



10 TIPS ON HOW TO FIND A COUNSELLING PLACEMENT

WHEN FIRST UNDERTAKING COUNSELLING TRAINING, FINDING A PLACEMENT CAN SOMETIMES FEEL LIKE AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK.

1. Speak with your tutors

This might sound an obvious solution, however it's surprising how many students never enquire with their tutors regarding placement opportunities, like the saying goes, 'If you don't ask, you don't get'.

2. Network with your peers

Share your contact details with peers. It's amazing how much information can be shared within a group.

3. Google is your friend

Search engine technology has become very sophisticated in recent years. Try searching '**counselling + student placement + (your area)**'. It's amazing just how many hits that search term can produce.

Placement providers tend to recruit at certain times of the year. The reason for this is that they work with the colleges' academic calendar.

4. Tap into social media

The internet has provided various 'homes' for likeminded people and counselling is no exception.

Try searching in social media groups such as Facebook and Twitter using the search term '**counselling**'. You will be surprised at just how many groups operate and how helpful members can be to a request for help.

5. Spread your net wide

In an ideal world it would be nice to have a placement near to home. Sadly for some that is not possible.

Using this [website](#) will help you calculate what areas are in your reach in a certain amount of travel time.

6. Timing is everything

Placement providers tend to recruit at certain times of the year. The reason for this is that they work with the colleges' academic calendar.

Most training providers start in September, with the first six months of the course being taken up with preparing students for client contact. The aim is to start placements after Christmas.

Working to this calendar, the best time to make contact is October as this gives placements time to conduct interviews as well as put any training in place before the January start.

Another key time is June. Why? Because those students who graduate start to leave their placements and move on, which can leave placement providers short of counsellors.

7. Ask the graduating year group

Most training providers run a two-year or three-year course. It's a good bet that by the final year, most students will have a placement. Why not catch up with them on their training day and ask where they are practicing?

8. Volunteer

Getting in early can really pay dividends. We know that placements are at a premium — right?

By volunteering at the charity you wish to work with, you will get an inside track not only on when placements become available, but on how the organisation works.

9. Don't give up!

Sometimes not having a placement when your peers have started theirs can be disheartening. It is during times like this when you have to dig in deep and keep pushing forward. Keep phoning, writing and emailing. That last contact you make may very well be the placement you want!

10. Don't settle for second best

A good placement can be hard to find, but once secured can bring so much to your personal and professional development. Make sure that you are happy with your choice.

Like any relationship, if you don't feel supported or safe, then personal growth does not occur. Your gut feelings are your best guide. Listen to them.