with a local business.

Top Tips

- Help the student feel at ease, start by asking if they are ok, how they feel about the interview and invite them to tell you a bit about themselves.
- Encourage eye contact and positive body language.
- Provide the student with constructive feedback, what they did well and where they could improve for their next interview.
- Suggest that the student asks the prospective employer a question if they haven't already done so. This could be around training opportunities or the job itself.
- Encourage students to research the company they are applying for. Suggest they log on to the A.F. Blakemore website to understand the company history, culture and job opportunities.

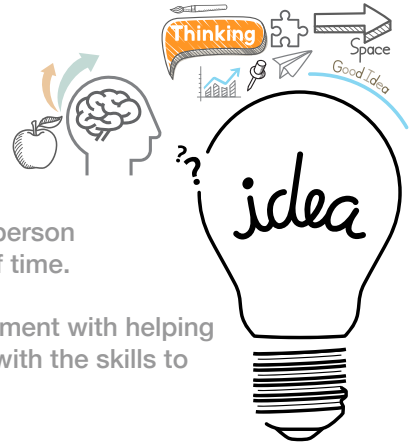
Career Support

Mentoring

What is it?

A one-to-one partnership between an employee and a young person. This is an on-going commitment whereby the employee and young person meet on a regular basis over an agreed period of time.

A mentoring partnership combines staff development with helping to support, encourage and equip young people with the skills to compete in the employment market.



Time Commitment:

LONGER TERM
commitment over a number
of months

Employee Development :



Communication

Confidence

Feedback Skills

TEAM BUILDING

*Gain a diverse
perspective*

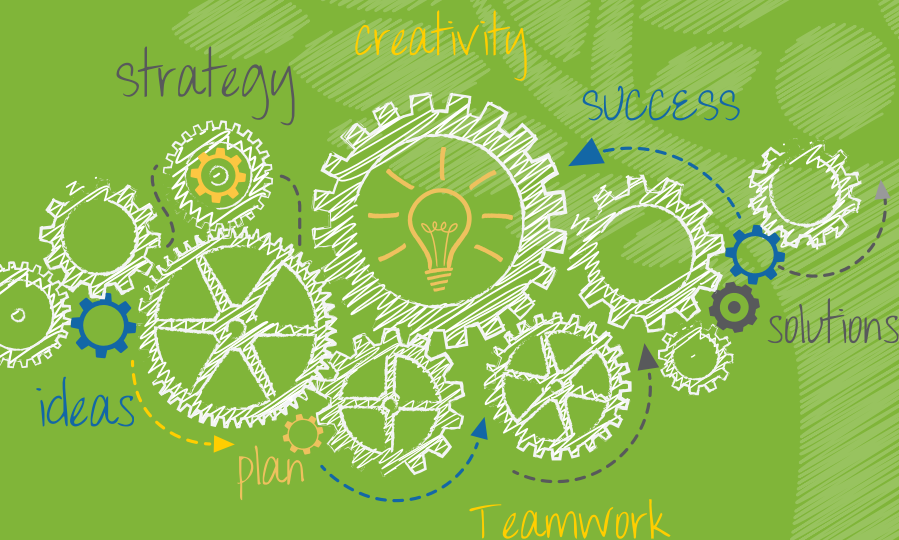


BENEFIT TO A YOUNG PERSON

The young person receiving business support is able to tap into a pool of knowledge and expertise within the company to help their own development.

Mentoring can also help to:

- Develop communication, study and inter-personal skills.
- Develop strategies for dealing with both personal and academic issues.
- Identify goals and establish a sense of direction.
- Gain valuable insight into the next stage of academic life/career.
- Gain an insight into the world of work.
- Boost confidence and self-belief.
- Ease the transition from school to work.
- Advice and guidance on CV's, interviews, etc.
- Raise pupil expectations and encourage life-long learning.



Work Experience

What is it?

Work experience placements at A.F. Blakemore are an opportunity for a young person to gain an insight into the world of work by spending a period of time working within an area of the business. Work experience is important as it allows a young person to gain skills, knowledge and confidence together with shaping their future career choices.

Time Commitment:

Work experience placements generally last between

1-2 WEEKS

or in special circumstances an extended period of time. Ongoing support must be provided to the student during this time

Employee Development:

Confidence

Communication

Improve Leadership Skills

Motivated workforce

Business Benefits

- Raises the profile of A.F. Blakemore to students and the job roles available.
- Promotes the opportunities available to school leavers.
e.g. Graduate Scheme and Apprenticeships.
- Can provide the business with a different perspective from a younger generation.

Benefit to students

- Gain experience and understanding of the world of work.
- Develop skills, knowledge and confidence for adult life.
- Learn the disciplines, routines and relationships in a workplace.
- Help to make more informed career choices for the future.

Top Tips

- Ask the student to apply in writing or send a CV.
- Offer a pre-placement interview.
- Plan a programme of activity including a risk assessment.
- Offer a comprehensive induction.
- Use a student diary to record their learnings and ask them to write a short report.
detailing their time with A.F. Blakemore.
- Evaluate the placement and report findings back to the school.



Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than child protection and relates to the action A.F. Blakemore takes to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. We are required by law to protect students from harm and are responsible for their safety whilst with us.

Guidance

- Where possible do not be left alone with a student or group of students.
- When conducting a one-to-one session such as reading volunteering or mentoring use a room which has windows or a glass door. Always leave the door open and sit a respectable distance from the student.
- Never touch a student in any way, even if they are upset or distressed do not provide physical contact for comfort.
- Do not use over familiar language such as 'love' or 'darling'.
- Do not give out your personal number or social media contact details to a young person.
- Do not arrange to meet the student outside of work/school.

Occasionally a student may disclose confidential information that gives concern for their emotional or physical safety. If this happens, please contact your point of contact at the school and notify Liz Bell on 0121 568 2910/lbell@afblakemore.co.uk.



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