

Employer Engagement Menu Activity Details

CAREER AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

Definition: Activities that provide career awareness, career preparation, and a solid foundation for work-based learning but don't typically take place in a workplace **OR** short-term activities that provide introductory information about an industry and its occupations that take place in a workplace.

Impact: Participants learn about a variety of industries and occupations and their respective duties, responsibilities, and opportunities through presentations or by visiting the workplace and observing in real time.

Engagement Activities	Activity Description	Time Commitment	Real World Example
Classroom Speaker	Employers visit a classroom to talk to students about a job, business, or industry; personal career journey; job duties and responsibilities; skills and knowledge needed; or a specific career topic.	30-90 minutes	A nurse visits a health science class to speak about their journey to acquiring the credentials needed to become a nurse and shares insights into the employability skills and technical skills that nurses frequently use as they carry out their work responsibilities.
Field Trip Location	Employers host a tour of facilities and operations, highlighting careers within the organization; a typical work day; student opportunities; or a curricular connection to a specific topic.	1.5-2.5 hours	An aviation company hosts a one-day field trip that includes a guided tour of the hangars and maintenance areas, where students observe aircraft up close and learn about safety protocols, engineering, and repair processes. Throughout the day, employees from various departments—such as pilots, technicians, and logistics coordinators—share their career paths and answer students' questions.
Touch-A-Truck	Employers from various industries that use specialty vehicles display the vehicles, discuss their industries' operations, and provide additional information about their industries.	2-4 hours	Employers in construction, emergency services, towing, and more participate in a Touch-A-Truck event, allowing participants to learn about their vehicles and the work that they do. An ambulance crew brings a CPR dummy to give students an opportunity to interact with it and learn more about emergency medical services.
Mentoring/Coaching	Employers offer support, guidance, and assistance to students as they explore careers; this may occur in face-to-face, virtual, or asynchronous venues or a combination.	1 hour per week	A company works collaboratively with a school district and a community-based organization that focuses on mentoring to mutually agree on the goals, structure, and longevity of a proposed employee mentoring program. Employees are matched with students and mentor them one-on-one over either short (e.g., months) or long (e.g., years) periods of time. Mentors are matched with students participating in career and technical education (CTE) programs or other courses that align to specific industries or areas of individual expertise. Both the company and educators consult evidence-based mentoring frameworks and best practices to inform the program's design, training, and metrics for success.
Annual CTE Programs Support	Attend a local school district's federally required career and technical education program annual update and feedback session.	2-4 hours	An employee serves on an CTE advisory board that meets every other month to consult with educators on curriculum design and decisions, ensuring that current industry perspectives and in-demand skills are integrated into instruction and work-based learning offerings.

Employer Engagement Menu Activity Details

CAREER EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

Definition: Activities that provide career awareness, career preparation, and a solid foundation for work-based learning but don't take place in a workplace.

Impact: Participants learn about a variety of industries and occupations and their respective duties, responsibilities, and opportunities.

Engagement Activities	Activity Description	Time Commitment	Real World Example
Career Fair	Employers staff a booth or meet with a group of students to share information about careers, including a look at roles and responsibilities, advice on how to pursue a career in a particular field, and information about the skills and expertise required for certain jobs.	2-4 hours	A local manufacturing company contacts a chamber of commerce and expresses interest in outreach to local schools. The chamber connects the company to a local high school, suggesting that the employer participate in the school's upcoming career fair. The company sends a small team of employees from several different departments to the event, which is also attended by a number of other employers from various industries.
Power Lunch	Employers host conversations at tables in school cafeterias during lunch hours to promote their industries and share information about current jobs and emerging trends in their career fields.	1-2 hours	A local credit union manager sets up a table in the high school cafeteria during lunch periods to discuss careers in banking and finance. Students can grab their lunch and sit at the table to learn about entry-level positions such as teller or loan processor, advancement opportunities, and the educational pathways available through community college business programs or on-the-job training programs that lead to credentials.
Job Shadow	Employers provide opportunities for students to observe, discuss, and participate in daily routines and activities of a particular job.	3-8 hours	A tech company hosts five students at its national headquarters for two days. Employees from across the business prepare presentations about their individual roles and lead tours of their offices while highlighting key aspects of their responsibilities, as well as the technology tools they use on the job and the skills they need to do their jobs. Each student is matched with an employee to observe their daily work routines.
Industry Project	Employers collaborate with teachers to integrate specific, authentic industry tasks into curricula.	8-15 hours	An insurance company identifies a research and archiving project that current employees don't have the capacity to execute. The company works with a career navigator at a local high school to outline developmentally appropriate steps a student can take to complete the defined tasks. The student then presents the completed project to company employees and the employees provide feedback on how the work will add value to the company's business and operations.
Service Learning	Employers support students in designing and implementing meaningful projects at local for-profit businesses, government agencies, and nonprofits.	2-90 hours	A student works at a local social services organization over the course of a semester to assist with a community outreach project. This experience is unpaid, but it differs from volunteering because it's part of a school capstone experience that reflects the knowledge and skills the student has developed.

Employer Engagement Menu Activity Details

CAREER PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Definition: Activities that provide an extended opportunity for participants to gain basic technical knowledge and employability skills in an identified field of interest OR activities that engage participants in paid experiences in a workplace in conjunction with classroom or lab learning to develop specific knowledge and skills in a specific industry or occupation.

Impact: Participants gain valuable workplace experience and skills in a specific industry or occupation by participating in workplace activities over an extended period of time.

Engagement Activities	Activity Description	Time Commitment	Real World Example
School-Based Enterprise	Employers help prepare students for the transition from school to employment or postsecondary education by providing work experience, typically in programs that take place on school grounds.	15 hours	A high school has a school store that employs students to run all aspects of operations with the support of a faculty sponsor. The business is open to the public, also giving students experience interacting with a wide range of customers.
Teacher Externship	Employers provide teachers with on-site opportunities to learn more about an organization, an industry, and the needs in the regional economy.	15-60 hours	Teacher externships are often organized through the district or school, at the state-level, or directly with companies. They typically take place during the summer or breaks throughout the summer for one day to two weeks. Teachers observe employees performing daily roles in specialized work environments like labs or manufacturing facilities. Teachers can also work collaboratively with employees to support future lesson planning and understand ways to integrate and translate current technological innovations and industry practices and standards into the classroom.
Practicum	Employers provide an opportunity for students to complete a short-term project in a professional setting.	2-3 hours per week	A regional hospital partners with students in a health science program to conduct a patient satisfaction improvement project. Over four weeks, students spend two afternoons per week at the hospital working alongside quality improvement staff to analyze patient feedback surveys, research best practices, and develop recommendations for enhancing the patient experience in the emergency department. Students present their findings to hospital administrators and department supervisors.
Internship	Employers provide paid or unpaid work-based learning experiences that integrate practical applications of knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with opportunities to build professional skills on the job.	A minimum of 60 hours over 6-8 weeks or more	Companies participate in a structured summer internship program coordinated through a mayor's office, a chamber of commerce, a local workforce board, or an intermediary organization such as SOCHE. Companies provide interns with structured work experiences, match students with a supervisor, offer students a chance to build key skills, and provide feedback on performance.
On-the-Job Training	Employers provide employee training and serve as instructors in hands-on learning experiences.	45+ hours	Often "on-the-job" training refers to work-based learning that takes place as part of a pre-apprenticeship or youth apprenticeship program and is designed to prepare students for specific roles in an industry or company that they will be hired into upon completing their education and training.
Youth Apprenticeship	Employers provide paid on-the-job training based on statewide youth apprenticeship curriculum guidelines.	450+ hours	Wisconsin's established youth apprenticeship program is run through the state's Department of Workforce Development (DWD). Beginning in their junior and senior years, students can choose to pursue a youth apprenticeship in one of 14 program areas. Those who complete the program receive an industry recognized credential. Employer sponsors oversee hiring, mentoring, and training of youth apprentices with support from regional DWD coordinators.
Clinical Experience	Employers provide opportunities for students to perform tasks in a supervised, real-world workplace.	4+ hours	Students in a health pathway perform rotations in a clinical setting such as a hospital or doctor's office to observe patient interactions and care.

Employer Engagement Menu Activity Details

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Definition: The activities below offer employers opportunities to engage with and learn more about various parts of the career pathway outside of the workplace.

Impact: Employers engage with and become more knowledgeable of K-16 institutions and their students' skills to become more integrated into the pathways ecosystem.

Engagement Activities	Activity Description	Time Commitment	Real World Example
Partner for a Day	An employer serves as a school's "Partner for a Day," engaging in activities on site to learn about the school and connect with faculty, staff, and students.	2-4 hours	One or more representatives of an employer visit a school and shadow a group of faculty, staff, and students to observe, participate in, and discuss their daily routines and activities. Each employer representative is matched with a staff member or student for the day. The hosts give the visitors tours of the facilities and highlight key aspects of their activities and responsibilities, tell them about the technologies and tools they use, and discuss the skills they need to succeed in the classroom or on the job.
Committee Member	Employers join and participate in the activities of local workforce development and education committees.	1-3 hours per month	An employee serves on a committee or subcommittee that meets regularly to plan pathways designs and make decisions to ensure that industry perspectives and in-demand skills are integrated into pathways and work-based learning offerings, such as the Montgomery County Business Advisory Council.
Informational Interview	Employers answer students' questions about careers, professions, or other topics, either in person in one-on-one or group conversations or by phone or email.	30-90 minutes	A teacher works with an employer to develop or adapt an interview protocol with the goal of students gaining a deeper understanding of the employer's industry, the typical roles and responsibilities of specific types of employees, and how those contribute to the company's business objectives. The conversations can also cover broader aspects of company's culture, work schedules, and day-to-day lives of employees.
Mock Interview	Employers ask students typical interview questions and provide constructive feedback about their interviewing styles and responses.	1-2 hours	An employee asks members of the company's HR team or other hiring managers to provide a list of questions they'd typically ask when interviewing candidates for internships or entry-level positions. The employee then meets students one-on-one in person at school or virtually and asks them those questions to simulate the interview experience.