Work-Based Learning
Tips and Techniques for Maximum Results

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Work-Based Learning: Learning at Work (Key Points)

Work-based learning activities have the potential to make significant differences in a student's learning. Study after study has shown that students of all ages respond favorably when academics are taught in context. Work-based experiences provide additional context, add value through real-life applications, and bring additional support to the classroom in the form of mentors, sponsors, and other industry-based resources.

As valuable as work-based learning can be, it is critical that all participants clearly understand that work-based learning activities are far more than a part-time job or a day off school to visit the city. In fact, to be effective, all such activities need to be part of an overall, school-wide plan to provide context for all academics and to develop specific job skills as appropriate.

Meaningful work-based learning is based on these and other basic premises:

- **Win-Win Partnerships:** Both the student and the participating business partner must gain from the experience.

- **Variety of Experience:** For maximum impact, work-based experiences should be offered as part of an overall plan that includes age-appropriate activities throughout the school year and over an extended portion of a student's education.

- **Managed Experiences:** Work-based learning is similar to traditional lesson-planning in that it requires careful planning, both in terms of scheduling and logistics, and in terms of learning expectations.

- **Differentiation:** A successful work-based learning program must clearly and absolutely differentiate itself from typical "on-their-own" teenage jobs.

Teachers who manage work-based experiences face the additional challenge of partnering within an employment model that is quite different from that of the public schools. Although each business and each individual business participant is different, teachers are likely to find fundamentally different values, including:

- Performance metrics: quantifiable data.
- Reward structure: length of service vs. performance measures.
- People development: development of individuals vs. a means to an end.

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Win-Win Partnerships

Education and business need each other. Partnerships are not only the right thing to do – they are also good business. They improve the quality of the graduates we hire. They help our image in the community. They give us a better return for our tax dollars. –Robert W. Lundeen, Former Chairman of the Board, The Dow Chemical Company

Work-based learning is viewed by enlightened business leaders as a rational investment in the enterprise. Similarly, progressive schools view work-based strategy as providing an unusually high return on investment (ROI). Both business/industry and the schools recognize that when young people understand the nature of work and the opportunities available to them, they are more likely to become productive, responsible members of the community. In turn, these same youth begin to value their educational experience.

Work-based learning, particularly career and technical education, is a significant workforce development strategy. Improved skills lead to better efficiencies; the availability of a better-trained labor pool encourages business growth. Students participating in work-based learning add to the community through:

- Increased graduation rates
- Better understanding of their long-term roles in the community
- Recognition of opportunities in the community
- Integration of school into the community
- Positive positioning of business
- Understanding of drug and alcohol issues relative to work and income
- Better preparation to assume responsibility at younger ages
- Credentialing/Certification of key skills

The mutual business-school support of a work-based learning strategy helps create a community-wide environment of collaboration and cooperation. It encourages respect and tolerance between various groups as each begins to understand the perspective of the other. Well-managed programs build businesses' confidence in the school system and help schools make better use of limited funding and other resources.

In addition to these common win-win benefits, individual stakeholders benefiting directly from substantive work-based learning programs include:

- Students
- Business/Industry
- Schools

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Variety of Experiences

Work-based learning, once the domain of a few vocational programs, has evolved into a substantive but loosely defined strategy with a focus on helping students understand the relationship between the work world and the skills and concepts they study in school. Although career and technical programs have provided leadership nationwide, many work-based experiences are being implemented by educators at all grade levels with highly varied academic connections.

The phrase "work-based" notwithstanding, the goals of work-based learning are addressed through a wide range of activities, often with differing labels, falling on a continuum that might be loosely categorized as follows:

Planning Activities
Advisory committee
Competency/Curriculum validation
Teacher internships

Connecting With Workers
Career fair/Career day (school or business-based; multiple experiences)
Community organizations (service/trade)
Employer-based training programs
Guest Speakers
Interviews
Mentoring
Role-plays/Presentations
Work-based classroom

Observing Workers
Field trips
Job shadowing
Site-based assignments
Site visits

Working
Business-based mentoring
Clinical experiences
Community service
Cooperative work experience
Early placement
Employer-provided training programs
Internship
Long-term, paid experiences
Mentoring
School-based enterprise
Service learning
Short-term placements
Work-release
Youth apprenticeship

Common to all of these and other activities is the element of careful planning and management to ensure a focus on learning consistent with the integration of academic and technical skills. The strongest initiatives include a broad range of different activities executed across the curriculum (K-12), sharing the common goals of helping students 1) explore careers, 2) understand the nature of the work world, and 3) relate work and careers to key academics.

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Managing the Experience

Ask first and often: Are the experiences provided by the school's work-based learning program substantially different from those experiences a student might have independent of the school?

Most students at one time or another have made some observations of work or workers. These casual observations frequently lead to perceptions about work and careers that are inaccurate, incomplete, or misdirected. Without the intervention of the school, students' exposure to the work world is simply inadequate for them to reach valid conclusions about their futures, including work, career, and college decisions.

Similarly, a very high percentage of teens work at least part-time during their high school years. Most do so solely for the income. Few have the interest or capacity to think through the potential learning opportunities afforded by employment, nor do they have the network to find meaningful experiences. Given the nature of typical part-time teen work and the relative lack of training and supervision, critics rightly question its impact on the worker's education and personal growth.

To make a difference, and to overcome these and other challenges, work-based learning must be positioned as a full partner in the education process. It should be viewed as a K-12 program, with specific goals at each stage of development. Each activity or experience must be planned and implemented with learning objectives in mind. It is this planning and management that differentiates the program and gives it value – value to students and to future employers.

A successful work-based learning program must clearly and absolutely differentiate itself from typical "on-their-own" teenage jobs. Although the idea of differentiation may apply to all work-based activities (e.g., any given field trip may or may not be organized to provide work-based "experience"), it is particularly critical relative to part-time employment. Adding value to the experience is both the justification for the school's involvement and the critical factor in making work a learning experience. Pro-active management of the experience is paramount to a meaningful learning outcome. Further, it is this careful attention to differentiation that positions work-based experiences as quality, substantive activities appropriate for *all* students.

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Valuing Work-Based Learning

The very best educators find value in learning for its own sake. The more they learn about 17th century poets, the more they want to know. The better they understand calculus, the more interested they become in the underlying theories and proofs. Most of us, unfortunately, younger students in particular, are less pure in our motivation for learning. Hence, the fundamental question by students throughout the ages: *Why?* Not *why is this true*?, but *why do I have to study this?*

In many ways, work-based learning answers the *Why?* question. It helps students understand the real-world applications of their academics and, for those enrolled in career or technical education programs, it provides the context for skill development. As an added benefit, involvement in work-based programs helps individual *teachers* answer the same question and, as a result, helps them to re-think and re-position their lessons in a way that adds interest and relevance to virtually any discipline.

In addition to its value to students, and therefore to teachers, work-based programs provide opportunities to integrate the school within the fabric of the community. The various activities encourage business leaders' participation and ultimately contribute to a wide range of win-win partnerships.

Positioning of work-based learning is an important element of its overall success. Given the "work" component of most programs, its overall purpose must be clearly communicated such that students and employers alike recognize it as an education experience first and foremost. Sponsors of the overall program and of individual experiences must clearly differentiate all work-based activities from those with less educational value. Careful planning to ensure a direct connection to curriculum and clearly communicated expectations are paramount to positioning of the program as a quality component of the total school experience for all students.

Although much of the value of work-based learning may be readily apparent, it is best characterized in terms of its planned outcomes and the related benefits to specific stakeholders:

- Expectations: Work-based learning requires a significant investment on the part of all participants. Therefore, the program should be designed with clear expectations in mind. Most importantly, for the individual student, it's the ah-ha! moment. It's those many moments throughout the various work-based activities when, however subtly, the student begins to realize the value of the academic and technical skills learned at school and applied in the workplace, it's those moments when s/he realizes that there is some direct correlation between focus at school and earnings potential now and in the future.

- Student Benefits: Helping students, particularly teens, understand the relative value of work-based activities requires careful planning and continuing reinforcement. For them to benefit in a significant way, it is imperative that they approach each experience with specific learning outcomes in mind. It is, therefore, important for the coordinating teacher to carefully plan, communicate, coordinate, and evaluate each activity. Actively managed work-based experiences can affect student behaviors, values, and learning many different ways, including: focus, academic performance, college orientation, problem-solving abilities, attendance, and work ethic. Ultimately, these experiences can help any student develop a portfolio of skills of value for a lifetime.

- Business Benefits: Active involvement of business in an educational initiative, like any project or activity, is driven by a simple business decision. The commitment is always made on the basis of cost-benefit analysis. Whether that analysis is formal or informal, any responsible manager must determine whether the cost justifies the outcome. In the case of work-based learning, the cost of participation is generally some combination of time and payroll expenses (both for the mentor and for the student employee in the case of employment-based experiences). Benefits to the business may be immediate (as in finding student employees to fill specific needs) or long-term as measured by returns from economic development, human resource development, community goodwill, and positive PR. Although many businesses may participate in various ways for purely altruistic reasons, the foundation of a strategic work-based initiative should be one of mutual benefit leading to long-term partnering.

- Mentors Benefit: With some exceptions, mentoring a student adds to the work load of the mentor. Once again, the sponsoring teacher must be prepared to answer the basic question: What's in it for me? Although altruism may be the driving motivator for most mentors, there are additional, direct benefits worth exploring. These might include: personal growth, added credibility within the company, recognition, networking, unique perspective on the job, access to company management, and tangible company rewards.

- Teachers Benefit: Effective management of work-based learning is demanding. It requires significant time and a flexible schedule that is likely to include evenings and weekends. Done well, the sponsoring teacher is, in effect, "on call" at all times. Nevertheless, for many individuals the rewards far outweigh the demands. In addition to the added contribution the teacher makes to the growth and development of students, benefits may include: professional development, access to resources, outside opportunities (paid and not), easier teaching, and positive positioning within the school and the community.

- School Benefits: The school system and its administration benefit from an active, professionally managed work-based education program in many different ways. Perhaps most important among them is the increased rapport with the leadership in the community. Even as business leaders, parents, and others press for improved school performance, their active participation in work-based activities provides a broader, more positive perspective on the challenges the system faces, on the initiatives underway to address performance deficiencies, and on the limitations faced by schools and educators. Conversely, and perhaps more significantly, their continuing involvement with the school provides administrators opportunities to showcase the many positive outcomes offered by career and technical education specifically, and work-based activities in general.

- Parents Benefit: Data suggest that mom and/or dad remain the most significant influence on most teenagers' lives – exceeding even the influence of peers who are generally ranked second (and far behind parents or guardians). Fortunately, the many benefits of quality, managed work-based experiences include advantages for the parents as well. Such experiences may open the door to communications, providing a common ground for dialogue, as well as a better understanding of what adult life is all about. Parents may find satisfaction in knowing that their children can learn about the real world of work without leaving the "protection" of the school. For older teens, a school-managed employment experience can be a significant contributor to maturation, development of a work ethic, and ultimately a clarification of long-term goals.

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Expectations

Work-based learning requires a significant investment on the part of all participants. Therefore, the program should be designed with clear expectations in mind. Most importantly, for the individual student, the program should focus on creating the **ah-ha! moments**: those many moments throughout the various work-based activities when, however subtly, the student begins to realize the value of the academic and technical skills learned at school and applied in the workplace, it's those moments when s/he realizes that there is some direct correlation between focus at school and earnings potential now and in the future.

Although each school must address different issues and priorities in the implementation of work-based learning, expectations of the total program might include opportunities for students to explore and "test" career options as they:

- **meet and talk** with incumbent workers on a regular basis.
- **observe** workers on the job.
- **work** on-site at meaningful tasks (paid or unpaid).
- **learn academics in the context** of job skills and real world environment.
- **use academic skills** in context as they learn career-oriented technical skills.
- **prepare for continuing education, with purpose** toward their long-term goals.
- **begin preparing for high-performance careers** through productive work.
- complete activities to introduce **all aspects of their selected industries**.
- develop basic **economic understandings** relative to their selected industries.
- develop a **strong work ethic**, solid business/workplace awareness, positive work habits, and a professional demeanor.
- develop solid **analytical**, **team**, and **problem-solving** skills.
- learn to **generalize and apply** both academic and technical skills.
- develop effective, mature **communication skills** appropriate for business/industry.
- learn to **value education and training** as a key to career success.
- develop a **network** of professional contacts.

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Student Benefits

Planned, documented and evaluated work experiences, particularly those with a mentoring relationship, help ensure maximum benefit for all students. Research data suggest that participating students:

- Have increased **focus and purpose**.
- Better understand real life issues as they **learn academics in context**.
- Are more **goal-oriented**; they have a **reason for continuing education**.
- Develop better **problem-solving** skills.
- Understand the concept of work and **work ethic**.
- Have **improved attendance** and **better grades**.
- Are more **interested in continuing education and training**.
- Earn **significant income** to support future endeavors.
- Have greater **job satisfaction**.
- Value mature **communication** skills.
- Are **better prepared** for future employment and **promotion**.
- Develop a **portfolio of skills** relevant to their futures.
- Are more likely to follow a **career plan**.
- Have increased confidence to **assume responsibility** and **make decisions**.
- Better **understand issues** of budget, personnel, and organizational structure.

NOTE: Employment-based experiences (e.g., co-op and intern programs) may require special attention. Researchers generally agree that planned, coordinated work experiences are beneficial to most teens. However, many also believe that too much work is counterproductive and can actually lead to degradation of grades and increased risk of alcohol or drug abuse. Typical work-based programs recommend 15 - 25 hour weekly schedules to maximize benefits and minimize risks.

Take Advantage of School
Student Access

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Business Benefits Through Work-Based Learning Programs

As Ohio schools move to provide work-based experiences for all students, the participation of our business community becomes increasingly important. Work-based learning programs depend on your willingness to participate in activities such as:

- Advisory groups
- Student job shadowing in your organization
- Guest speaking
- Field trips and tours to your organization
- Student interviews and activities involving your personnel
- Co-op, internship, and youth apprenticeship programs

Fortunately, what's good for our students and our community also provides high ROI for our business community. Specifically, your active involvement helps create win-win opportunities for you, your business, and thousands of Ohio students:

- Achievement-oriented students
- Positive positioning of your company with school/students
- Community goodwill; positive PR
- Long-term workforce development
- Assessment of student potential for long-term employment
- Reduced training costs
- Increased professional development of regular staff
- Reduced hiring costs
- Increased employee loyalty
- Exceptional employee productivity
- Reduced absenteeism
- Understanding of generational impact on company
- Influence on curricula
- Teacher as "supervisor" and intermediary
- Teacher assistance with the relationship
- Quick start (teacher assistance w/ orientation)
- Access to temporary/flexible staffing

While the primary goal of work-based learning is student education, benefits to participating companies are significant – particularly from a strategic perspective. Companies nationwide have initiated new projects with student employees, found renewed interest in and opportunities for professional development of all staff, and benefited from the creative, high-energy spirit that teens bring to the workplace.

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Mentors Benefit Through Work-Based Learning

As Ohio schools work to offer work-based learning experiences for all students, the opportunities for quality, caring mentors (or training sponsors) continue to increase. Mentoring a young person is challenging and rewarding. Mentoring is a partnership with the potential to benefit both parties. As you consider a role as a mentor, whether it's for a part-time employee or for a student who is simply looking for guidance, consider:

- We **get what we give**; there is payback, both personal and to the benefit of the community.
- Serving as a mentor helps build our own **self-confidence**.
- Being a mentor helps to **better position us** within the overall organization.
- There is **personal satisfaction in teaching**.
- Sharing what we know almost always leads to our own **personal/professional growth**.
- Acting as a mentor will likely increase our own **networking opportunities**.
- Mentor/Mentee relationships often become **life-long friendships**.
- Mentees grow up; some become **leaders** who will always value our part in their growth.
- Serving as a mentor helps us clarify and **better understand skills/procedures/policies**.
- Serving as a mentor **helps us**, the individual, the company, and the community.
- Mentors **develop better listening skills** and increased sensitivity to others' issues.
- We **learn** from our mentee's teacher and from **shared experiences** with other students.
- We learn to understand the implications of actions from **different perspectives**.
- It feels good when **mentees benefit from our own mistakes** of the past.
- There is **ego gratification** in being a "star maker."
- Quid pro quo works.

Work-based learning offers real and tangible benefits to our students, our companies, and our communities. Of all the activities and experiences that make up a work-based learning program, none is more important that the role of a caring, nurturing, challenging mentor. Here's a terrific way to contribute to the future of others and to benefit personally from the experience.

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Teachers Benefit From Work-Based Learning

Participation in a quality work-based program is demanding but rewarding. It may require new skills. It will require extensive efforts to network and build relationships outside of the school environment. Meaningful work-based experiences require teachers to understand how business and industry work and to work with "outsiders" in the development of opportunities for young people.

There are rewards. Participation in the development of the program and in the planning and management of its many activities provide unique, interesting, and meaningful opportunities:

- Student benefits
- Industry contacts: opportunities to develop relationships with local leaders
- Advocacy for school: positioning as a key representative of the organization
- Advocacy for program: significant opportunities to build support
- Leadership positioning: key role in response to state and federal reform initiatives
- Easier context: with facts and examples, more realistic instruction
- Motivation of students: easier teaching with interested students
- Tool: management of activities influences student behavior
- Curriculum resources: expand your variety of materials
- People resources: help for advisory committees, student organization, guest speakers
- Financial resources: support for student organization
- Positioning: perception as a leader in school and community
- Opportunities: consulting and part-time employment
- Personal growth: job opportunities (strategic positioning, summer work, etc.)
- Accountability: proof of competence
- Flexible schedule: manage your time 24/7
- Supplemental pay, extended contracts: rewards for additional time

Although different schools and programs offer different tangible rewards, perhaps the most significant payback for teachers is less tangible: it's fun for the teacher, rewarding and productive for the student. Work-based learning helps students connect and do better.

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School Benefits

The school system and its administration benefit from an active, professionally managed work-based education program in many different ways. Perhaps most important among them is the increased rapport with the leadership in the community. Even as business leaders, parents, and others press for improved school performance, their active participation in work-based activities provides a broader, more positive perspective on the challenges the system faces, on the initiatives underway to address performance deficiencies, and on the limitations faced by schools and educators. Conversely, and perhaps more significantly, their continuing involvement with the school provides administrators opportunities to showcase the many positive outcomes offered by career and technical education specifically, and work-based activities in general. These and other opportunities include:

- **Student benefits** as they begin to understand the relevance of academic preparation and learn to put education into a life perspective.

- **Repositioning** of the school as increased numbers of the community's leaders develop a better awareness of the system's successes and of the opportunities being provided for all students.

- **Increased continuity** of K-12 programs and better positioning for college or continuing education with purpose.

- **Broader perspective** of the community itself as school administrators and teacher-coordinators increase their networking skills and opportunities, ultimately resulting in new contacts and relationships throughout the business sector, and as the school's graduates begin to play a role in the community's leadership.

- **Expands opportunities for all students** and exposes them to a broad array of career opportunities, work philosophies, and work environment. Enhances the school's ability to meet the needs of a diverse student population.

- **Professional growth** resulting from active participation in business planning and economic development. Examples might include better understandings of strategic planning, budgeting, human resource management, marketing, and other business functions.

- **Community and economic development** opportunities, including a more active role in community planning as the possibilities for economic development through better educated graduates become increasingly apparent to local leaders.

- **Access to resources**, including equipment, personnel (e.g., loaned executives), funding, facilities, consulting and other resources that may contribute to the school's mission and, ultimately, to improved outcomes for individual students.

- **Better use of facilities** as employment-based programs move students into the business community, and as a vehicle for accessing state-of-the-art facilities and technology without capital expense for the school.

- **Opportunities** for faculty and administration to work more closely with elected school officials within the positive context of various work-based, community-based activities.

- **Positive student outcomes**, including enhanced retention, reduced absences, increased discipline, additional leverage (participation in work-based activities as a "reward"), and as a way to position the school as a place for all students.

- **Positive public relations** that flow from positive, successful programs. Work-based learning has a long track record of positive performance leading to student success.

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Parents Benefit From Work-Based Learning

Data suggest that mom and/or dad remain the most significant influence on most teenagers' lives – exceeding even the influence of peers who are generally ranked second (and far behind parents or guardians). And while the ultimate benefit of work-based education programs is focused on the student, quality, well-managed programs offer advantages for the parents as well. Such experiences may open the door to communications, providing a common ground for dialogue, as well as a better understanding of what adult life is all about. Specific examples may include:

- Student academic performance as they gain a better understanding of the relevance of their education and its overall perspective on life. (Student Benefits)

- Opportunities for students to "sample" the real world of work while they remain within the overall protective environment of the school system (i.e., under supervision of teachers and with specific learning goals the primary intent of all work-based experiences).

- Opportunities for parents to participate in the learning process as they share their own experiences, participate as volunteers for various functions, or host students at their own work settings.

- Improved communications with teens, in particular, as students' work-based experiences provide common ground for discussion of specific experiences, of work and career philosophies, and of goals and frustrations in attaining desired outcomes.

- Shared, real-life successes as teenage students are recognized for accomplishments in the real world.

- Maturation of students as they increasingly learn to position themselves within an adult environment and to recognize those behaviors that bring rewards and successes in the real world.

- Increased valuing of continuing education and training and more purposeful interest in college or other postsecondary education – i.e., more realistic reasons and goals associated with further education.

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Positioning Work-Based Learning

A business's decision to support work-based learning over an extended period of time is likely to be the result of a simple cost-benefit analysis. Although any given businessperson may choose to participate in a particular activity for purely personal or altruistic reasons, it is the long-term, strategic commitment that will serve students best. Responsible, professional managers in any industry – the very managers who are best able to provide the required leadership for a positive mentoring relationship – are those who use rational, objective data in their decision-making process. They will address with little emotion the fundamental issue of value: What do I get for my investment?

Conversely, educators often approach business leaders with some degree of insecurity, with "hat in hand" as if requesting a donation for new uniforms or for an ad in the yearbook. A more accurate and productive approach might be viewed from a marketing perspective. Business needs student employees and business needs the schools' participation in long-term human resource development.

Marketing Perspective. Viewed from a marketing perspective, the coordinating teacher might address four distinct topics as s/he requests the involvement of the business community:

- **Product:** Successful businesses design their product on the basis of the needs and perceived wants of their customers. For management to buy into the work-based learning initiative, decision-makers and gatekeepers must understand and see value in the product. To that end, they must be involved in the design of the product itself as, together, representatives of the school and business community identify, revise, schedule, and define outcomes for specific work-based activities. Getting Involved

- **Cost**: Just as the school must analyze the cost of various work-based activities, so too must the participating business. Each must consider both the direct, out-of-pocket costs associated with the experience (e.g., staff time, food and beverage, student wages) as well as the indirect costs that each will incur (e.g., lost opportunity, use of and damage to facilities and equipment, liability risks, management's time). Cost-benefit analysis must balance these and other potential expenses with the short and long-term benefits the business may derive. Ultimately, the most successful partnerships will be those in which the key decision-makers recognize the **benefits** associated with active participation in the initiative.

- **Location and Timing:** A key element of marketing is that of logistics – getting the right product to the right place at the right time with minimal cost. In fact, it's the cornerstone of many of the most successful contemporary businesses. Similarly, educators must be prepared to work with selected businesses on a wide variety of timing and location issues. In most industries, work is cyclical; management is less likely to volunteer staff time during high-intensity periods. Businesses operate on a 12-month, 24/7 calendar of sorts. Effective work-based programs, particularly employment-based programs, must recognize and resolve many issues associated with scheduling. Similarly, while it may be far easier to bring a speaker to the classroom, the impact of the same speaker may be far greater if the presentation is made on-site. Arranging for experiences off-site may add costs and planning complications (e.g., busing); therefore location decisions must be part of the overall strategic planning process for successful work-based programs. Careful, advance planning and pro-active management are critical to the long-term success of the initiative.

- **Communication:** In addition to communications associated with program operations, (Relating to Business Behavior) the school can add significant benefit (i.e., perceived value) for participating businesses through a carefully developed promotional initiative. By using the school's stature in the community to publicly acknowledge participating businesses, both the work-based program and the individual company are better positioned in the eyes of the public. Examples of effective communication tactics range from simple stickers and plaques for display on-site to award programs, press releases, and other more demanding activities. The ultimate goal of the communications efforts regardless of the level of sophistication is to make participation in the work-based program a point of community pride for each sponsoring organization. (See also Working with Business).

Working with Business

Venus or Mars? Spanish or English? Strategic or tactical? Educator or businessperson: We think differently, use different vocabularies, hold unique values, and focus on different priorities. Partnerships are possible, even essential. *Building* strong partnerships require us to recognize, accept, and respond to the realities of the business community. The best partnerships require planning, commitment, energy, and patience. They require serious focus and constancy of purpose. They *are* worth the effort, but they require us to understand that in many ways, cultures are different. Examples include: perception and valuation of time, measures of success, comfort with the work/school environment, planning/management skills, market orientation, scheduling priorities, reward structure, priorities, and understanding of and comfort with youth.

Working with Teens

Students, however intelligent and motivated, are young and inexperienced. While educators may be comfortable with the sometimes inconsistent, unpredictable nature of young people, business mentors may not. It is, therefore, important that coordinating teachers recognize and communicate both the value that teenage employees bring to the workplace and the special considerations that they and the work-based education initiative demand, including:

- Making work a learning experience
- Treating them as equals
- Acknowledging short-time perspectives
- Providing an active mentor
- Offering flexibility and responsibilities
- Supporting their personal initiatives
- Teaching them to plan and organize

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Communicating Benefits

Work-based learning offers real and tangible value to business and industry. However, if we expect support from the business community, it is our role as educators to effectively communicate the potential return on investment (ROI) as part of our overall marketing strategy. Like any good consumer product, part of the perceived value is the result of careful market positioning driven by effective communications strategies.

Almost by definition, *effective* communication *strategy* must be developed locally, within the context of the community we are seeking to reach. However, there are common elements of building a strategy that have implications for nearly any school/business community. These might include:

- Begin with a **marketing plan**. Marketing implies far more than developing a brochure or a series of promotional activities. In fact, marketing planning should be strategic and involve careful research to determine values, interests, needs, and motivators of all key targets. The very best communications or promotional strategies are only as effective as the programs they attempt to sell. Program design must flow from the active participation of all key players.

- Build program features from **planned benefits**. At each step of the development process, ask the fundamental question that drives all human behavior: "What's in it for me?" where "me" is each of the targets from whom support is needed (e.g., business management and potential mentors – as well as parents, school administrators, other faculty, students). From the list of benefits, design elements of the program that will ultimately become the outline of the overall work-based learning experience package.

- Position the program as a **brand** in the same way that a consumer products company creates an image for its product. Think McDonald's. What comes to mind first? For most people the images are of youth, fun, and fast. Few of us first think beef, deep fryer, or plastic. Like McDonald's, schools must position work-based learning in a way that is attractive and easily understood by business leaders who are not ingrained in the language, bureaucracy, or culture of education.

- Based on the positioning concept, identify the **key messages** to be communicated to the business community. Keeping the "me" focus, create several basic themes or ideas that will ultimately encourage business participation. Depending on the local environment, key messages might include participation in work-based learning as:

    - an investment in (future) human resources.
    - a point of community pride.
    - a way to earn recognition for support of the schools.
    - a trade-off for immediate part-time staffing.

- Using the results of the above steps, determine the specific **tools and techniques** that might best reach the selected audiences. Regardless of the specific tools (media) selected, always develop the appropriate message in terms of benefits. Keep the "me" focus as the core of each message. (As we communicate with business and industry, it is simply not relevant to them that a given activity will "help to integrate basic mathematical concepts with key tasks associated with high-wage, high-skill jobs." Conversely, depending on the audience, they may be interested in knowing that the work-based program will ultimately help them "find employees with better math skills.")

  Examples of communications strategies that work best in most settings are those that are the most personal and the most "connected." While a well-written, benefits-oriented, highly graphic brochure may be needed, it will provide best results when it is distributed:

    - in person.
    - with a personalized letter.
    - as part of a presentation at a service club meeting.
    - with a thank-you note for prior activities.
    - in response to articles and photographs in the local paper.

    - with a very graphic annual report.
    - by a business colleague (e.g., advisory committee member).
    - at a recognition function.
    - at a student organization function (e.g., competitive events).
    - by members of the school board.
    - in response to an introductory phone call or e-mail.

- Develop a **communications plan**, complete with detailed calendar. Too often, our efforts to promote participation in school activities are one-time initiatives. Effective communications require systematic, continuing, and focused efforts. For example, companies who rely on direct mail often schedule a minimum of three different mailings for delivery between one and three weeks apart. By doing so, they are able to significantly increase their response rate as compared with three independent mailings spread over a greater length of time.

The bottom line: If we want active participation of business and industry in support of a *continuing, systematic* work-based education initiative, we must assume the responsibility for communicating the program's benefits. Our communications efforts must be **planned, positioned, and benefits-oriented.**

Relating to Business Behavior
Recognition Activity

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Working With Business

Venus or Mars? Spanish or English? Strategic or tactical? Educator or businessperson: We think differently, use different vocabularies, hold unique values, and focus on different priorities. Partnerships are possible, even essential. *Building* strong partnerships require us to recognize, accept, and respond to the realities of the business community:

- **Demand is high** for those business leaders with the interest, ability, and willingness to contribute to the growth of young people.

- **Time is money** holds a greater meaning in the business community because, more so than in education, time *is* opportunity; opportunity costs are real.

- **Measures of success** are often very different. We think about the future of our students. Business leaders are measured in large part by their numbers.

- **Teens are scary** and so are teachers – to lots of adults. Many business leaders are uncertain how to work with teens. Many have insecurities held from their own school experiences.

- **Strategic** means long-term planning. Business leaders do it. Most of us don't. Getting their active participation requires careful planning and goal-oriented, focused dialogue.

- **Benefits sell** and substantive, meaningful work-based experiences will happen only as the result of perceived benefits by all players.

- **Time is of the essence**, but it's the rare business that works on the school calendar or daily schedule. Work-based learning happens when it happens; we must be there when it does.

- **Rewards are in the eye** of the beholder. As we ask them to meet our needs, we must plan to meet theirs.

- **Education is not** their job; it is ours.

- **Seldom will they know** how to build a work-based program that contributes to the company's goals *and* helps us help students.

- **The ball is in our court**.

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Coordinating the Employment-Based Experience

Paid, employment-based *education* is very easily confused with part-time jobs. It is the role of the coordinating teacher, through careful planning and management, to clearly differentiate one from the other. It is the planning and management of the experience that transforms work into work-based learning; it is the *learning* focus that is of interest to schools; and it is the responsibility of the coordinating teacher to make it happen. Successful planning and management of an employment-based program must include:

- **Selection of employer.** It is the role of the coordinating teacher to identify appropriate companies and appropriate jobs for student learners. While criteria for selection may change from community to community, it is critical that the teacher manages the selection process and that employment not be driven simply by what's available at the moment or by jobs students may already have. An informal, but written training agreement should clearly document both the employer's and the school's commitment to making the employment a learning experience.

- **Identification of sponsor/mentor**. Once an employer is identified, the coordinating teacher must work with the appropriate management personnel to identify a specific individual who will serve as the student's training sponsor and mentor at the work site. This critical step is frequently overlooked in traditional work experience programs, but is a key element of positioning employment as a learning experience.

- **Agreement on learning outcomes** . The fundamental purpose of the employment experience must be learning. Careful identification of learning outcomes is what ultimately makes the employment experience an effective tool. It is the element of planning that helps ensure a breadth of experience atypical of most teen jobs. Once again, it is the responsibility of the coordinating teacher, along with the sponsor/mentor, to clearly identify expectations for student learning over the agreed upon employment period. As outlined in the training agreement, a carefully documented training plan is used to clarify learning expectations and to facilitate the scheduling of specific activities and work-based assignments.

- **Regular work site visits**. The coordinating teacher is responsible for managing the employment experience, for balancing the need for immediate, productive work outcomes with learning, and for protection of the student's best interests. Initial contacts with management to formalize the training agreement and a preliminary meeting with the mentor should occur prior to the student's actual employment. (In some cases, a student may be employed and, *after applying the same selection criteria* as for other employers, the coordinating teacher may determine that the site is appropriate for employment-based learning. Nevertheless, it remains the teacher's responsibility to negotiate a training agreement and training plan as required for all student learners.)

  Following placement, the coordinating teacher remains responsible for the student's learning experiences. Planning and management of the experience requires regular, planned visits to the work site. Frequency of the visits will vary with the situation, but as a general guide the coordinating teacher should plan to visit:

  - once each week during the first and second weeks of employment
  - once each two weeks during the next 6 - 10 weeks of employment
  - once each month for the duration of the experience, except:
  - on demand as necessary to mediate performance problems and to ensure adherence to the training agreement and training plan

  Each work site visit should be planned in advance; depending on the employer, visits may be scheduled by appointment. Each visit should address some or all of the following:

  - student performance on assigned responsibilities
  - duties and tasks relative to the agreed upon training plan
  - off-the-clock projects and activities to expand the learning experience
  - safety conditions
  - mentoring responsibilities and skills
  - validation of work hours and negotiation of future schedules

- formal assessment leading to grades and academic credit
- observation of the student
- negotiation of rewards and/or disciplinary actions
- discussion of additional opportunities for involvement in program
- courtesy call on senior management
- documentation per policy and procedure, including training plan

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The Players: Roles and Expectations

Work-based education should be viewed not as a unique activity targeted at a single group of students, but as a coordinated series of activities and experiences serving all youth within the system. To that end, a comprehensive work-based program depends on many different individuals each contributing to the overall experience.

Teacher as Learning Manager Whether it's the senior English teacher, a career-technology instructor, or a seventh grade career counselor, the role of a work-based coordinating teacher is similar: planning and management of logistics and, more importantly, of anticipated learning outcomes. Done right, each experience has learning value. Business, however, is not well positioned to determine how it can best provide such value. Therefore, it is the individual teacher who must determine the potential of various activities and then define them in terms of instructional benefits for students.

Business/Industry as Learning Site Work-based experiences on-site offer very specific opportunities to help students better understand the nature of work and career. Examples of these include:

- observation of the working environment
- contact with incumbent workers and managers
- dialogue with HR personnel and senior executives
- observation of work tasks
- productive, paid or unpaid work

Sponsor as Mentor With the possible exception of the coordinating teacher, no individual is more critical to a work-based activity than the individual sponsor or mentor. Although the nature of the relationship varies depending on the experience, it is this individual who is best qualified to help students understand the opportunities of the industry in question and, with extended relationships, to coach and counsel a young person through the learning process. Therefore, identification and selection, as well as training and development, of appropriate mentors is a critical function of the coordinating teacher.

School as Administrator An effective work-based learning program must be a school-wide (or district-wide) initiative, rather than the domain of a single individual. The best programs involve virtually all teachers and counselors and require the active support of the administration. For maximum impact, school administrators must be willing to minimize policy and regulatory impediments, take appropriate risks, support career guidance, provide planning and coordination time, facilitate partnerships throughout the community, create reward structures for teachers and students, and encourage the involvement of all students and their parents.

Parents as Support Parents remain the number one influence on young people. Therefore, if a work-based program is to reach all students, parents must recognize its value to their own children and be willing to encourage participation. Additional parental support of the program can take many forms, including active support of the various experiences. Since many work-based experiences occur off school premises and outside of normal school hours, parents must be willing to assume a portion of the responsibility for their children's participation, including risks associated with transportation and unmonitored activities (e.g., employment-based experiences).

Student as Work-Based Learner All work-based experiences require an exceptionally high level of active involvement of individual students. In fact, it is this high level of interactivity and participation that contributes to the exceptionally positive outcomes of productive programs. Although the learning experiences remain under the supervision of a coordinating teacher, they are often carried out relatively independently. Therefore, it is particularly important that each student be fully prepared in advance, that specific policies and expectations are clearly communicated and documented, and that a system of accountability be in place for all activities.

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Teacher as Learning Manager

Whether it's the senior English teacher, a career-technology instructor, or a seventh grade career counselor, the role of a work-based coordinating teacher is similar: planning and management of logistics and, more importantly, of anticipated learning outcomes. Done right, each experience has learning value. Business, however, is not well positioned to determine how it can best provide such value. Therefore, it is the individual teacher who must determine the potential of various activities and then define them in terms of instructional benefits for students. Key activities of the coordinating teacher include:

- Diagnose learning needs and develop program goals
- Develop specific learning objectives for each activity (Curriculum Connection)
- Identify opportunities in the business sector (Business/Industry as a Learning Site)
- Develop communications strategies to encourage business involvement (Communicating Benefits)
- Arrange specific activities and negotiate training agreements (Training Agreement)
- Identify individual sponsors/mentors (Sponsor as a Mentor) (Selecting Mentors)
- Negotiate training plans (Training Plans)
- Prepare students to meet the business community (Meeting Business People)
- Manage logistical issues, including scheduling and transportation (Logistics)
- Match students with appropriate experiences (Matching Students)
- Supervise on-site experiences, particularly employment-based experiences (Coordinating)
- Assess student performance (Assessment Responsibilities)
- Develop activities to encourage student reflection (Curriculum Connection) (Job Shadow Reflection)
- Document activities and communicate with all parties (Record Keeping)
- Plan and deliver sponsor-development activities (Sponsor Development)

Introduction Card
Business Analysis
Employer Prospect Card

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Business/Industry as a Learning Site

Work-based experiences on-site offer very specific opportunities to help students better understand the nature of work and career. Examples of these include:

- observation of the working environment
- contact with incumbent workers and managers
- dialogue with HR personnel and senior executives
- observation of work tasks
- productive, paid or unpaid work

Because the quality of the learning experience is wholly dependent upon the company or organizational environment, site selection becomes a critical aspect of the coordinating teacher's overall planning. As with all aspects of work-based learning programs, criteria for selection will vary according to local needs and opportunities. Consideration should include such criteria as:

- Company practices relative to contemporary benchmarks for similar organizations
- Equipment relative to state-of-the-art
- Position on civil rights, EEO, ADA, etc.
- Safety record, OSHA compliance
- Compliance with FLSA, state and local labor laws
- Cleanliness and adequacy of the facility relative to the industry
- Management support of and interest in education
- Nature of the existing workforce relative to the industry
- Variety of experiences available
- Management support of employment-based learning practices, including:
  - -Assignment of mentor
  - -Availability of training
  - -Opportunities for job rotation, variety of assignments
- Reputation in the community
- Relationship with union, rank and file workers
- Company's long-term need for employees
- Growth opportunities for student employees (employment-based experiences)
- Existing team-orientation, quality management practices
- Company perspective on human resource development

It is important not to lose perspective on the purpose of work-based learning. The school's role is to ensure the development of academic and technical skills that have value. In some instances, particularly during extreme economic conditions (good or bad), finding appropriate sites for specific experiences may be unusually challenging. In these conditions, schools may provide better opportunities through school-based enterprises and comparable activities. In short, for younger students a negative experience in the workplace may be worse than no experience.

Business Analysis
Employer Prospect Card
Orientation to Business
WECEP

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Identification of Sponsor/Mentor

A good coach will make his players see what they can be rather than what they are. –Ara Parasheghian

With the possible exception of the coordinating teacher, no individual is more critical to a work-based activity than the individual sponsor or mentor. Although the nature of the relationship varies depending on the experience, it is this individual who is best qualified to help students understand the opportunities of the industry. Mentoring, particularly of young people, can be highly rewarding, but requires a firm commitment and significant effort outside of routine job responsibilities. Specifically, the coordinating teacher should identify mentors who are willing and able to:

- actively assist students in their efforts to establish goals relative to career development.
- provide training to develop skills for the immediate task and for future opportunities.
- reinforce the value and relevance of academic skills.
- serve as a role model, both specific to the job and for the greater good.
- advise the student in terms of job performance, growth opportunities, and networking.
- coach the student on specific job skills.
- orient student to all aspects of the industry.
- advocate on behalf of the student, both to management and to other gatekeepers.
- evaluate student performance in a constructive manner.
- create a supportive, trusting relationship.
- look out for the best interests of the student at all times.
- ensure the health and safety of students in the workplace.

Benefits of Mentoring
Selecting Mentors

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School as Administrator

An effective work-based learning program must be a school-wide (or district-wide) initiative, rather than the domain of a single individual. The best programs involve virtually all teachers and counselors and require the active support of the administration. For maximum impact, school administrators must be willing to minimize policy and regulatory impediments, take appropriate risks, support career guidance, provide planning and coordination time, facilitate partnerships throughout the community, create reward structures for teachers and students, and encourage the involvement of all students and their parents.

Specific examples of required administrative support might include:

- Policy statement in support of basic work-based education principles
- Academic credit for work-based learning
- Whole-school reform initiative to integrate work-based experiences within all subjects
- Classes to teach career and technical skills
- Elimination or modification of rules and policies that impede implementation
- Support of career guidance and counseling at all grade levels
- Resources, including personnel, transportation, and facilities
- Flexibility with scheduling
- Active solicitation of community involvement at the highest levels of management
- Rewards and accountability relative to outcomes
- Release time and extended contracts for participating teachers
- Encouragement of cross-discipline dialogue regarding learning outcomes
- Multiple connections between the school and work-based learning opportunities
- Documentation of expectations and evaluation of program effectiveness
- Requirements for student portfolios, end-of-year projects, etc.
- Policies supporting recruiting, placement, and management of student participants
- Policies supporting unique program requirements

School Benefits

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Parents' Role in Supporting Work-Based Learning

Parents remain the number one influence on young people. Therefore, if a work-based program is to reach all students, parents must recognize its value to their own children and be willing to encourage participation. Additional support of the program can take many forms, including:

- Sharing of specific work-related incidents from a positive perspective
- Candid discussion of work challenges
- Candid discussion of both management and rank and file perspectives
- Encouragement of reflection by their child relative to his or her work experiences
- Learning about school-sponsored opportunities
- Encouraging students to set and work toward obtainable goals
- Valuing and encouraging continuing education *with purpose*
- Participating in specific work-based activities as appropriate
- Encouraging support of one's own employer
- Positioning work as a positive aspect of life
- Ensuring student attendance

Since many work-based experiences occur off school premises and outside of normal school hours, parents must be willing to assume a portion of the responsibility for their children's participation, including risks associated with transportation and indirectly monitored activities (e.g., employment-based experiences). To that end, parents may support work-based initiatives by:

- holding school and coordinating teacher harmless
- agreeing to requirements for work permits
- allowing participation in off-premises activities (field trips, etc.)
- providing transportation as needed

Parent/Student Agreement

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Student as Work-Based Learner

Properly managed, all work-based experiences require the active involvement of individual students. Compared with "traditional" academic classes, the learning process depends on a higher level of interactivity and participation by the student. Although the experiences remain under the supervision of a coordinating teacher, they are often carried out relatively independently. Therefore, it is particularly important that each student be fully prepared in advance, that specific policies and expectations are clearly communicated and documented, and that a system of accountability be in place for all activities. Specifically:

- Goals must be established for the overall program.
- Activities must be carefully planned and tied to the curriculum.
- Student and work-based experiences must be carefully matched.
- Students must understand the expectations for business behavior.
- Anticipated learning outcomes must be documented and students held accountable for achieving these expectations.
- Student responsibilities must be clearly articulated.
- Policies must be developed and communicated in advance.
- Consideration must be given appropriate access for all students.

When work-based experiences are part of a student employment program (e.g., co-op, internship, or youth apprenticeship), it is particularly important that both student and employer recognize the program as "educational," and as significantly more than a part-time job. Both parties must be prepared in advance to balance productivity, compensation, and learning to provide a win-win employment situation. To that end, a minimum length of employment should be negotiated in advance. Doing so ensures that the employer will recover some of the training costs associated with employment-based programs and discourages impulsive terminations. Conversely, such agreements send a clear message to the student, discouraging job changes based on short-term compensation, minor personality conflicts, etc.

When the work-based experience includes mentoring, particularly with employment-based experiences, the coordinating teacher should help the student understand the role of the mentor and make specific recommendations for gaining maximum benefit from the experience. Specifically, the student should recognize that a mentor can help him or her:

- learn new skills.
- identify new opportunities.
- meet other people who can open doors of opportunity.
- build confidence.
- develop broader perspectives on careers and work.
- avoid errors.
- develop better judgment and decision-making skills.
- understand the politics of the work environment.
- as an advocate to senior management.
- as a reference for future employment.

Parent/Student Agreement

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Goals

The long-term effectiveness of work-based learning depends in large part on the identification of strategic goals that lead to a direct curriculum connection. In an ideal setting, goals are developed district-wide (K-12) prior to the development of specific projects and activities to achieve specific learning objectives. Broadly based goal statements might address:

- Career awareness (e.g., jobs, labor market, career ladders)
- Nature of work (e.g., benefits, types, societal expectations)
- Concept of "labor" (e.g., labor laws, union/organization)
- Nature of the workplace (e.g., environmental issues, nature of interactions)
- Work ethic (e.g., values, rewards, day-to-day challenges)
- Skill development (e.g., employability, job)
- All aspect of the industry (i.e., broad perspective)
- Interpersonal skills (e.g., image, communications, consideration)
- Networks (e.g., value, techniques)
- Professional growth (e.g., continuing education, OJT learning)
- Use of mentoring (e.g., valuing, techniques)
- Legal issues (e.g., FLSA)
- Application of academics (e.g., relevance of academics to work)

These and other program goals provide the context for work-based learning and provide all teachers a framework within which to encourage student activities, reflection, and focus.

Curriculum Connection

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Curriculum Connection

Work *experiences* become work-based *learning* opportunities *only* if they are tied in a meaningful way to specific curricula. Without the school as an intermediary, the student cashier or construction helper learns little after the first few days of employment. Conversely, when the coordinating teacher actively seeks to connect work experience with curricula, the experience is quite different and far more productive for student and employer alike.

All work-based learning programs might consider how to integrate the following into the day-to-day planning of student experiences:

- Specific job tasks (age and program appropriate)
- Critical thinking and decision-making skills
- Academic skills
- Technology and computer skills
- Communications and interpersonal skills (e.g., listening, feedback, non-verbal)
- Understanding and appreciation of diversity
- Business, personal, and work ethics
- Teamwork
- Interaction with business community

These and other broad topics might be integrated with the day-to-day education process in a variety of ways, including:

- Opportunity to reflect on work experiences in class discussions (any course)
- Journalizing
- Research and thought papers (any course)
- Joint assignments, particularly traditional academic and career-technical courses
- Operation of various in-school enterprises
- End-of-year, end-of-course, senior projects
- Development of portfolios
- Planned and evaluated OJT experiences
- Student organization activities

Goals
Training Plans

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Legal/Liability Issues

Work-based learning exposes students to a broad range of activities outside of the traditional school boundaries. In its role as an intermediary for these activities, the school is subject to varying degrees of responsibility and potential liability. Therefore, it is incumbent on coordinating teachers and school administrators to fully understand applicable laws and liability issues, including:

- Potential impact of student actions during off-site activities
- Potential impact of acts affecting students in work-based settings
- Safety of workplace, including OSHA and other regulations
- Confidentiality considerations, agreements
- EEO and civil rights issues, including access to programs
- Insurance
- Permissions and informed consent
- Emergency information
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Workers Compensation laws
- Wage and Hour (FLSA and state) rules and regulations
- Policy and procedure guidelines for off-site activities
- Transportation (liability issues)
- Job site rules and regulations (OSHA, etc.)

CAUTION: This is a listing of examples only. Schools and coordinating teachers are strongly advised to determine risks, establish policies, and analyze applicable local, state, and federal regulations in conjunction with appropriate legal counsel.

Labor Laws and Issues (PDF)

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Student Access

Work-based learning is a concept with application to all students, at all grade levels. As part of the overall school strategy, consideration should be given to age-appropriate activities throughout a student's school experience. For example, there are opportunities for students in the early grades to connect with workers through activities such as:

- Guest speakers
- Field trips
- Media-based activities
- Interviews
- Correspondence (e.g., e-mail)

In addition to continuing activities to connect with workers, additional opportunities to observe work may be appropriate for middle and junior-high age students (e.g., job shadowing). Finally, as students reach their mid-teens, the school may add employment-based opportunities, including longer, more in-depth experiences – both paid and unpaid.

Throughout the design of the work-based experience program, consideration must be given to ensuring opportunities for and to *encouraging participation* of all students, regardless of such variables as:

- Ability levels
- Academic performance (historical)
- Race and ethnicity
- Gender
- Career aspirations

Special consideration might be given to ensuring access by under-served populations. Conversely, coordinating teachers may wish to position the program such that participation in various activities is viewed as an earned right or a privilege. In this event, criteria for participation must be objective and clearly articulated.

Continuum of Experiences
Faculty Recommendations (form)

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Assessment Responsibilities

The "experience" of work-based learning can range from little more than a fun day (or hour, or afternoon) out of school, to substantive, meaningful extensions of the classroom. The key to making the experience meaningful is not its length, but the element of planning and effort to identify expected educational outcomes. To the degree that we expect the focus of work-based learning to be "learning," experiences must be planned and managed in the same way that an experienced teacher might develop a lesson plan. Each activity, then, should include specific learning objectives, measurable outcomes, and a plan for assessment. All work-based experiences should become a factor in determining course grades in the same manner as any other substantive assignment, test, or project.

Examples of assessment techniques might include:

- **Testing:** incorporating specific information that a student might have been reasonably expected to obtain through participation in a given activity.
- **Reflection:** specific assignments to encourage students to reflect upon and criticize their own experience, including reporting on "content" learned and, equally important, on the inferences drawn from the total experience. (**Sample Guide for Reflection**)
- **Portfolios:** documentation of work-based experiences over an extended period of time, with an emphasis on sampling a student's best work. (**Sample Guide for Portfolio**)
- **Culminating activities:** major projects or other activities based on previously obtained information and experiences, designed with the goal of encouraging synthesis and inference. Examples might include competitive events, senior project, development of an in-store enterprise, handbook of x, etc.
- **Skill testing:** careful assessment of the student's performance on a given task, using **rubrics** or other appropriate tools to objectively measure one's skill level. (**Guidelines for Using Rubrics**)
- **On-the-job assessment:** using training plans and feedback from the workplace mentor to document learning of identified specific skills and concepts. (**OJT Assessment Procedure**)

For work-based activities to be positioned appropriately within the context of the overall class, they should play a role in the overall assessment of the student's performance – i.e., they should be a factor in determining the student's letter grade. To that end, each activity should include an appropriate assessment that leads to the awarding of points (credit) toward the course grade. Activities might be weighted in much the same manner as any other classroom assignment.

For **employment-based** experiences (e.g., co-op) involving a substantial amount of the student's time, and resulting in academic credit, the grade may be determined by utilizing a variety of the above factors. For example, points might be awarded for the demonstration of specific skills (per the training plan), for completion of additional activities at the training station, for completion of a work journal, or for on-line research of the industry.

Sample Grading Procedure

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Planning Activities

Since work-based learning depends heavily on the active involvement of the business community, and since we are asking business/industry to make a substantive commitment to the program, it is critical that appropriate representatives be involved in the planning, design, and evaluation stages. Critical to the growth of a quality work-based program is the active participation of industry personnel, either individually or as part of an advisory and steering committee. Examples of roles that the industry representatives (committee(s)) might play include:

- Competency/Curriculum validation to ensure that instruction adequately supports career goals, including preparation for continuing education
- Support of articulation and integration partnerships with other educational programs, with industry training, and with various community opportunities for professional growth of both teacher and student (e.g., service club activities, trade organization programs)
- Development of work-based case problems
- Documentation of work-based anecdotes of instructional value
- Assistance with student assessment, both formative and summative
- Analysis of current and future employment opportunities
- Marketing and communications focused at specific markets, including other business leaders, students and their parents
- Identification of resources and opportunities to support student experiences (e.g., contacts who might serve as guest speakers, employment networks)
- Providing of meaningful work-based experiences for teachers for their own professional development (e.g., internships, participation in various training, summer employment)
- Assumption of a leadership role in strategic planning

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Connecting With Workers

Other than a close circle of family and teachers, many students have very little contact with adults and virtually no contact in the context of work and careers. A fundamental goal of work-based learning, then, is to encourage connections with appropriate representatives of business and industry and to provide adequate structure to ensure meaningful outcomes. The best contacts are likely to be those established by the coordinating teacher. Nevertheless, students themselves (and their families) may be able to facilitate the networking process.

Examples of activities that might be used to help students connect with workers might include:

Career fair/Career day: Implemented locally in many different ways, the common element of career fairs is the opportunity for students to meet and talk with several different workers in one location over a fixed period of time. Career fairs are often school-based, with students moving from room to room or table to table to meet and talk with individual business/industry representatives. Career fairs may be organized to include representatives from many different industries or from a single industry represented by several different "jobs" (e.g., construction industry represented a general contractor and representatives of each major trade).

Community organizations: Although highly varied on the basis of industry and geographic setting, many communities do offer opportunities for students to participate in various professional meetings and activities. While the most productive sessions are likely to be those associated with an industry or career (e.g., Ohio Restaurant Association, database managers, help groups), other opportunities exist among organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, service groups, union-sponsored activities, etc.

Employer-based training programs: A limited number of programs are made available by some organizations on a space or time available basis. Options for access to selected training programs have increased with the advent of Internet-based programming. Although few companies will provide access to in-depth materials, programs as basic as "new employee orientation" may have merit in terms of helping students prepare for those early connections with industry.

Guest speakers: Individual guest speakers can be very effective when the presentations are "negotiated" in advance to ensure appropriate focus. Over time, a cadre of speakers is easily developed on the basis of their effectiveness in achieving desired outcomes. (In other words, keep inviting the good ones!)

Interviews: As with guest speakers, individual and small-group interviews provide an effective tool if the coordinating teacher has effectively established desired outcomes and prepared both the student interviewer and the business interviewee appropriately. Interviews may take many forms, essentially balancing logistical ease against varying degrees of direct contact (e.g., phone, email, in-person).

Mentoring: The use of work-based volunteer mentors, both short and long-term, helps to establish a relationship that can have lasting value and a particularly strong impact on the student's exploration of work and career. The specific role of a mentor varies according to duration, goals, and setting. However, most mentoring arrangements seek to connect students with adults who will serve as coach, counselor, technical expert, and advocate. The mentoring relationship introduced early in the work-based program might extend (even as mentors and student-mentor matches change) throughout the entire work-based experience.

Role-plays/Presentation: Involving business representatives in various role-play situations provides the value of direct contact, along with the opportunity for the representative to provide guidance and support in terms of the student's work. The concept of role-play may be extended to include presentation of projects, work samples, etc.

Work-based classroom: Whether it's permanent (e.g., classroom in the mall) or temporary (e.g., using available training or meeting rooms), many schools have experimented with moving instruction into various work settings. Doing so provides the context of a given industry as students are surrounded with its people, equipment, and environment. Similarly, it provides easy access to the existing workforce and facilitates involvement of many different individuals as speakers, mentors, advisors, etc. Conversely, work-based classrooms face transportation

challenges, risk of isolating students from day-to-day school events, etc. For these reasons, work-based classrooms, particularly permanent ones, may have the greatest utility for upper division career and technical programs.

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Observing Workers

A student seriously interested in a career in the chemical industry had listened to guest speakers, completed telephone interviews, and enjoyed her chemistry class. She was excited about the opportunity to – finally – visit a real-life chemical engineer in her lab down at the factory. She returned the next day appalled at the smell, convinced that she "could never work in a place like that." The bottom line: at some point, work-based programs must find ways to get students into the actual work environment. Examples might include:

Field trips: For the traditional field trip to be meaningful in the context of work-based learning, it must be organized to focus on planned outcomes. Most easily accessible "public" tours are entertaining, but may fall short of providing the real-life exposure that can best contribute to student learning. Nevertheless, visits to work sites have the potential, if properly briefed and debriefed, to open students' eyes to many different opportunities.

Job shadowing: It may be for a morning or a week, involving a single student or a small group. Regardless of the specific details, the opportunity to observe (shadow) an employee as s/he carries out day-to-day activities makes real the nature of a particular type of work. As with all work-based activities, for a job-shadow experience to be effective, it must be carefully planned in advance, with specific learning outcomes clearly identified.

Site-based assignments: Although challenging for the coordinating teacher to arrange, few experiences offer better learning value than specific projects or activities for students to complete on the premises of a given business. Depending on the industry and company, assignments may range from interviewing clients to sourcing supplies, from sampling effluent to measuring tolerances.

Site visits: Falling somewhere between an internship and job shadowing, individual or small group site visits offer one of the most effective ways to provide a solid overview of any given industry and career ladder within the industry. While they may vary considerably from company to company, each site visit should provide for the student to spend time with one or more workers willing to provide a tour of the work environment, descriptions of various responsibilities, and an opportunity for the student(s) to interview and question.

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- Determine the purpose(s) and scope of the work-based learning program (e.g., career awareness, career exploration, technical skill development).
- Identify the course(s)/faculty that will support the school-based aspects of the program (e.g., career-technical courses, counseling program, cross-discipline team).
- Determine the specific types of activities and the grade levels at which they will be offered (i.e., **a Continuum of experiences**).
- Match staff with specific activities (e.g., identify a coordinator for all activities, a team leader for 8th grade experiences, etc.).
- Determine school-wide needs for site-based experiences over the course of the entire year.
- Identify or develop appropriate letters, brochures, or other communication tools for each relevant audience. (There are many documents on this web site that address benefits, marketing, and communication to students, parents, and the business community.)
- Initiate contacts with all appropriate organizations and individuals with potential to participate in the specific activities identified above.
- Develop a database of potential business participants.
- Match specific business partners (company and people) with students and activities.
- Plan mentor-development activities as appropriate to overall program.
- Prepare students as appropriate. (**Meeting Business People**)

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Working

Co-op students express higher levels of satisfaction with school than non-co-op students, and students in supervised co-op jobs are more likely than students working in unsupervised jobs to use reading, writing, math, and other skills on the job; learn new things; have more autonomy; find the work more intrinsically motivating; and acquire information or motivation that helps them in school. (1)

Why? What is it about co-op that makes it different? Does the same difference apply to other *employment*-based experiences? The difference, we believe, is planning, management, assessment, documentation, and school credit.

The ultimate experience to help students understand the context of work, is work. However, it is critical that the coordinating teacher understands and clearly differentiates between traditional part-time work and the carefully planned and managed employment-based experience that has positive learning impact. Working every night down at "Acme" to "pay for the wheels" is not the equivalent of *any appropriate* work-based strategy. Conversely, working at "Acme" for a defined number of hours, while following a negotiated training plan, may be an ideal orientation to work and a valuable way to reinforce and extend academic and technical skills learned in school.

Specifically, *all* employment associated with work-based learning should be driven by careful planning to integrate work-based and school-based activities, and to integrate academic with technical skills. Examples of employment-based learning – i.e., work-based learning experiences based on employment (or pseudo-employment) – might include:

Clinical experiences: work-based program typically structured as a paid or unpaid internship (see below) in a medical or closely allied setting

Community service: one of several labels associated with service learning (below)

Cooperative work experience: Frequently confused with work-release and other less demanding programs, cooperative work experiences (co-op) are extended, paid work experiences controlled by a negotiated training agreement and associated training plan. Properly managed co-op experiences require multiple experiences within the sponsoring company, observation and intervention by the coordinating teacher, assessment and documentation of performance, and school credit for successful completion of the experience. Co-op experiences are increasingly common in college settings, but frequently involve less active participating of the coordinating faculty than is recommended here.

Early placement: Defined differently in different settings, the essence of early placement programs is permission for a student to complete the technical portions of his/her coursework prior to the end of the school year and to obtain supervised employment-based placement for the balance of the year. In some settings, students may be allowed to complete both academic and technical skill requirements prior to year end, allowing for a full-time early placement.

Internship: Paid or unpaid, internships are generally organized similarly to co-op experiences, but for a shorter time period. Internships may run from a few weeks to several months, but are generally not viewed as continuing employment and may focus on a single basic experience as opposed to the variety required in co-op settings. Like co-op, quality internship experiences require observation and intervention by the coordinating teacher, assessment and documentation of performance, and school credit for successful completion of the experience. (Credit is most often awarded in the context of the overall course grade, as with any major course project or assignment.)

Long-term, paid experiences: see cooperative work experience, above

Mentoring: With employment-based experiences, the student's mentor is frequently his/her immediate supervisor. Sometimes referred to as the training sponsor, mentoring in an employment-based experience is similar, but not identical to mentoring done independently of employment. In this situation, the mentor is more directly responsible

for productivity and is continually challenged to balance the short-term needs of the organization with the best interests of the student (and, usually, the long-term interests of the organization).

Regardless of the specific work-based experience being addressed, the use of work-based mentors, both short- and long-term, helps to establish a relationship that can have lasting value and a particularly strong impact on the student's exploration of work and career. The specific role of a mentor varies according to duration, goals, and setting. However, most mentoring arrangements seek to connect students with adults who will serve as coach, counselor, technical expert, and advocate. The mentoring relationship introduced early in the work-based program might extend (even as mentors and student-mentor matches change) throughout a variety of different work-based experiences.

School-based enterprise: Increasingly schools are looking at internal options for providing legitimate work-based experiences. Once limited to helping in the cafeteria or providing assistance to the front office, custodian, et al., contemporary school-based enterprises range from store and banking operations to home construction, market research services, computer repair, coffee shops, automotive repair, and the like. School-based enterprises offer the advantages of more direct control of the coordinating teacher (with corresponding closer ties to curriculum) and less pressure for profitability. Conversely, regardless of how well they simulate real-world settings, they remain insulated from most external competitive and regulatory pressures. Nevertheless, many schools have had very positive outcomes from student involvement with school-based enterprises.

Service learning: Relatively new to the work-based learning environment, service learning generally refers to "pseudo-employment" with a sponsoring (often not-for-profit) organization. Students are assigned real work on an unpaid basis over an extended period of time. Like all work-based experiences, service learning requires careful planning and management to ensure that the focus is on learning as opposed to "free" student labor. It is important to differentiate service learning from simpler, short-term community service projects.

Short-term placements: see internship, above.

Work-release: Simple work-release programs that permit a qualified student to leave school early to report to work (without school intervention) is generally not considered a legitimate work-based learning experience.

Youth apprenticeship: Patterned after traditional, union-sponsored apprenticeship programs, youth apprenticeships are considered by many to be the most sophisticated and accountable of the various employment-based experiences. Programs are based on clearly identified skills and the:

- active participation of both the employer *and* the union(s)
- integration of work and curriculum
- (frequently) structured linkages with additional formal education
- (frequently) documentation with a certificate of mastery (technical skills)

(1) The American School-to-Career Movement.
Richard Mendel
American Youth Policy Forum

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Tips and Tools

Contents List for Techniques and Tools not specific to one category of activities

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Training Plan Procedures

1. Identify the observable tasks associated with a student's work-based experience. You can generate your own task lists by talking with the mentor and other businesspeople employed in the industry, reading training materials, and examining task lists that have been compiled through various research studies. For many industries, you can obtain software or hard-copy training plans from various curriculum centers.

2. Present the list of tasks to the mentor, and solicit input to ensure that all are appropriate for the specific situation. Invite the mentor to add additional tasks as appropriate. Modify the list accordingly.

3. Work with the mentor to select tasks for the student to focus on during the first evaluation cycle. Since work-based experiences are a joint venture, the needs of the coordinating teacher and of the mentor must both be considered. Ideally, you'd like the student to focus on tasks that will be discussed in the classroom during the same time frame. Conversely, the mentor has priorities in terms of productive output and will need to train accordingly. Negotiate to obtain maximum value for the student while protecting the needs of the business partner. Consider the mentor's position:
   - You may be able to modify the sequence of your classroom instruction to better meet the needs of this and other businesses.
   - You may determine that this particular site or mentor is not an appropriate placement for a work-based student at this time.

   Listen. Negotiate. Work together. Select 8-10 tasks to be evaluated during the next month. Mark these on the training plan. If you're working with a hard copy training plan, each of you should keep a copy. If your training plans are on software, you could generate a list of the tasks selected and mail it to the training sponsor.

4. Review with each student the specific tasks on the training plan for which s/he is responsible. Depending on the nature of your work-based program, clarify your expectations. For example, do you want the student to learn to do the task, to observe the task being completed, to interview someone about the task, etc.

5. Evaluate student progress on the identified tasks. Working with the mentor, evaluate the student's performance for each task previously identified. Ask the mentor to rate the student's performance on each. For those tasks on which the student received a low rating, ask the training sponsor to identify specific areas of weakness and to suggest ways that the student could improve her or his performance. For tasks on which the student received high marks, ask the mentor to give examples which illustrate the outstanding performance. Have the mentor sign the training plan. Then, work together to select three to five additional tasks.

6. Communicate the results of the evaluation to the student. Identify areas that need to be improved, and provide the training sponsor's suggestions for improvement. But don't stop there. Be sure that you also identify strengths that have been pointed out by the training sponsor. Provide evidence to support those factors. Ask the student to sign the training plan. Give the student a copy of the new tasks. Record the date and nature of the conference.

7. Continue the cycle, adding new tasks each visit and removing from the list those for which the student has demonstrated proficiency or completed the assignment.

Training Plan

Co-op General Evaluation Form

Internship General Evaluation Form

Co-op Skill-Set Evaluation Form

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Career Exploration
Job Shadow/Internship
Guide for Reflection

Experience: _____

Using as a starting point what you've learned from this experience, consider how it is related to your own future. There are no right or wrong answers for this assignment, but you will be evaluated on how thoroughly you respond to each question.

Answer each question on the basis of your own skills, interests, and attributes. Think carefully about what you like and don't like, what's important to you, how and where you'd like to be in five years, in ten.

- Why did you pick this particular career area to observe?
- In what ways did the work and work environment differ from what you expected?
- What aspects of the job(s) did you find appealing?
- What aspects of the job(s) did you find unappealing?
- How does what you learn in high school relate to this career area? Be specific. Think about all of the courses you take and what you are expected to learn in each.
- What are the rewards you believe would result from a successful career in this area? (Be sure to consider the total compensation package, as well as all other potential rewards.)
- Think about the typical day, week, and year for someone in this career area. What about it appeals to you? What is the downside?
- Do the rewards of this career justify its education and training requirements?
- Does the level of responsibility (for yourself and for supervision and management of others) seem appropriate to your own interests, goals, and preparation? How so?
- Is this career area still of interest to you? Based on what you've learned and on your own feelings (above), what other career areas do you believe you should explore?

Sample Guide
Career Portfolio

Your portfolio is the most important story you'll ever tell. It is *your* story told with a purpose. It's no kid story. Your career portfolio is a lifelong project that can help you get where you want. It's like a resume with passion, with history, with tangible examples of who you are and what you're capable of. If you start now and work at it regularly, your portfolio can help you for the rest of your life. Best of all, it's a fun project!

What it is. Simply put, a portfolio is a collection of samples – samples of your experiences, your accomplishments, your skills and your interests. The purpose of *this* portfolio is to document what you have to offer a business or organization. It's a chance to tell a prospective employer that you can do the job – and to prove it with evidence. Your evidence may be anything from actual project documentation (letters, forms, journals, permits, drawings) to photographs and recordings.

What counts. Many of your teachers may require portfolios of your work in a particular class. Maybe you've done many different portfolios over the years. If so, you're a step ahead. But, simply put, this one is the big one. The real deal. Your career portfolio is the one portfolio that can and should stay with you forever! It's a work in progress that should be updated regularly – refocused, updated, made more sophisticated as your tastes and abilities change. What counts? Everything that's relevant to progressing in your career.

Start with evidence from your classes. If you're good in math, include some proof. Good writer? Prove it. Got leadership? Explain it. Good with tools? What have you done? Athletic? What have sports taught you? Work hard? Where's the evidence?

Only you know what's inside. You've done lots of good things over the years. You have interests – some public, some private. You know what you like, what you'd like to do more of. Your portfolio is your chance to dig deep. To prove to others what you already know. To document for others why you deserve a chance.

Getting started. Collect proof. Keep things that show what you're capable of, that illustrate experiences you've had. Below is a list of ideas. But remember, this is going to be your portfolio. Collect evidence that is relevant to you, to where you want to go with your own career. Here are some ideas of things to collect or document:

- Assignments of which you are proud (any class)
- Photographs of things you've done
- Report cards highlighting classes you're particularly interested in
- Work history, including documentation of responsibilities
- Competency record listing specific skills you've learned
- Programs, agenda, minutes, letters, and other evidence of participation

Organizing. The older you get, the more stuff you'll have collected. As special as you are, nobody (except maybe your grandmother) wants to see it all. So, you're going to have to make some decisions. Selecting what to include in your portfolio isn't always easy. You'll be tempted to include items from your most fun or your hardest projects and activities. That's good *if* they represent what's important to you *in terms of the purpose of this particular portfolio.* Remember, your career portfolio is not a scrapbook in the literal sense (although it may look like one). Your portfolio is a collection of evidence that helps position you for a particular goal: a job, college, training program, apprenticeship, promotion, raise, etc.

Selecting and organizing your materials will not be easy, because you have to match your interests with those of your audience. For your portfolio to have impact, it has to meet the needs of your prospective employer (or admissions officer, or boss, et al.). If you're to get the attention you deserve, you must talk in their terms. You must figure out what's important to your audience and then prepare your portfolio accordingly. For a career portfolio, here are some ideas that might be of particular interest to a potential employer:

- Reliability: What evidence can you provide to prove your reliability?
- Leadership: You don't have to be president of your class. Ever organized your friends to do something? Been active in a career organization?
- Intellect: Good student? Remember, grades are not the only way to prove your intelligence. In fact, some people believe there are many other (and better) alternatives. And, nearly everyone agrees that there are many different kinds of intelligence. Document yours.
- Academic skills: What have you learned?
- Technical skills: What can you do?
- Work experience: Everything counts, including lawns and baby-sitting.
- Interests: School and work experience is critical to your success. So are your interests. What are they? How do they relate? Remember, a prospective employer may not care about your stamp collection, but s/he may care a lot about your ability to focus, to organize, to research, and to document – all skills you might have developed while collecting stamps – or covers, or cards, or posters.

Documentation. The hardest part of creating a really strong portfolio is documentation. It's also your chance to tell your story in your words, to personalize the evidence you've provided. Documentation is just this simple: In your words, written to your specific audience (employer, admissions officer, et al.), explain *in a very short paragraph* why you've included this particular item and what it demonstrates of interest to the reviewer. Here's an example:

> **Evidence:** The program booklet from your mentor-appreciation banquet
> **Documentation:** I was chairman of our mentor appreciation banquet which we planned over a period of three months. Four different student committees, our teacher, and a business advisor planned the banquet. Twenty-three mentors (81%) attended, along with all of our students and 53 parents. I learned a lot about project planning, coordinating groups of workers, and consensus-building among my classmates who had lots of different ideas. I believe that what I learned on this project will help me with planning and organizing work projects and with getting along with work teams.

Presentation. Your portfolio may be big or small depending on how active you've been. One thing is sure: It will get bigger as time goes on. Therefore, it is important that you prepare it in a way that will be easy for a reviewer to use. It will need a table of contents. Depending on its size, you may want to include side tabs (assuming you're using a notebook approach), index, etc. Keep in mind, the goal is to help a reviewer find what s/he is interested in. Your index, for example, might include headings like: leadership, scholarship, technical skills, etc.

Finally, remember that your portfolio is a sales tool. It should look friendly, professional, and appropriate to the reviewer. For some, classy is the right feel. For others, a bit of flash may be more appropriate. Think about what you're trying to say about yourself and who you're trying to say it to. Design the look of your portfolio accordingly. Depending on your interests and your audience, you may want to consider alternative ways of delivering your portfolio. How about packaging it on a CD or DVD?

Talk about it. As important as your portfolio is, you can increase its impact dramatically by presenting it in a professional manner. Plan ahead how you will show it off to a prospective employer or other individual. Make an outline of key points you want to highlight. In fact, make several outlines for different situations. You may have five minutes to make your case in some settings, and 45 in others. Be ready for either extreme or everything in between. Consider incorporating parts of your portfolio into a Power Point presentation if appropriate to your audience.

Although oral presentations are hard for most of us, they are very, very important to getting maximum value from your portfolio. Prepare, practice, and then practice some more. It will pay real benefits.

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Guidelines for Using Rubrics

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Lead developer/writer for this document: Beth Osteen, VP, MarkED

Creation and Use of Rubrics
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Introduction

How would you answer the following questions:

- Does my instruction make a difference in students' job performance?
- How much have students' knowledge and skill changed as a result of being in my courses?
- What could I show to parents, administrators, guidance, business representatives, and legislators to prove that students have benefited from being in my courses and that they are able to apply the information I've presented?

One tool that has found favor with educators in recent years that can help you show that students are advancing and benefiting from your instruction is performance assessment. To understand what performance assessment is and how you can use it to improve student performance, let's look first at the different types of assessment.

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Types of Assessment

Classroom assessment falls into two major categories: fact-based and performance-based. Both types are needed, but in many disciplines, teachers have relied solely on providing a collection of relevant facts and testing students on their ability to recall them. Multiple-choice items, matching, and fill-in-the-blank are examples of fact-based assessments.

These assessment tools are excellent for some types of learning. There will always be batteries of facts that students need to learn. However, with the number of facts doubling every three years, it has become increasingly important to be able to process information, not just to know the facts.

As we move further into the information age with its burgeoning body of facts and fallacies, students need to be able to think critically, analyze, make inferences, and solve problems. They need to be able to discriminate between information that is valid and reliable and that which is not. These higher-order thinking skills are best evaluated using techniques other than traditional paper-and-pencil, fact-based tests.

With performance-based assessment, students are given problems or tasks that they might encounter in the real world and are asked to make decisions about how best to perform the tasks. As in the world of work, there will be many ways that students could complete assignments successfully – not just one right answer.

Students' responses to the tasks may involve presentations, demonstrations, written projects, etc., that require students to use the information and skills that you want them to master. These responses are the final product of students' work and indicate how well students have internalized instruction. As in the world of work, it is the end result that is evaluated, not the process of getting there.

Use of performance assessment will help students see the relevancy of their class work, which in turn can enhance their learning. Additional advantages of performance assessment are:

- Teachers gain a clearer understanding of what students know and what they still need to learn. Likewise, students gain a clearer understanding of what is expected of them, both in the classroom and in the future workplace.
- Students are involved in their own learning because they gain practice in applying what has been taught.
- Students claim that evaluation is more interesting and relevant.

Top

Performance Assessment and Rubrics

After giving students a real-world problem or task to perform, how do you evaluate it? With fact-based assessment, you can objectively score students' responses: They either selected the correct response, or they didn't. With performance assessment, however, your subjectivity becomes a key issue in scoring students' responses. To overcome this subjectivity, many educators develop a set of guidelines that they can use to evaluate the quality of students' work. These guidelines, or rubrics, help to increase the objectivity with which students' performance is evaluated, making the assessment fairer for students.

Let's define a rubric as an evaluation tool, or scale, used in performance assessment to evaluate students' abilities in performing a real-world, or authentic, problem. It is similar to the performance checklists that have been used in business and marketing classrooms and by student organizations for competitive purposes for many years; however, a rubric provides much more information than a "Yes or No" checklist or a scale with Excellent, Good, Fair, and Poor ratings. It qualifies what constitutes an excellent or poor performance by providing descriptions of observable actions or attitudes demonstrated by students.

Teachers who have worked with and used rubrics in the classroom on an ongoing basis have found that they are excellent communication tools. Rubrics spell out the critical components of a task for teachers and students; they identify specifically what students must do for successful performance. Teachers can then tailor their instruction to focus on what is important to know and be able to do, and students know in advance what factors will be evaluated on the test and what standards they must meet. Everyone can be working towards the same goal.

The performance activity and evaluation scale have to be carefully designed so that they complement, or reinforce, each other. The real-world problem that is presented cannot exceed the factors addressed in the evaluation scale and vice versa. Both must focus on the primary, or key, elements of a skill. Let's look at an example.

> A teacher provides instruction about how to write business letters that are informative in nature. For evaluation, the teacher will give students a task for which they must write an informative business letter. To grade the letter, the teacher will rate it according to a predetermined scale that describes the criteria, or qualities, that are expected to be included in informative business letters. The teacher would not ask students to write persuasive letters or evaluate the informative letter using a scale for persuasive business letters.

Rubrics should be introduced to students at the beginning of instruction for a performance indicator so that students have a clear understanding of what you expect them to do to earn an A. Also at this time, you could review examples of exemplary performance – video of an oral presentation, an outstanding job interview, or last year's winning written project – so that students have a comprehensive understanding of what constitutes excellent performance. The goal is to lead students toward outstanding performance rather than pushing them away from poor work.

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Types of Rubrics

The evaluation scale can be either holistic or analytical – or a combination of the two. A holistic rubric consists of a single scale – all factors that are to be evaluated are identified together for each level of performance. It might be a checklist or a description of each attainable level of performance. Continuing our example of business-letter writing, the criteria for business letters might address the letter's content, organization, style, focus, and conventions. Descriptions of these criteria at the mastery level might be:

> All necessary information was presented clearly and concisely. Content had logical organization. Business-letter form was maintained. All contact information was complete. Letter showed command of sentence structure, grammar and punctuation. Spelling and word usage were correct.

Holistic rubrics are quicker to develop and learn, quicker to score, and quicker to find agreement among various evaluators than are analytical rubrics. Because they produce a single score, they are most effective when the elements being assessed are closely related. However, they do not give as much feedback to students, and so they are more difficult to use as a learning tool than analytical rubrics. Two different business letters can earn the same score for very different reasons.

Analytical rubrics, on the other hand, are excellent tools for teaching as well as for assessment. An analytical rubric consists of multiple, separate scales, and therefore provides a set of scores rather than just one. The multiple scales enable students to pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses related to each criterion. Looking again at the business-letter writing example, the key aspects of each criterion (i.e., content, organization, style, focus, and conventions) would be described separately for each level of performance. For each criterion, a scale of descriptors is developed. These are phrases or sentences that describe the quality of the performance along a continuum of performance levels. Levels of performance are used to designate the quality, or how well, the student performed each of the descriptors. A student's performance can vary across all performance levels, e.g., some aspects of a student's writing ability might be Professional, while other aspects might be at a Novice level or anywhere in between.

The analytical rubric provides feedback to students by letting them know exactly which elements of the skill were mastered and which need more practice. While it is an excellent teaching tool, the analytical rubric does take longer to learn well and more time to score. Scores attained for the various criteria may be combined to make a final score.

Several factors should be considered in choosing the type of rubric. The first is the complexity of the skill. Complex skills require complex scales for adequate evaluation. Simpler skills may require only a checklist. In addition, the degree of mastery expected with a skill should be contemplated. Consider the purpose of the assessment. Is the rubric being used to introduce a new skill or as capstone to a unit of teaching? Those skills being introduced for the first time, with no expectation of mastery, may best be evaluated with a simple rubric.

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How to Create Rubrics

If the benefits of using rubrics appeal to you, follow these steps to create them from scratch for use in your classroom:

- Identify the purpose of the evaluation. Knowing what you want to accomplish with the evaluation is a must-do because it guides your selection of the type of rubric and aids in determining how many levels of performance are needed. If the evaluation is being conducted for instructional purposes to help students develop their skills, create an analytical rubric since it provides more specific information about the performance/product than a holistic rubric. However, when you are working with large-scale evaluation and need to grade performances/products quickly, you will want to use a holistic rubric.

- If you want to determine whether a student can perform a skill, a Yes or No checklist with two levels of performance is sufficient. However, if you are concerned about the quality of a student's performance, you'll need to use three or more levels of performance.

- Determine what to evaluate. Carefully review the training plan or task list used to design your curriculum. Select those statements whose performance or final product can be observed by others.

- Decide how much to evaluate. Examine the performance indicator and its objectives to determine what aspects you want to evaluate with the rubric. For some performance indicators, you will be able to evaluate all of the objectives with the rubric. For others, you will need to evaluate a portion of the objectives. Assess those whose product/performance will be observable and suitable for performance assessment versus paper-and-pencil tests. Make a list of the objectives that you will use.

- Refine factors to evaluate. This is an excellent time to review student work related to the performance indicator chosen for evaluation. Review work from the last few years in light of what you want to accomplish. This can give you a new perspective on what students are producing and might reveal instructional gaps that may need to be addressed. It will also help you to see what factors you have previously evaluated.

  Make a list of the factors related to the objectives you have targeted that can be evaluated through performance assessment. To assess a student's oral presentation, for example, some of the factors to list might include: relevant information, confidence, grammar and vocabulary, volume and pace, student's appearance, use of visual aids, pronunciation, ability to answer questions, originality, nonverbal communication, length of presentation, structure of presentation, clarity of purpose, etc.

  Review the listing of factors that you have generated. Are there additional factors that should be included? Have factors been included that, on second thought, are not significant to the overall performance of the performance indicator or its objectives? Refine your listing.

- Group related factors. Examine the listing of factors to determine what they have in common. For assessment of an oral presentation, are the factors aspects of the way the presentation is organized? The presentation's content? The speaker's delivery style? The mechanics used?

  Group the related factors together, and assign them a descriptive label. These labels are the criteria on which students will be assessed. To use the rubric for more than one task/scenario, write general criteria rather than making them scenario specific.

- Define the criteria. For the criteria you identify, write a brief definition to communicate their intent/focus in the rubric. Avoid using positive or negative comments in the definitions. Simply define the criteria as they relate to the final performance/product.

- Describe an outstanding performance. For each of the grouped, related factors that you have identified for each criterion, determine what you would look for in a performance/product that would designate quality

work. What would an outstanding performance look like? The Mechanics criterion for oral presentations might include such descriptions as used silent pauses for emphasis, used standard grammar throughout presentation, etc.

As you do this, keep in mind that the final product or performance is what you will be evaluating. You will not be able to assess the steps students take to develop the product or performance. Instead, you must look for evidence that the steps have been taken. For example, if the activity is to conduct an oral presentation, you will not be able to evaluate whether the student researched one source or 20 sources. Rather, you will need to look for evidence during the presentation that the background research has been done. You might, for example, evaluate whether the students are familiar with their topics and whether they are able to answer questions about their topics.

The descriptions of the quality of student work are critical components of the rubric and will be known as the descriptors. They provide the basis for discriminating between the different levels of performance in student work. As you write them, use terminology that can be easily understood by students. Also, write these descriptions in general terms rather than making them specific to one situation. By doing this, the same rating scale, or rubric, can be used to evaluate a variety of scenarios, situations, or problems developed for a performance indicator. For oral presentations, a general factor deals with the quality of the content rather than specifying what content to evaluate.

After the descriptions are written, review them carefully to determine whether some of them:

- can be combined to make more substantive descriptors,
- are saying basically the same thing,
- cannot be observed, and/or
- are not significant to the overall final product/performance.

If so, pare down the listing, writing the descriptors so that they are discernibly different from each other, observable, and substantive.

- Obtain feedback. Show the listing of criteria and their descriptors to a variety of audiences. Start with your colleagues. Ask them to review the information to make sure that your groupings of factors are logical and that you have comprehensively addressed the criteria and descriptors. Ask that they check the listing of descriptors to be certain that an evaluator could observe the descriptors. If not, you will need to modify or delete descriptors.

  Ask your advisory committee for their input. Do they agree with the criteria? Can they identify additional descriptors to include in the listing? Would they recommend deleting or combining any descriptors? On the basis of 100 points, how important do they consider each criterion to the overall performance?

  Now, ask students to read the criteria and descriptors to check their clarity. If students identify confusing or unclear statements, discuss them with students, asking for their input to improve the statements.

- Develop a continuum of performance levels. Student performance can be rated on a continuum from outstanding to inadequate. Your job is to decide how many levels of performance you will use and what labels you will assign them. Fewer levels make for easier scoring, while more levels provide more complete feedback for the student. However, use of too many levels loses the rubric in detail. Use of an even number of performance levels forces the evaluator to decide whether a performance falls on the negative or positive side of the rating scale.

  Examples of performance levels are:

Exemplary	→	Accomplished	→	Developing	→	Beginning
Professional	→	Experienced	→	Developing	→	Novice
Frequently	→	Sometimes	→	Rarely	→	Never

When developing the continuum of performance levels, be consistent in naming the different levels. If you are evaluating frequency, for example, all levels should focus on frequency: often, occasionally, rarely, never. On the other hand, if you are evaluating a student's expertise, you should develop levels that deal with expertise: professional, experienced, developing, novice.

- Define poor performance. For each descriptor identified for the outstanding performance, describe its poor performance.

  In oral presentations, an exemplary performance under Mechanics is: Speaker pronounced words correctly and clearly, making it easy for the audience to understand what was being said. The opposite of that performance might include: Speaker mumbled and mispronounced words throughout the presentation, making it almost impossible for the audience to understand what was being said.

- Complete the continuum. For each pair of exemplary and poor performances, fill in the intervening levels of performance. Levels of performance are used to designate the quality, how well the student performed each of the descriptors. A student's performance can vary across all levels of the continuum, e.g., some aspects of the performance may be at the top level while others are at the poorest. Still other aspects may fall somewhere in between.

- Create task/scenario. Now is the time to design the activity through which students will demonstrate their mastery of the performance indicator. This is a fun step because it allows you to use your creativity, developing tasks/scenarios that are challenging and realistic. As you construct the scenario, be sure that it requires students to use the skills you want them to master that are identified in the descriptors.

  When writing tasks/scenarios, you will need to develop directions, a situation/problem, and a listing of equipment/supplies/materials needed to perform the tasks. Directions should be clearly and succinctly stated so that students understand specifically what they are to do.

  For the situation/problem, create a realistic project that students are likely to encounter in the work world. Creating situations/problems from the real world gives students a view of what will be expected of them beyond school. Many students find school more relevant in this context.
  The situation/problem should be new, not one that has been covered in class or in homework assignments. In this way, students are applying what they have learned as a result of classroom instruction. Ideas for situations/problems can be found in any number of places. Think about how students will be required to use the skill on the job or in their careers. Many activities you already use in your classroom can be modified and turned into performance assessment activities with a little thought. Professional publications, other teachers, and members of your advisory committee are also good sources of ideas for situations/problems.

  The situation/problem should identify the setting in which and the audience for which the problem/situation is to be solved or performed. Is the student to perform the activity at work? In class? As a competitive event for a student organization? Many teachers use audiences from the world of work – employers, coworkers, and community agencies.

  As you identify the resources that students will need, think about what materials, equipment, and supplies students would have access to if they were assigned the problem/situation at work. Develop a complete listing of all the resources students should obtain before beginning the project.

  The tasks/scenarios should be fair and free of bias. In other words, all students must have an equal opportunity to perform the projects successfully. They should not be hindered in their performance due to gender, culture, socio-economic status, or access to resources. All students must have access to the required tools.

  Compare your completed tasks with the objectives with which you began. Does the task you've designed require students to use the skills you want them to learn?

- Revise, revise, and revise. Before implementing the tasks, ask several teachers and students to read the activities for clarity. When you write something, you know what you want to say, so it's easy to think you've conveyed your thoughts clearly. However, someone who is unfamiliar with the topic may not understand what you mean. Students must know exactly what is expected of them.

  Periodically, analyze the various elements of your rubric. You'll find that improvements can always be made.

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Implementing Rubrics

Once you have rubrics, whether they are ones you develop or ones obtained elsewhere, you need to use them in the classroom. The following steps will help you to implement rubrics.

Step 1
The first step in implementing a rubric is to be very clear about the goals of the rubric. Study the rubric yourself to learn the factors being assessed and what will be expected of the students. Determine also what preparation you'll need to do to encourage the most learning possible.

Step 2
Identify the task/scenario that you will use. For the rubrics in this package, there are three tasks/scenarios provided for each performance indicator. The scenarios are designed for different locations: classroom, job, and career-technical student organization. Determine the best setting for evaluation of each skill.

Step 3
Give each student a copy of the rubric. Review it with the students. Be sure they understand all the terminology.

Criteria:	The particular factors being assessed
Level of Performance:	How well or poorly the student performs
Descriptors:	Items under each level of performance for each criterion that describe the quality of student performance; together, they provide a comprehensive profile of student performance.

In addition to the terminology of the rubric, be sure that students understand all words used in the descriptors across all levels of performance.

Explain to the students that the rubric will be used to assess their performance on the activity, or scenario, provided with the rubric. Because their performance can fall across so many levels, the assessment will provide them with a picture of which skills they have mastered and where they may need to improve. They'll be able to see exactly how their work stacks up against a professional level of performance.

Step 4
Plan your instruction based on the criteria and descriptors. Focus your instruction on the significant aspects that you have identified in the descriptors of the rubric.

Step 5
Deliver your instruction, teaching the skills needed for the performance. Implement teaching methods appropriate for the specific performance indicator being addressed. Reinforce your instruction, giving students opportunities to practice the skill.

Step 6
Have the students perform the selected task/scenario, and use the rubric to evaluate their performance, developing a profile of the quality of the student's performance for each criterion.

Step 7
Give the completed assessment to the students, so that they can compare the assessment results to see how their performance compares with a professional standard. Ask students to discuss their reactions to the rubric and to the assessment process, e.g., Did they like knowing the standards against which they were being assessed? Did they understand the terminology in the rubrics? Of the descriptors? What changes would they make to the rubrics? To the activities?

Step 8
Review and evaluate rubric implementation. You may want to change some of the vocabulary or spend more time teaching a particular skill. Once you've actually used your rubric, it will be much easier to identify any problems that may still exist.
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Rubric Scores and Grading

The relationship between rubric scoring and grading varies from teacher to teacher, and in fact, from rubric to rubric. Many teachers use rubrics as capstone activities to provide an assessment of what students have learned. For complex activities, such as developing a marketing plan, the rubric might provide the structure of a semester's work. Here are some factors to consider when choosing the best method for grading rubrics.

Analytical rubrics can be graded in several ways. The first is simply to assign a grade to each level of performance. Professional level equals A, experienced level equals B, etc. The student receives the grade of the level with the most checkmarks.

You may also assign a weight to each criterion, depending on how much of the total score you feel it is worth. For example, when scoring an oral presentation rubric, you may decide that of 100 points, content is worth 40, delivery is worth 20, organization is worth 20, and mechanics is worth 20. From there, you might further assign points for each level of performance.

Still another grading method might be to give each level a numerical value. Then, multiply the number of checkmarks in each level by the number assigned to the level. For example, if you have four levels of performance, each checkmark in the professional level would be worth four points, each check in the experienced level would be worth three points, and so on.

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Acknowledgments

The guide was created to facilitate creation and implementation of rubrics in career-technical education. The suggested tasks/scenarios are intended as a starting point for developing authentic problems/situations for student assessment.

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Creation and Use of Rubrics
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Training Agreement

School-based experiences depend on the mutual efforts of several individuals and organizations. To ensure that all aspects of a quality learning experience are incorporated into each activity, a "formal," written agreement is strongly recommended and may be required.

Specifically, the training agreement in work-based education programs is the written document developed cooperatively between the employer, the coordinating teacher, student, and parent/guardian. It outlines the responsibilities of the employer and student to the program and establishes the conditions of the student-learner's work-site experiences. It defines what is expected of each of the parties involved (work-site, school, student-learner, and parents/guardians) and addresses such key functions as:

- Planning document to ensure the overall focus of the learning experiences
- Information document to help mentors appreciate their responsibility for teaching
- Permanent record of the agreement
- Document to ensure compliance to labor laws, rules, and regulations
- Agreement to develop and honor a training plan to ensure meaningful learning coordinated with school curricula.

Sample Training Agreement

Job Placement Agreement

Training Plans

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Training Plans

The difference between a random work experience and a legitimate work-based learning experience is planning and management. Planning begins with an agreement with a designated business to provide a specific on-site learning experience. (Training Agreement) Typically, the agreement documents the need for and the willingness to honor a learning plan for the individual student.

Developed jointly by the coordinating teacher, work-site mentor, and student, the training plan details specific competencies to be learned over a suggested time frame. In addition, it may detail specific activities to ensure the student's exposure to a wider variety of experiences.

Depending on the purpose of the work-based experience, the training plan must focus on the student's career interests from either an exploratory or a career development perspective. The coordinating teacher and the work-site mentor discuss the skills, attitudes, and understandings required of the student and design the training plan accordingly. The plan clearly demonstrates the relationship between the academic, career, and technical program at the school and the experience at the worksite.

Specific elements of the training plan may include:

- student, mentor/sponsor, company
- job title or functional responsibility
- competencies or experiences and respective time line
- signature block for student, coordinating teacher, and sponsor/mentor

The plan may also include a rating scale or other tool to facilitate use of the plan for assessment of student performance. Ratings may be based on any of several different scales, using one or more assessment strategies. Two examples:

-Excellent, above average
-Acceptable, but improvement possible
-Not acceptable, needs significant improvement

OR

-Can perform task satisfactorily without supervision
-Can perform task with supervision; needs additional work
-Cannot perform task satisfactorily

Regardless of the specific format, the training plan must be designed to ensure a comprehensive, meaningful experience that surpasses a simple field trip, visit, or part-time job. It must focus the activity on those experiences and competencies that contribute to the long-term growth of the student and, ultimately, to workforce development.

Training Plan Procedures

Co-op General Evaluation

Internship: General Evaluation

Co-op Skill-Set Evaluation

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Selecting Mentors

The mentor (sometimes referred to as the "training sponsor") is *the* key player on the business side of any work-based learning partnership. Therefore, it is important that the coordinating teacher invest carefully in the identification and selection of appropriate individuals to serve in this role. Although sometimes difficult to accept, some interested would-be mentors are simply not appropriate for a direct role in the development of students. (These same people may, however, be invaluable in other aspects of the work-based learning program – e.g., serving on an advisory council.) Selection criteria might include:

- Nature of business itself, including working conditions, management philosophy, etc. (Business/Industry as a Learning Site)
- Quality of mentor's own skill set
- Personal performance reviews
- Work ethic, work habits
- Personal characteristics relative to role modeling
- Communication skills
- Patience
- Sharing orientation (i.e., of knowledge and experience)
- Personal/Professional interest in company
- Supportive, encouraging, sincere personality
- Demonstrated enthusiasm for learning
- Respect for mentees (i.e., values the potential, knowledge, education of mentee)
- History of prior volunteer work
- Prior experiences (teaching, counseling, training)
- Stable work history
- Problem-solving orientation
- Prior experience as a mentee
- Available time
- No relevant legal or moral issues
- Appropriate motivation
- Willing to attend orientation and other relevant meetings

Business/Industry as Learning Site

Sponsor as Mentor

Mentor Development

Mentoring Guidelines

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Work-Based Assignments

If work-based learning is to earn school credit, or to count as a significant component of a specific course, the experience should include a variety of well-documented projects and activities – assignments that provide focus and measurable outcomes. One strategy for designing assignments-for-credit might be to write and organize them according to the level of difficulty relative to the action you are requesting the student to take. For example:

- Easy to complete: Student is required to collect information.
- Moderately difficult: Student is required to analyze information or compare facts or opinions.
- Complex: Student is required to apply or interpret information.

Using the above strategy, the coordinating teacher is able to assign point values on the basis of difficulty and then assemble a collection of various activities appropriate to the overall work-based experience.

Examples of activities follow:

Pricing Activities

Safety Activities

Additional activities might be developed to extend the work-based learning experience beyond the specific on-site activity. Examples follow:

Job Search Activities

Resume Activities

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Assessment Responsibilities

The "experience" of work-based learning can range from little more than a fun day (or hour, or afternoon) out of school, to substantive, meaningful extensions of the classroom. The key to making the experience meaningful is not its length, but the element of planning and effort to identify expected educational outcomes. To the degree that we expect the focus of work-based learning to be "learning," experiences must be planned and managed in the same way that an experienced teacher might develop a lesson plan. Each activity, then, should include specific learning objectives, measurable outcomes, and a plan for assessment. All work-based experiences should become a factor in determining course grades in the same manner as any other substantive assignment, test, or project.

Examples of assessment techniques might include:

- **Testing:** incorporating specific information that a student might have been reasonably expected to obtain through participation in a given activity.

- **Reflection:** specific assignments to encourage students to reflect upon and criticize their own experience, including reporting on "content" learned and, equally important, on the inferences drawn from the total experience. Sample Guide for Reflection

- **Portfolios:** documentation of work-based experiences over an extended period of time, with an emphasis on sampling a student's best work. Sample Guide for Portfolio

- **Culminating activities:** major projects or other activities based on previously obtained information and experiences, designed with the goal of encouraging synthesis and inference. Examples might include competitive events, senior project, development of an in-store enterprise, handbook of x, etc.

- **Skill testing:** careful assessment of the student's performance on a given task, using **rubrics** or other appropriate tools to objectively measure one's skill level. Guideline for Using Rubrics

- **On-the-job assessment:** using training plans and feedback from the workplace mentor to document learning of identified specific skills and concepts. OJT Assessment Procedures

For work-based activities to be positioned appropriately within the context of the overall class, they should play a role in the overall assessment of the student's performance – i.e., they should be a factor in determining the student's letter grade. To that end, each activity should include an appropriate assessment that leads to the awarding of points (credit) toward the course grade. Activities might be weighted in much the same manner as any other classroom assignment.

For **employment-based** experiences (e.g., co-op) involving a substantial amount of the student's time, and resulting in academic credit, the grade may be determined by utilizing a variety of the above factors. For example, points might be awarded for the demonstration of specific skills (per the training plan), for completion of additional activities at the training station, for completion of a work journal, or for on-line research of the industry.

Sample Grading Procedure

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SAMPLE
Informed Consent/Parental Permission

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Your son/daughter has requested permission to participate in our work-based learning program, including activities that occur off the school premises. These activities will include site-visits to area business and industry and interaction with adults and other students outside of the immediate control of the school. The purpose of these activities is to help students acquire a better understanding of the overall work environment, potential careers, and skills/education required for entry and advancement within the industries studied.

Your permission is required for your son/daughter to be considered for participation. In giving your permission, you should consider the following:

- Activities may occur throughout the school year.
- You and your child will be responsible for transportation except for special instances.
- Students may share transportation (i.e., provide rides for other students) to various activities.
- Bus or comparable transportation will be provided for some, but not all, activities.
- Although the coordinating teacher and other school staff will make every effort to look out for the safety of your child, representatives of the school will not be present for many of the activities.
- Off-site activities, particularly those within some industries, pose safety risks different from routine in-school activities.

In signing this document, you agree to hold harmless the school, school employees, participating businesses and, authorized representative of the businesses who are participating in the school's work-based learning program.

Permission is granted for my son/daughter's participation in activities organized as part of the school's work-based learning program. I have read and understand the materials provided which explain the nature of the program and types of activities in which my child may participate.

_____ _____
PRINT: Parent or legal guardian Date

of_____
PRINT: Student Name

_____
SIGNATURE: Parent or legal guardian

Matching Students and Experiences

The match between the student, the business, and the mentor is an important consideration in the overall planning process. The match is always subjective, but with due consideration the coordinating teacher can improve the likelihood of a successful match. For obvious reasons, the longer the relationship is designed for, the more critical the alignment of the student and the work-based setting. Consideration might be given to:

- Career interests of the student
- Age-appropriate situations
- Specific requests of the mentor (within EEO and similar parameters)
- Specific requests of the student (within educationally sound parameters)
- Physical requirements of the job/site
- Personalities
- Available schedules
- Relevant academic skills
- Relevant technical skills
- Personal qualities relative to critical tasks
- Work habits relative to philosophies of the company
- Advance preparation of student
- Coaching and counseling skills of the mentor
- Mentor training and experience with students

Since in any setting there are likely to be some work-based sites of greater interest than others, the coordinating teacher may position the more demanded sites as "rewards" for successful completion of other experiences, academic performance, positive behavior, etc.

Since mismatches are certain to occur, the coordinating teacher must be prepared to proactively address these negative situations. By establishing policies and procedures up front, the teacher will be prepared to minimize damage and lost opportunity both in terms of student learning at the moment, and of the long-term viability of the business and mentor as a work-based site. Strategies might include intensive counseling, change of mentors within the site, or change of site. It is important that the student recognize that failure to complete a work-based experience, except in extreme circumstances, is similar to losing one's job for cause.

Termination Procedures

Faculty Recommendation (form)

Continuum of Experiences

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Mentor Development Program

Good mentors (work-based learning sponsors) are "grown," not found. Even for the individual that has a natural way with students, we must not assume that s/he understands the goals and desired outcomes of the program. Regardless of an individual's qualifications at work, the effective mentor must be prepared to assist in the planning and management of the student's experiences, be prepared to deal with the routine challenges offered by teenage students, and understand the types of activities and behaviors that are acceptable when interacting with young people. Good mentoring is more than being a good role model.

Therefore, the sponsoring teacher and the school system must incorporate a process to "develop" mentors into the early planning stages. This sponsor-development program must accommodate a range of individuals with varying degrees of experience with mentoring, with young people, and with the work-based programs. Further, it must recognize practical considerations in terms of available time, planned level of participation, and decision-making authority of the individual. Therefore, it should be readily apparent that each mentor-development program will be different and that participation within the overall development program will vary according to the needs and abilities of the individual mentor.

Specific tools and activities that might be considered in the development of the total mentor-development package might include:

- Group Training: meetings, workshops, seminars, or other traditional classroom-oriented training sessions. Particularly important for a new mentor, and at the beginning of a new school year, training sessions must be scheduled at times and places to facilitate participation. Meetings of this nature should be highly interactive, fast-paced, substantive, and extremely well-planned with a clearly defined agenda and planned outcomes.

- Orientation Function: an event to bring together key participants for a short, to-the-point "kick-off" activity at the beginning of the year. Consider involving all mentors, plus key school personnel, parents, et al. A simple coffee and donut event can be a very effective tactic to set the stage for the balance of the year.

- Job Aids: simple checklists or reminders of specific procedures for completing the activity. For example, a note card with key points to be discussed in a first meeting of a day-long job shadowing, or a similar card outlining key considerations in evaluating a student's daily work.

- Handbook: short, to-the-point resource guide with appropriate references and procedures to facilitate the mentor's efforts. Consider a loose-leaf, three-ring binder with appropriate dividers. Include minimal text; focus on checklists, forms, and basic information (including who and how to contact school partners).

- Letters, memos, and other written materials: personalized correspondence and carefully selected reminders (along with a continuing series of thank-you's and reinforcing comments). Brief, written correspondence can add significantly to the perceived value of mentoring. However, a letter or memo is not an appropriate substitute for a personal visit or phone call.

- Newsletter: Consider a regular, carefully written newsletter that outlines key activities in progress, student successes (including alumni), and special contributions of individual businesses and mentor. With current technology, creating an attractive, easy-to-scan newsletter (heavy on photos and graphics) is a relatively simple task. Writing it is a far greater challenge. Nevertheless, if done on a regular basis, kept short and to the point, and widely disseminated to current *and potential* businesses and mentors, a newsletter can have substantive impact on the long-term development of mentors and of the program itself.

- Personal visits: In-person, hands-on coaching of mentors is hard to beat. Time-consuming and requiring confidence and expertise of the coordinating teacher, personal site visits remain the single most effective way to develop individual mentors and to promote the value of the work-based learning program.

- Recognition: There are many ways to say thanks (e.g., cards and notes, simple message-based "gifts" such as coffee mug with logo, phone calls, events). From a mentor-development perspective, perhaps the most

effective recognition is some form of group event (breakfast, banquet, etc.) that allows newer mentors to interact with and to hear from students, teachers, and other mentors examples of particularly effective activities over the course of the year.

- Assessment: Evaluation of the work-based learning experience, completed jointly by the mentor and the coordinating teacher (with appropriate student input), is a very effective tool for stimulating discussion and planning improvements in the coming cycle of activities.

- School-based Activities: Encouraging the mentor to visit and participate in classroom activities contributes to their understanding of the program, of the constraints imposed by the school environment, and of the opportunities available. Involving the mentor in specific projects helps create an "our school" mentality that over time can facilitate broadly based community interest and support.

Although not a mentor-development activity in and of itself, a well-maintained database of business contacts is invaluable in the maintenance of any ongoing program. Using data tables to track all aspects of a mentor/business's participation, including teacher contacts, can significantly strengthen any well-managed communications strategy.

Mentoring Guidelines

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The content of the documents herein are intended for use as a starting point in the design of an academically sound work-based learning program. Users of this site assume full responsibility for adherence to all appropriate laws governing such activities and for adherence to school policy and procedure.

References to state and federal law, state and national policy, and local policy and procedure are provided for consideration and discussion. References are not comprehensive and may or may not apply to local circumstances.

Prior to use, sample forms, documents, policies, or other information contained herein must be reviewed by appropriate authorities to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal laws and policies.

Legal/Liability Issues

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Work Experience and Career Exploration Program (WECEP)

Purpose

The program is designed to provide a carefully planned work experience and career exploration program for 14- and 15-year-old youth who can benefit from a career oriented educational program designed especially to meet the participants' needs, interests, and abilities. The program is aimed specifically at helping dropout prone youth to become reoriented and motivated toward education and to prepare for the world of work.

Background

Educators expressed concern for those students who develop a feeling of frustration or failure in academic achievement and wait for their 16th birthdays to occur in order that they may quit school. In this connection, educators in several states, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division and the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health Education and Welfare, developed a program which would permit youngsters 14 and 15 years of age to explore career possibilities while they accumulate credits toward graduation. The program was developed in accordance with the concepts of action oriented research which was recommended by the workshop on research techniques conducted by the Office of Education for implementing the 1968 amendments to the Vocational Education Act. This vocational Education legislation was prompted by a vast amount of educational research which indicated that in order to help school alienated or disoriented youth see purpose and value in education it must include school supervised work experience and training and exposure to real jobs and careers as a vital core of the educational program.

Amended Child Labor Regulation Permits Student Participation

An amendment to Child Labor regulation 3, issued pursuant to the Fair Labor Standards Act and effective September 4, 1975, provides for necessary deviations from the child labor standards to permit enrollees to participate in a program approved by the Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division in cooperation with the office of Vocational and Adult Education. Enrollees in approved work experience and career exploration programs may be employed as many as 23 hours during any week when school is in session and as many as 3 hours on a school day. Any portion of this time may occur during school hours. (The maximum number of hours a person 14- or 15-years of age may be employed when school is *not* in session is 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week.)

Minors enrolled in an approved program may be employed in any occupation permitted to 14- and 15-year-olds under the child labor provisions of the Act and, additionally, in any occupation for which a variation has been obtained from the Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division. Under no circumstances may program enrollees be employed in mining or manufacturing occupations or occupations that have been declared hazardous for the employment of 16- and 17-year-olds or agricultural occupations declared hazardous for youngsters under age 16.

Requisites for Program Participation

Any State education agency that is interested in participating in the program may file a letter of application for approval of its particular program. The letter should be filed in duplicate with the original to the Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor, and a copy of the Education Department, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Division of State Programs Operation. The criteria used in consideration of applications are included in the amendment to Child Labor Regulation 3, effective September 4, 1975.

Students in the program should be 14- or 15-years of age and identified by local school personnel as able to benefit from the program.

Students should receive school credits for both in-school related instruction and on-the-job experience.

Each program should have a maximum of no more than 25 students per teacher/ coordinator.

Each program should be under the supervision of a teacher/coordinator who would generally supervise the program, and coordinate the work and education aspects of the program, and make regularly scheduled visits to the work stations.

There should be no participation in the program until a training agreement has been signed by the teacher/coordinator, the employer, and the student and approved by the student's parent(s). The State educational agency or local educational agency should keep on file for 3 years a copy of the agreement for each student participating.

Students should be employed only in occupations which are permitted under Regulation 3 or for which a variation has been obtained.

Students should be paid the applicable minimum wage rate.

The names and addresses of each school enrolling WECEP students and the number of enrollees in each school shall be kept for 3 years at the State Education Office and made available for inspection by representatives of the Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division.

Any other provisions providing safeguards insuring that the employment will not interfere with the schooling of the minors or with their health and well-being may also be submitted.

WECEP Programs

The programs provide for a course of study and actual job experience. School classes include academic courses stipulated by State requirements for graduation as well as instruction in job-related and employability skill development with individualized or remedial instruction where needed. Credits toward graduation are awarded for both in-school related instruction and on-the-job work experience in accordance with the standards of the respective participating States. A part of the instruction is aimed toward development of safety concepts related to school, community, and employment; and toward development of desirable attitudes toward work.

Regularly scheduled classroom periods of instruction are devoted to job-related and employability skill instruction and time is allotted for classroom instruction in those subjects necessary for graduation under the State's standards. A maximum of 3 hours on a school day will be allowed at the work station. Work experience will be received on jobs permitted or approved under Federal or State laws and will be under the supervision of the teacher/coordinator and employer. The program has been constructed so as to provide students with an opportunity to advance academically as well as to grant them exposure to a wide range of career possibilities. Flexibility in the curriculum provides for entrances and exits. An enrollee will be able to pursue higher academic training; will be able to go into a vocational skill program; or will be better equipped for the world of work. The program's aim is toward development of vocational skill attitudes rather than training in a particular vocation.

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Working with Teens

Teenage employees bring many positive attributes to the workplace. But, younger workers perform at their best when managers provide some special consideration:

1. **Make work a learning experience.** Make time for the student. Explain why; answer questions honestly; ask about their learning experiences. Teach them something new each day.

2. **Follow the plan.** Work with the teacher to create learning goals, to identify specific outcomes for each experience. Hold yourself and your student participants accountable.

3. **Treat them as equals.** Although they come to you relatively inexperienced, students are alert, sensitive, and concerned about their personal status. Involve them in a wide range of activities; challenge them as you would a more experienced employee.

4. **Provide frequent feedback**. While you think strategically, in terms of months and years, teens tend to think in terms of days or weeks. Frequent feedback works best. Smaller, more frequent rewards typically work better than annual salary adjustments. Ten minutes of discussion each day is usually more effective than an hour at the end of the week.

5. **Provide an active mentor**. Make time for a manager to provide active leadership of your student employees. Explain why things are done a given way; answer questions honestly; ask questions about their learning experiences. Teach them something new each day.

6. **Consider employment-based experiences.** If employment is included as part of the overall work-based learning program, balance your needs for immediate productivity with their learning goals:

    - **Be flexible and responsible**. Students can often fill challenging spots on the schedule. At the same time, understand that they are students first and workers second. Encourage participation in school events; offer time off to study; remember how important spring break is to a student. Be reasonable (and legal) in your scheduling expectations. Balance your short-term scheduling needs with long-term payoff for you and your student.

    - **Support their initiatives**. Encourage them to participate in school activities – especially their career-based student organizations. Your support will be rewarded with increased loyalty and increased abilities as they learn to interact more professionally with other business leaders.

    - **Help them focus**. Students must learn to manage their time, their projects. Teach them to plan, to document procedures, to prioritize activities on the job. Help them learn to be accountable for tasks at work through simple job aids like checklists or step-by-step procedures. Encourage them to evaluate their own performance.

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Relating to Business Behavior

When students enter the business community, they enter a world that is different from their norm. For them to be successfully assimilated into the day-to-day life of already busy business people, students must understand and be responsive to the culture of the organization hosting their work-based experience. Since each community, each business is different, the coordinating teacher must take the time to understand the business culture and to adequately prepare students accordingly. Examples of culture concerns might include:

- **Focus on results.** People at all levels are paid on the basis of expected results. Good mentors are going to have little patience with students who appear uninterested or unfocused. Performance, paid or unpaid, will be expected.

- **Time is money.** Most business people place a much higher value on their time than we do in education. Ultimately, every working minute is measured in terms of its payback to the business or organization. Students must learn to appreciate that time wasted is money lost. Good mentors will have little patience with down time on the job.

- **Planning is key.** Students should expect to work by the calendar, by the appointment book. In the best work environments, meetings start on time, appointments are kept (in a timely fashion), and projects are scheduled well in advance so that deadlines are met.

- **Casual is relative.** Work settings vary dramatically in the degree to which casual behavior (including dress) is accepted. Students must learn and then respect the culture. From dress to greetings, appropriate behavior is the starting point of the student-mentor relationship and critical to establishing a positive interaction.

- **Priorities change.** Even the best of mentors is faced with balancing support of the student's experience with the pressures of the job. As priorities change, schedules and planned learning experiences may do so as well. Patience and understanding are key. In the long term, most mentors will fulfill their responsibility to the student.

- **Training differs from education.** Most businesses train. Few educate. It is up to the coordinating teacher and the student to encourage the mentor to do more than teach critical skills. Asking questions to gain understanding of relationships, of why and how, is key to making a training session an education.

Meeting Business People

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Getting Involved

You can help make a difference. Connecting with your local schools helps positively position you and your business in the community, provides access to tomorrow's labor force, and helps young people get off to the right start. There are many different ways we can work together. Check these examples, then let's talk about your interests and priorities!

- **Student Visits:** Show off your company while you help young people understand what the working world is like. Whether it's an individual student visiting for a day, or an entire class touring your facility, your insight into your company and its opportunities will add value to classroom lessons.

- **Judge/Evaluator:** Help us document their successes! Join with your local teacher to evaluate student work in the context of the real world. Provide your perspective on what makes a good project as you help students understand the meaning of quality work in your environment. Be a judge for their student organization events.

- **Mentor and Sponsor:** Help an individual student reach his or her maximum potential! Use your own professional network to help a student make contacts in the community: through your service club, your Rotary events, your trade shows, your buying trips, and your sales calls. Develop a cadre of students who can contribute to your own future success as they become business leaders in their own rights.

- **Employer:** Part-time student employees enrolled in work-based education programs offer exceptional potential. Balance your productivity needs with their learning for maximum benefits to both you and the student learner.

- **Visit Class:** Consider a role as guest speaker, group project resource person, individual mentor, or teacher advisor as you visit the classroom. Your time (and that of your employees) is well spent when you participate in classroom activities; it's a great way to position yourself for future hiring needs or to better understand the needs of our schools.

- **Advisor:** Help us get it right! With only a few hours a month, help ensure that our graduates will meet your employment needs. Volunteer to work with other business leaders to validate priorities, review curriculum, evaluate instructional materials, and share ideas.

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Record-Keeping

Although specific requirements will vary considerably on the basis of the type activity and relative to school policies, the following are examples of records that might be of use:

- Student wage and hour reports for employment-based activities
- Record of site visits with journal entries
- Mileage and expense data
- Copies of work permits as required by state, county, or local government
- Student schedules (for all types of participation)
- All permissions and consent forms
- List of participants in each activity
- Notes regarding evaluations and suggestions for each event (e.g., for review prior to planning for future activities involving the same business representatives)
- Contact information and specific notes regarding business participants
- Calendars and schedules for planning in future years
- All substantive documents created as part of the project
- Student/Business endorsement statements for use in future promotional materials
- Promotional materials
- Policy statements, specific directions/activities, instructional materials

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Sample Policies

Because school settings differ and various work-based experiences require different parameters for successful completion, **policies must be developed locally** for specific situations. Samples of various policy statements might include:

General Policies, All Work-Based Activities (Samples Only)

- Each work-based experience must be journalized or otherwise documented prior to participation in any subsequent experience.
- All student-initiated experiences must be scheduled not fewer than 10 days prior to the activity.
- Experiences that require released time from classes must receive prior approval of all affected teachers not fewer than seven days prior to the scheduled activity.
- Written parental/guardian approval is required, not fewer than three days in advance, for participation in any off-site activity.
- Transportation to off-site activities, unless otherwise planned, is the responsibility of the individual student; written parental approval of transportation arrangements is required.
- Students absent without permission from any class on the day of the scheduled activity may not participate in the activity.
- Students who appear to be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other banned substances immediately prior to or during any work-based learning activity will be held fully accountable to existing school policies and should expect maximum penalties, including a ban on some or all future activities.
- Students in possession of any weapon during any work-based learning activity will be held fully accountable to existing school policies and should expect maximum penalties, including a ban on some or all future activities.
- Appropriate dress, consistent with the nature of the work-based activity and setting, is required at all times. Inappropriately dressed students will not be allowed to participate in any given activity.
- All work-based experiences are considered an extension of the regular school day. Therefore, all relevant school policies will apply unless specifically exempted by the administration.

General Policies, Employment Programs (Samples Only)

- Student acknowledges that the primary purpose of work-based employment is educational and, therefore, agrees to abide by policies of the work-based program and decisions of the coordinating teacher, including those regarding specific job placements and assignments made without regard to specific pay rate, schedule, or similar variables.
- As required by state law, a work permit must be obtained prior to the first day of employment.
- Wage and hour reports must be completed and filed with the coordinating teacher within three days of pay day.
- "Critical incident" reports must be completed within 24 hours of each occurrence; critical incidents include any out-of-the-ordinary occurrences related to school-sponsored employment. Examples might include accommodations, reprimands, significant schedule changes, promotions or pay raises, inappropriate behavior of work colleagues or managers, changes in management or mentor, accidents/injuries, unplanned

change in responsibilities, changes in company policies, or any other event relevant to planning of the work-based experience.

- Student acknowledges that the school, through the coordinating teacher, is acting as an intermediary between employer and student and that said teacher has a legitimate right to know and a substantive role in determining the outcome of any employment issues, including placement, termination, scheduling, assignments, and all other aspects of employment.

- Released time from school will be scheduled in cooperation with parents/guardian and will apply without regard to the work schedule on any given day. Students must vacate the school premises at the agreed upon release time, regardless of work schedule, unless they have permission of the coordinating teacher to remain on school grounds for specific purposes.

- Unless otherwise exempted by the coordinating teacher, students must work an average of not fewer than 15 nor more than 20 hours per week, year-to-date, and must work not fewer than 10 nor more than 25 hours in any given week.

- Students are expected to be employed on or before October 1 and to remain employed through May 15 unless otherwise exempted.

- Students may terminate employment only with prior approval of the coordinating teacher. Quitting without said permission will be treated as if the employer had terminated the students with cause.

- Students terminated for cause, including poor performance, will be required to participate in remedial activities and may at the discretion of the coordinating teacher be removed from the work-based program, reassigned to other employment, assigned to in-school activities, or disciplined as warranted by the situation. Students terminated for dishonesty will be removed from the program for a period of not fewer than six weeks, receive no credit for the experience, and be subject to legal or other disciplinary action by the school, business, and legal authorities.

- Students unemployed through no fault of their own, at any time during the school year, must report to the designated classroom during the normal release time and must be fully engaged in alternative experiences during that time.

- Vacation or leave time exceeding two consecutive days may be negotiated with the employer, but requires approval of the coordinating teacher prior to submitting a request to employer.

- Transportation is the responsibility of the student. Transportation problems do not justify absence from work.

- Unplanned absences which are normally considered excused by the school must be reported to the coordinating teacher prior to the beginning of the school day and to the employer per company policy, but not later than 30 minutes following the beginning of the normal workday.

- Absence from school means absence from work. Students may not, without prior permission of the coordinating teacher, report to work on a day when they are absent from school.

- Appropriate dress is required at all times while on the job.

- Suspension or other disciplinary action by the school shall apply to school-sponsored employment and may result in termination by the employer.

- Throughout the employment period, students will be required to participate in a variety of experiences designed to enhance the learning process and to position the work-based program. These experiences may include such activities as specific assignments to be completed at the place of employment (off the clock), activities at other companies or organizations, group projects on or off school premises (including CTSO

activities), sponsor development and recognition functions, and other activities deemed beneficial by the coordinating teacher. Participation in these activities will be included in the performance assessments of the student's overall work-based experience.

- Student acknowledges that s/he may be provided confidential information while at a work site and agrees to maintain the confidentiality of same. Inappropriate use of confidential information shall be considered a form of dishonesty and shall be subject to the same disciplinary actions.

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Mentoring Guidelines

Mentoring is a very personal, individual activity. It implies the development of a professional relationship with the mentee that involves coaching, advocacy, and a professional friendship. The level of commitment and nature of activities appropriate for any given mentoring situation will vary. However, some suggestions for developing your role as a mentor include:

- Expose the student to a variety of productive experiences as part of his/her specific assignment, and
- Permit the student to participate in appropriate, worthwhile tasks beyond specific job assignments.
- Help the student gain an overall perspective of the company by sharing information on all aspects of the organization, including general information and experiences on planning, management, finances, technical and production skills, labor issues, community impact, health, safety, and environmental issues. Help them see the big picture.
- Introduce student to appropriate staff. Explain the role of student to other staff.
- Act as a job coach.
- Act as a career coach.
- Encourage questioning and critical thinking.
- Communicate regularly with the coordinating teacher.
- Adhere to legal and ethical guidelines. Help the student develop and understand appropriate business ethics.
- Develop criteria for student participation to ensure that the students you work with are positioned to meet your needs. Keep in mind, however, that the overall goal of any work-based education experience is student learning. Even for paid experiences, education should be the first objective and productive labor the second.
- Learn mentoring skills. Participate fully in the coordinating teacher's mentor-development activities, including meetings and the use of specific resources. Meet regularly with the teacher to help ensure a quality learning experience for the student and to develop your own skills for working with young people.
- Provide adequate time.
- Contribute to program improvement. Mentoring for a work-based learning program is a partnership. Share with the coordinating teacher and/or the school administration your ideas for making the experience more productive for both the student and your company.
- Participate in the evaluation of your mentee. Although you will generally not be asked to provide a grade in the literal sense, you will usually be asked to provide very specific input on the students overall efforts and learning outcomes. Your input on student performance becomes particularly important for longer, more in-depth experiences.
- Involve the coordinating teacher in conflict resolution. The coordinating teacher may have specific ways to help resolve any performance or behavior issues while maintaining the overall positive aspects of the mentoring relationship.
- Notify the coordinating teacher of any changes at the work site that may have an impact on the student or the program (e.g., changes in management, in your own responsibilities, in schedules).

- Call the coordinating teacher immediately in the event of any specific rules infractions or violation of company or school policy.

- Within appropriate parameters, demonstrate personal interest in the student. Consider cards or notes of encouragement, recognition of holidays and birthdays, discussion of school events and activities involving your mentee, visits to school, support of/assistance with specific school activities related to career planning and preparation, and contact with parents.

- Encourage student's participation in company meetings, as appropriate, in your civic and community group activities, etc.

- Assist student with the development of a career plan, including specific learning activities to prepare for the next stage of his/her employment.

- Volunteer to speak in student's career class, to host school field trips, or to support student organization activities.

Getting Involved

Working with Teens

Orientation to Business

Assessment of Student Participation

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Take Advantage of School!

Most students think that work-based learning activities are fun. After all, you get to meet some interesting people, see the real world in action, and in some cases, get paid as you learn. More important than a good time, however, are the many ways the experiences can help you with your own future. Think about these benefits of participating:

- Develop a **focus and purpose** for your classes and your future career.
- Find out how your **academic courses really can help** you in the years to come.
- Develop personal goals for your future; figure out **what you want from college**.
- Learn better **problem-solving** skills that will help you forever.
- Learn to **communicate your points** to adults/supervisors.
- Learn what work is all about; see how a strong **work ethic** leads to real rewards.
- Learn to assume **greater responsibility** at work, in the world.
- Learn to apply your studies and watch your **grades go up.**
- Find out why you might be **interested in college** after all.
- Earn **significant income** when you qualify for an employment-based experience.
- Get **better prepared** for future employment and **promotion**.
- Develop a valuable **portfolio of skills** that will help you develop a real career.
- **Be ready** for a **real** career with valuable, **saleable** skills.

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Ideas

Developing an effective work-based education program that will meet the needs of a wide range of students is challenging, time-consuming, and very different from traditional teaching. Following is a collection of ideas that may be of use in some situations:

- Always require student documentation of their experience, along with their own evaluation and comments. Use them as you arrange for the following year's activities.

- Students know many people who might be available to support various activities – including mentoring; their parents know others. Include both in your networking efforts to make contacts in the business community.

- Create and scrupulously maintain an electronic database with enough detail to be of value from year to year. Take time to design the data tables so that you will have access to any sort or subgroup needed throughout the year. (For example, include industry, job, list of activities, etc.) Your memory and note cards will not get the job done over time.

- Take careful notes when you have a guest speaker, including notes on his/her delivery. When you invite the speaker back another time, include your content notes, with suggestions on where to spend more and less time. Guest Speaker

- Prepare a worksheet for students to use when listening to a guest speaker. Be certain that the worksheet is incorporated into your assessment process. Guest Speaker Worksheet

- Plan activities well ahead. Any activity involving business people should be initiated not fewer than four weeks in advance. Getting on a busy calendar is far easier three months ahead than three weeks.

- Brief your students before each activity. Be certain to include very specific expectations regarding acceptable behavior. Many young people simply have no idea what is or is not appropriate in a business setting. Meeting Business People

- Debrief every activity.

- Consider the student reward structure. Make it feel good to have completed a particular activity, especially if they are doing so on their own time. Think about how hard some students work to earn Boy and Girl Scout merit badges. Gold stars work.

Job Shadow Student Worksheet

Share your best ideas! E-mail your suggestions and we'll make every effort to include them in our next revision of this page. Send your ideas to: gleason@mark-ed.com In the subject line, enter "work-based idea."

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Logistic Issues

Although the key to successful work-based learning begins with the development of a strong philosophy and overall plan, the logistical details are always a significant aspect of the program's overall success. This is particularly true with work-based activities that are planned on an ad hoc basis. Local situations differ and may require attention to other issues. The following are typical of concerns that require special planning and attention to the *mechanics* of many work-based activities:

Emergencies: Eventually, there will be some. Know your school policy. Know whom to call. Follow up afterward.

Employer Participation: Gaining the support and involvement of the business community is a continuing process. Getting commitments for specific activities will differ considerably depending on the nature of the company and the individuals involved. A locally owned and operated business may require nothing more than a short phone call to the owner. Visits to the branch of a major corporate entity may require several months of planning, involving the sign-offs of management at various levels. Advance contact (3 - 6 months or more) is always appropriate, even if the specifics of the event are still in the planning stages. It is generally easier to obtain a preliminary commitment well in advance than to wait until the eleventh hour. Most managers, like most people, are more willing to commit to an event that is outside of their immediate frame of reference. Keep in mind that an effective event will require far more than a simple "OK" from the employer. Work-based learning requires careful planning and management, including detailed agreements (i.e., a training plan) specifying the nature of the student's experience.

Evaluation: In addition to feedback you solicit from the students, develop a short feedback form for the business community. As time permits, a follow-up phone call or visit is particularly effective. Remember: All activities can be improved. Regardless of how well a given event may go, be certain to actively solicit suggestions. Although not all will be doable, or even appropriate, the process of getting feedback is important and even in-actionable feedback may spark other ideas that will be useable.

Food and beverage: For most events, meals are not likely to be an issue. However for full-day activities, it is important that the student and the work-site host understand what is expected of each. Be certain, for example, that if a student is expected to purchase lunch on-site, s/he has the appropriate cash in-hand. Be certain that your students understand that eating, drinking, and chewing gum protocol may be very different in the business community than in your school. Explain in detail what is and is not appropriate.

Informed Consent: When students are involved, even the most carefully planned and managed event has the potential for challenges. Parents/Guardians are, rightfully, protective of their children. Each has a different perspective on what is acceptable risk for his or her child. For example, one parent may find it perfectly acceptable for a 15-year-old to ride with a 16-year-old friend to a work-site visit. Others may see this same arrangement as high-risk and unacceptable. One parent may view a visit to a hard-hat construction site as a great learning experience, while others may see the same experience as inappropriate. Since the risk of accidents or other challenges is always present, it is critical that each student's parent or guardian be fully informed of all activities and that each agrees *in writing* to the student's participation. If a "blanket" permission form is used (i.e., one that covers participation in a series of events or activities), be certain that it is broad enough to cover the risks associated with each event. Even with a blanket authorization in place, specific events (e.g., out-of-town travel) may require additional authorization.

Permissions: In addition to parental consent, individual permissions may be required for each student for each event. These may include sign-offs by:

- Administrators
- Guidance (e.g., acceptable standing or GPA)
- Teachers affected by absences

Promotion, promotional materials: If the work-based program and activities are elective, a planned promotional campaign is appropriate and likely to be necessary. Support will be needed from several targets in addition to the students themselves. Take time to communicate in writing, as well as through various meetings and conferences, the desired outcomes of the WBL activities and the specifics of each event. Don't assume that all teachers and staff

will be supportive; take the time to develop benefit statements targeted at both the students and the faculty/counselors who will be impacted. Allow time to produce quality promotional materials appropriate to the audience. Develop the plan months in advance, and begin the communications process at least 90 days prior to any given event.

Scheduling: Each substantive activity within the overall work-based learning program must be treated as an independent project. Each requires its own project plan, complete with milestones, deadlines, etc. Begin with the end date (i.e., the date on which the event begins) and work backwards to be certain that each step in the overall planning process is completed in time to meet local requirements. (For example, if the school board must approve bus transportation, the appropriate paperwork must be complete on a schedule that will culminate in the board's approval at a meeting far enough in advance of the event to prevent bottlenecks that might compromise the program.) Each of the other logistical issues (and many others specific to the event) needs to be addressed in the overall project plan.

- Coaches affected by absences

Thank-you's: Plan ahead so that appropriate thank-you notes, etc. (from you and the students) can be processed immediately following each event. An immediate, hand-written note is far more effective than a formal, word-processed letter–particularly if the note is received within a few days of the activity.

Transportation:

Busses: Know and plan according to school board policies (e.g., application/approval process, budget issues, bus passes, sign-off forms).

Private, adult transportation: Planning should include advance solicitation of volunteers, details of the event, maps or directions, parking, reimbursement of expenses, specifics on numbers/capacity of vehicles, reminders, cell phone numbers or other contact information, thank-you's.

Student transportation: All of the above, plus specific guidelines including use of caravans as appropriate, very specific directions and policies regarding stops en route, etc. Include specific policies (and consequences) relative to traffic citations, etc. Be crystal clear regarding the use of controlled substances.

Individual transportation: Activities that focus on an individual student's visit to the work site will require a parent to assume responsibility for providing transportation. Regardless of the specific strategy (e.g., student's own vehicle, public transportation, shared rides with other students or adults, etc.), it is important for the coordinating teacher to have, in writing, full permission of the parent.

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Wage and Hour

Caution: Labor laws change. State laws may supersede federal laws. The following overview is provided to focus discussion and thought as the work-based program is considered. It is imperative that both the coordinating teacher and the participating business understand and honor all applicable labor laws, including those that apply specifically to youth.

Child-Labor Q&A: If your company increasingly is hiring youth, it's a good time to review the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Its child-labor provisions are designed to protect minors, and your awareness of them will prevent age, wage, overtime pay, and record-keeping violations. Below are some frequently asked questions.

What hours can youths work?
Under the FLSA, the minimum age for employment in non-agricultural employment is 14. Hours worked by 14- to 15-year olds are limited to:
* Non-school hours
* 3 hours on a school day
* 18 hours in a school week
* 8 hours on a non-school day
* 40 hours in a non-school week; and
* Hours between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. (except from June 1 through Labor Day, when evening hours are extended to 9 p.m.)

What is the youngest age at which a person can be employed?
The FLSA sets 14 as the minimum age for most non-agricultural work. However, at any age, youths may deliver newspapers; perform in radio, television, movie or theatrical productions; work in businesses owned by their parents (except in mining, manufacturing, or hazardous jobs); and perform babysitting or minor chores around a private home. Also, at any age, youths may be employed as home workers to gather evergreens and make evergreen wreaths.

Different age requirements apply to the employment of youths in agriculture. When both the FLSA child labor provisions and state child labor laws apply, the more protective takes precedence. For more information, visit this Department of Labor Web site: http://www.elaws.dol.gov/flsa/cl/exemptions.asp

Must young workers be paid the minimum wage?
The federal minimum wage is $5.15 per hour. However, a special minimum wage of $4.25 per hour applies to workers under the age of 20 during their first 90 consecutive calendar days of employment. Other programs that allow for payment of less than the full federal minimum wage apply to disabled workers, full-time students, and student learners employed pursuant to sub-minimum wage certificates, which are permitted in certain circumstances.

Must a youth have a work permit?
The FLSA does not require that youths get work permits or working papers to get a job. Some states do require work permits. Youths can ask their school counselors if a work permit is needed before getting a job.

What kinds of work can young people perform?
Regulations governing youth employment in non-agricultural jobs differ somewhat from those pertaining to agricultural employment. In non-agricultural work, the permissible jobs, by age, are as follows:
* Workers 18 years or older may perform any job, whether hazardous or not.
* Workers 16 and 17 years old may perform any non-hazardous jobs.
* Workers 14 and 15 years old may work outside school hours in various non-manufacturing, non-mining, and non-hazardous jobs.

Source: U.S. Department of Labor
(Workforce, 9/00)

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Exceptions and Exemptions
Under some circumstances, labor laws governing youth provide specific exemptions or special rules for students enrolled in training programs. Rules vary.

http://www.ode.state.oh.us/ctae/cbips/WECEP/default.htm

(http://www.state.oh.us/Business/Employer/ProtectingYourBusiness/Wages.htm)??

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Termination Procedures

Even the best plans and efforts to match students with work-based experiences don't always ensure a successful outcome. Typical problems that ultimately require termination of the experience:

- Parental dissatisfaction with the environment or activity
- Work-site mentor refuses to follow the training plan
- Scheduling conflicts with other school activities
- General layoffs (no fault of student)
- Non-negotiable personality conflicts
- Mismatch of mentor/student expectations
- Unsafe worksite
- Inadequate grades or attendance (school or work)

Over time, terminations are virtually a sure thing. Therefore, the coordinating teacher should plan in advance for the possibility. Although terminations are more likely with long-term mentorships (both paid and unpaid), all employment-based experiences run the risk of personality conflicts, scheduling conflicts, or other issues that make continuation of the experience problematic. To minimize damage to the partnership, coordinating teachers might consider:

- School policies that preclude a student's resignation without authorization of the coordinating teacher. (No spur-of-the-moment "I quit.")

- Notification requirements as part of the training agreement and provisions for a "cooling off" period that allows the coordinating teacher time to attempt to resolve differences. The goal of such provisions should always be to ensure that the best interests of the student-learner are considered.

- School consequences in the event of a termination, including grades, credits, release time, course load, alternative assignments, alternative employment, remedial work, etc.

- Specific procedures and communication requirements. For example, notification of parents, meeting with mentor, counseling with student.

- Identify learning opportunities resulting from the termination. For example, reflection activities, reassessment of career interests, clarification of personal goals, documentation of the experience, etc.

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SAMPLE

Business Site Visit
PARENT CONSENT AND RELEASE

This consent and release is executed by the undersigned student and the undersigned parent or guardian legally responsible for the undersigned student.

In consideration of the selection of the undersigned student to participate in the

___ Field Trip to:_____ on:_____

___ Job Shadowing Day to:_____ on: _____

___ Other:_____ on: _____

the undersigned herewith agree to the participation by the undersigned student and hereby, for ourselves, our heirs, executors and administrators waive, release and forever discharge any and all rights and claims for damage which the undersigned may have or which may hereafter accrue against the district or their respective officers, agents, representatives, successors, and/or assigns, for any and all injuries which may be sustained and suffered by the undersigned student in connection with or arising out of participation in the above indicated activity.

This consent and release shall apply to the above activity on the date indicated OR on any alternate date that may be selected by the school.

I have read and understand the enclosed information.

_____ _____
Student Signature Date

_____ _____
Signature of Parent or Person Responsible Date

For questions regarding this community-based experience, parents or guardians may contact:

_____ _____
Coordinating Teacher Best time to call

To ensure student permission, this consent and release must be returned to the coordinating teacher or his/her designee by:

_____
Day Date

Plan a Mentor Recognition Activity

Many schools plan some type of annual recognition activity for work-site mentors. Activities range from simple awards and recognition coffees to more formal functions (luncheons, evening banquets, etc.). These events provide opportunities:

- for the school, teacher, and student to express appreciation for the efforts of the mentor and others involved in the planning and development of the program.
- to position the work-based learning program among those with less day-to-day contact (e.g., senior school administrators, senior managers).
- to encourage interaction and sharing among mentors and other partners.
- to serve as a venue for student recognition.
- for students to gain experience with planning and organization of a major event and to demonstrate their skills to participants.
- to generate positive, community-wide public relations.
- to introduce the work-based learning program to potential new participants.

Planning tips follow:

September/October
- Initiate discussion with students
- Seek approval of school administration
- Determine appropriate date

October/November
- Select student committee members and chairpersons

January
- Gather menus, catering or restaurant options
- Prepare draft budget
- Select venue

February
- Select guest speaker

March
- Select menu
- Plan entertainment
- Revise budget
- Prepare initial guest list

April
- Send invitations
- Plan decorations
- Confirm speaker, entertainment
- Plan student portfolio showcase
- Plan overall program, including specific student roles
- Arrange for photography, PR releases

May

- Confirm all plans with restaurant/caterer
- Provide directions and details to speaker, entertainment, et al.
- Prepare place cards and name tags
- Develop a seating chart
- Prepare program for printing
- Review basic etiquette
- Debrief students following event

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SAMPLE

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

The purpose of this form is to authorize emergency treatment of your child in the event s/he becomes ill or is injured while under school authority. Although school and/or medical authorities will make every reasonable effort to contact parents prior to treatment, by signing this form you authorize emergency treatment as recommended by appropriate individuals.

Student's Name _____ Grade _____

Address _____ ZIP _____

Coordinating Teacher _____

Phone _____ Birthdate _____ Student's Social Security Number_____

Facts concerning the child's medical history including allergies, medications being taken, and any physical impairments to which a physician should be alerted:_____

_____

_____

Child lives with (Circle): Father, Mother, Step-parent, Foster parent, Guardian

Father's/Guardian's Name _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Where Employed _____ Work Phone _____

Cellular _____ Pager _____

Mother's/Guardian's Name _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Where Employed _____ Work Phone _____

Cellular _____ Pager _____

In the event this student becomes ill at school but does not need medical attention, name people to be contacted if you cannot be reached:

1. Neighbor/Relative _____ Phone (H) _____ (W) _____
2. Neighbor/Relative _____ Phone (H) _____ (W) _____
3. Neighbor/Relative _____ Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

PLEASE COMPLETE AND SIGN PART I OR PART II ON BACK.

PART I OR PART II MUST BE COMPLETED

Part I: To Grant Consent

In the event reasonable attempts to contact me at _____ (phone number) or _____ (other parent) at _____ (phone number) have been unsuccessful, I hereby give my consent for (1) the administration of any treatment deemed necessary by Dr. _____ (preferred physician) or Dr. _____ (preferred dentist), or, in the event the designated preferred practitioner is not available, by another licensed physician or dentist; and (2) the transfer of the child to _____ (preferred hospital) or any hospital reasonably accessible. _____

_____

This authorization does not cover major surgery unless the medical opinions of two other licensed physicians or dentists, concurring in the necessity for such surgery, are obtained before the surgery is performed.

Date _____ Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Please give additional emergency information on other side. Address _____

_____

Part II: Refusal to Consent (Do not complete if you completed Part I.)

I do not give my consent for emergency medical treatment of my child. In the event of illness or injury requiring emergency treatment, I wish the school authorities to take the following action:

_____

_____

_____

Date _____ Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Address _____

_____

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Tips and Tools

Contents List for Techniques and Tools not specific to one category of activities

Getting Started

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Sample Grading Procedure

Would you consider a teacher to be fair and objective if s/he based your grade on one score? Probably not. We understand that a student's grade should reflect her/his total actions and abilities related to a specific subject area—not just a snapshot of the person at one point in the grading period.

Therefore, you need to decide what factors to evaluate that will reflect a composite of the student's actions and abilities over a specified period of time. Factors might include:

- Assessments completed by the mentor
- Completion of specific work-based activities
- Adherence to policies, rules, and regulations
- Completion of a work journal

Notice that each of the factors identified is directly related to work-based experiences. Be sure that the factors you select for evaluation are defensible in terms of students' growth and development in the workplace. Always establish your complete grading criteria (factors, points, grade scale) prior to the beginning of the grading period. Distribute it to students and take the time to discuss it thoroughly so that each individual student understands exactly what is required to earn a given grade.

(NOTE: Teachers get themselves in trouble by offering points for activities that are not related to relevant student performance. For example, you know of teachers who offer points for helping with filing, cleaning, typing, etc. Doing so opens the door to many questions. Keep yourself out of trouble by identifying the factors that will make up the grade before the students begin the program. Then, stick with them.)

The factors that you identify should be fair, objective, capable of being evaluated, and manageable. Factors that might otherwise appear subjective must be carefully defined in terms of specific, observable behaviors. For example, if one of your factors is "business behavior," you need to define what you mean by business behavior and find a fair way to reward credit for it.

Once you have selected the factors that will be evaluated, you must decide how important each factor is to the overall grade. In other words, will on-the-job evaluations be 40 percent of the grade? 60 percent? 75 percent? You must go through this process for each of the factors that you select to make up the grade. For example:

- Assessments completed by the mentor 40%
- Completion of specific work-based activities 40%
- Adherence to policies, rules, and regulations 10%
- Completion of a work journal 10%

An easy way to work with these percentages is to convert them to a 1000-point scale. For example:

- Assessments completed by the mentor 40% = 400 points
- Completion of specific work-based activities 40% = 400 points
- Adherence to policies, rules, and regulations 10% = 100 points
- Completion of a work journal 10% = 100 points

TOTAL = 1000 points

By converting to a point basis, it becomes easy to assign points for specific activities within each grading factor. For example, if there are 20 activities that a student must complete during the grading period, each activity would be worth 20 points (20x20=400). Follow this same procedure for each of the factors that you identify.

Finally, convert your point system to letter grades. Many instructors use the same grading scale as that followed by their school systems. In other words if 90–100 = A, the grading scale would be:

901 to 1000	=	A
801 to 900	=	B
701 to 800	=	C
601 to 700	=	D
< 601	=	F

Whatever factors you decide to evaluate and grading system you decide to use, the information should be communicated in writing to students, parents, administrators, and employers so that all parties know exactly what is expected of students and how grades will be determined. The grading system can be included in the student policy and procedures manual. The use of assignment sheets is also useful in communicating requirements associated with assignments. Initially, these are time-consuming to develop, but once they are in place, they will save you a great deal of time in the long run. An example of an assignment sheet is found in Figure 6.

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Meeting Business People

The business people your coordinating teacher has arranged for you to work with are volunteers. They're giving you time because they want to contribute to your future. They are giving you time and energy that they could be using for other things. But, they've chosen to help you. In return, you need to do your very best to be prepared, to demonstrate your appreciation for their interest in you. Here's a key consideration: The more interested and enthusiastic your mentor *believes you to be,* the more s/he will give to you in return. Here are some tips for getting started right:

- **Respect time.** Arrange your meetings by appointment. Always be 10 minutes early. Never cancel unless it's an absolute emergency. (Transportation problems are not an emergency; work them out.) If you must cancel, do so as far in advance as possible and always notify your mentor and any other relevant individual. Never be a no-show! If you are ever late – even by one minute – apologize and correct the problem so that it doesn't happen again. (Being on time means being at the appropriate place ready to work at least five minutes before you were scheduled, with all personal activities like hanging up your coat or going to the bathroom already completed.) Leave your workstation when told or several minutes after your designated time. Those extra few minutes will make a big difference in how you are perceived by your mentor and others in the business. It costs you nothing and gets you a lot!

- **Dress for respect.** Always be impeccably groomed. Always ask what the preferred dress is and then respect what you're told. Remember, your goal in any mentoring relationship is to earn the respect of your mentor and others in the business. Dress, especially early in the experience, is an important consideration in the impression you make. This is not the time to push the edge. It is a time to earn some respect.

- **Ask permission.** Until you understand how the business works, ask permission for anything of which you're unsure. Don't chew gum, eat, drink, call, leave, or visit with others unless you've gotten permission. Even if the environment is casual, you'll make some "respect" points by asking. Respect gets you rewarded in the end.

- **Leave your friends at the door.** This is your deal. Take advantage of it.

- **Speak up.** Be as articulate as you are capable of being. Use complete sentences and real words. Your mentor is interested in your professional behavior. S/He wants to help, but may not be used to working with young people. Students have their own ideas about communications. Unfortunately they don't count when you're visiting a business, or when you're working with a volunteer mentor. Communicate his/her way. Shake hands. Be positive. Smile. Speak up. Ask questions.

- **Listen carefully.** There's lots of interesting stuff out there. (Lots of boring stuff, too.) Listen carefully so that you don't miss the things that matter – now and in your future.

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CO-OP: GENERAL EVALUATION
(Use with separate skill assessment form.)

Ratings are assigned by the instructor in conjunction with the training sponsor (where appropriate).	RATING SCALE 1. Excellent, above average. 2. Acceptable, but improvement possible. 3. Not acceptable, needs significant improvement.

HUMAN RESOURCE FOUNDATIONS	Assessment			
	1	2	3	4
Dresses appropriately				
Maintains positive attitude				
Demonstrates interest and enthusiasm for job				
Demonstrates problem-solving orientation				
Demonstrates responsible behavior				
Demonstrates honesty and integrity				
Demonstrates orderly and systematic behavior				
Demonstrates initiative				
Demonstrates self-control				
Demonstrates willingness to learn				
Uses feedback for personal growth				
Adjusts to change				
Shows empathy for others				
Asserts self appropriately				
Demonstrates cooperative, team-oriented behavior				
Reports to work promptly and regularly				
Produces quality work				
Produces appropriate quantity of work				
Manages time wisely				
Follows directions				
Communicates well with others				

Validating Signatures	
1. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)	3. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)
2. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)	4. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)

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INTERNSHIP: GENERAL EVALUATION

Ratings are assigned by the instructor in conjunction with the training sponsor (where appropriate).	RATING SCALE 1. Excellent, above average. 2. Acceptable, but improvement possible. 3. Not acceptable, needs significant improvement.

HUMAN RESOURCE FOUNDATIONS	Assessment			
	1	2	3	4
Dresses appropriately				
Maintains positive attitude				
Demonstrates interest and enthusiasm for job				
Demonstrates problem-solving orientation				
Demonstrates responsible behavior				
Demonstrates honesty and integrity				
Demonstrates orderly and systematic behavior				
Demonstrates initiative				
Demonstrates self-control				
Demonstrates willingness to learn				
Uses feedback for personal growth				
Adjusts to change				
Shows empathy for others				
Asserts self appropriately				
Demonstrates cooperative, team-oriented behavior				
Reports to work promptly and regularly				
Manages time wisely				
Follows directions				
Communicates well with others				
SPECIFIC WORK TASKS PERFORMANCE (list):				
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Validating Signatures	
1. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)	3. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)
2. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)	4. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)

Return to Contents

CO-OP: EVALUATION

Ratings are assigned by the instructor in conjunction with the training sponsor (where appropriate).	RATING SCALE 1. Can perform task independently 2. Can perform task with supervision/assistance 3. Does not meet standard

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	Assessment			
	1	2	3	4
Demonstrate basic word-processing skills				
Demonstrate basic presentation software skills				
Demonstrate basic database skills				
Demonstrate basic spreadsheet skills				
Demonstrate basic search skills on the Web				
Follow safety precautions				
COMMUNICATIONS				
Apply effective listening skills				
Use proper grammar and vocabulary				
Reinforce service orientation through communication				
Address people properly				
Handle telephone calls in a businesslike manner				
Persuade others				
Make oral presentations				
Write business letters				
Write informational messages				
Write inquiries				
Write persuasive messages				
Prepare simple written reports				

Validating Signatures	
1. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)	3. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)
2. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)	4. _____ (student employee) (date) _____ (employer) (date) _____ (coordinating teacher) (date)

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Introduction Card

School's Name
School's Address
School's Phone Number

To _____ Title _____

Business _____

Address _____

From _____

This will introduce _____ who is a business education student at our high school. We have recommended the student for an interview with you on _____ at _____. Thanks for your assistance.

Please see the reverse side.

(Front)

Interview Evaluation

After the interview, please complete this side of the card and mail it back to the school in the stamped envelope provided by the student.

Traits
Criteria
Comments

1. Appearance
□ Appropriate
□ Inappropriate

2. Attitude
□ Positive
□ Negative

3. Communication
□ Clear
□ Unclear

4. Composure
□ Composed
□ Too Relaxed

□ Too Nervous

5. Promptness
□ On Time
□ Late

General Comments _____

_____

_____

Signature _____ Date _____

(Back)

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Factors	Yes	No	Comments
1. Is the business involved in the subject area?			
2. Does the business have job openings that match the career objectives of students enrolled in the course?			
3. Does the work environment appear to be safe?			
4. Are the facilities well maintained?			
5. Is the business's equipment up to date?			
6. Does the business have a reputation of stability in the community?			
7. Do the business's current employees appear to be well-trained?			
8. Is the location convenient for students?			
9. Is the owner/manager willing to learn about co-op?			
10. Does the owner/manager exhibit a positive attitude toward employees?			
11. Is the owner/manager willing to allow time for students to receive instruction on the job?			
12. Is the owner/manager receptive to allowing time for student evaluation?			
13. Is the owner/manager willing to assign a training sponsor to work with students?			

BUSINESS ANALYSIS

Business _____ Address _____

Owner/Manager _____ _____

Contact Person _____ Title _____ Phone _____

Possible Job Titles _____ _____

_____ _____

Overall Evaluation	◻ Outstanding	◻ Good	◻ Average	◻ Below Average	◻ Unacceptable

Coordinating Teacher _____ Date _____

Return to Contents

Employer Prospect Card

Name of Business _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Type of Business _____

Contact _____ Title _____

Recommended By _____ Business _____

Hours of Operation _____

Working Hours _____

Comments_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Front)

Date of Contact Results

1.

2.

3.

4.

_____

Placement Record

Date of Interview Student Results

1.

2.

3.

4.

Student Hired _____ Date _____

Job Title _____ Department _____

Training Sponsor _____ Title _____

(Back)

Return to Contents

ORIENTATION TO BUSINESS

STUDENT _____ DATE _____

TRAINING STATION _____ SUPERVISOR _____

Directions. Be sure that your student employee obtains information about the following factors. Check the information on each item as it is completed. Return the completed form to the coordinating teacher.

Company Orientation

_____ 1. Give student copies of printed materials.
_____ 2. Explain the company's history.
_____ 3. Describe the company's product line(s).
_____ 4. Discuss company policies and procedures regarding:
  _____a. Hours of operation/work
  _____b. Overtime policies
  _____c. Pay periods
  _____d. Vacation policy
  _____e. Holiday policy
  _____f. Appropriate dress and grooming
  _____g. Safety rules
  _____h. Emergency procedures
  _____i. Procedures for absence
  _____j. Parking
  _____k. Procedures for arrival
  _____l. Procedures for departure
  _____m. Policies about use of telephone
_____ 5. Describe employee benefits such as:
  _____a. Discounts
  _____b. Educational assistance

Department Orientation

_____ 6. Describe the relationship of the department to the company.
_____ 7. Discuss specific departmental rules including:
  _____a. Breaks
  _____b. Work schedules
  _____c. Days off
  _____d. Presence of food at work station
_____ 8. Introduce co-workers
_____ 9. Explain job responsibilities of co-workers
_____ 10. Identify training sponsor

Job Orientation

_____ 11. Show student her/his work station
_____ 12. Describe student's responsibilities
_____ 13. Explain the importance of the student's responsibilities to the organization

_____

(Employer/Training Sponsor) (Date)

_____

(Student) (Date)

_____

(Coordinating Teacher) (Date)

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Faculty Recommendation for
Participation in Work-Based Experiences

To: _____
(Teacher's Name)
From: _____
(Your Name)
Date: _____

According to information provided by _____,
(Student's Name)

_____ is currently enrolled in your class and has applied for admission to participate in a work-based activity for _____. If selected, the
(Date range)

student will represent our school in the business community. Please evaluate his/her ability to fulfill that role by rating classroom performance. All comments will be kept confidential. Completed forms should be returned to me by _____.
(Date)

Scoring scale: 1 = exceptional, 2 = average/acceptable, 3 = not acceptable

Traits	**Score**	**Comments**
Appearance		
Attendance		
Cooperation		
Dependability		
Willingness to learn		

Specific suggestions/concerns to be addressed prior to student's participation in work-based activities.

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School's Name
Report of Coordination Activities

Name _____ Course _____

DIRECTIONS: Code the contacts with businesses as to purpose:
C = Counseling, E = Evaluation, O = Observation, P = Prospecting, and M = Miscellaneous

Day	Contact Code	Contacts (business/student)	Notes	Reimbursable Mileage
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

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WEEKLY WORK SCHEDULE

For Week Beginning: Monday, _____ -- Sunday, _____ Period _____

Student's Name	Business	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday		Sunday	
		From	To	From	To	From	To	From	To	From	To	From	To	From	To

Return to Contents

SAMPLE
Assessment of Student Participation
-Site Visit/Internship-

Business Sponsor: _____ Student: _____

Company/Organization: _____ Date: _____

Please rate the participating student on the following items.
(SA = Strongly Agree; U = Undecided/No Opinion; SD = Strongly Disagree)

The participating student:

SA A U D SD 1. was punctual.

SA A U D SD 2. arrived fully prepared to participate.

SA A U D SD 3. provided appropriate notice of absences or schedule changes.

SA A U D SD 4. was cooperative, friendly, and respectful.

SA A U D SD 5. dressed neatly and appropriately.

SA A U D SD 6. showed appropriate initiative; asked you and others investigative questions about profession.

SA A U D SD 7. completed any assigned work tasks to your specifications and satisfaction.

SA A U D SD 8. demonstrated enthusiasm toward the experience.

SA A U D SD 9. communicated effectively, including appropriate verbal and non-verbal behavior.

SA A U D SD 10. made all appropriate efforts to investigate the career to the fullest extent possible.

SA A U D SD 11. showed appropriate appreciation for your help.

SA A U D SD 12. sent an appropriate thank-you within three days of completing the experience.

SA A U D SD 13. is recommended for other, similar activities at other organizations, subject to the following recommendations:

Suggestions to improve the experience and additional comments:

Please return this form within three days, using the envelope provided. Thank you!

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Student Responsibilities
-Work-Based Activities-

Prior to and during participation in any work-based activity, including internships, mentorships, co-op, and others as designated by the coordinating teacher, you must agree to or complete the following:

1. Complete any advance assignments or activities, including self-inventories and company research.

2. Complete the application form and get parental signature.

3. Have proof of your social security number.

4. Submit to a drug screening and criminal background checks as may be required by the company or organization.

5. Complete the designated release forms and get parental signature(s). Required forms (x):
   ___ Medical/Emergency information
   ___ Transportation
   ___ Proof of automobile insurance
   ___ Specific activity authorization
   ___ Other:_____

6. Have the approval of your coordinator or counselor for participation with the specific business or organization of interest.

7. Complete the orientation session.

8. Contact, not fewer than three days in advance, the assigned company/mentor by telephone to arrange the initial meeting.

9. Learn and follow all company guidelines and be prepared to discuss the guidelines with your coordinating teacher or counselor.

10. Provide complete documentation of your experience both written (journal) and oral (class reports or other presentation as assigned).

11. Complete the evaluation process following completion of the experience.

12. Comply with all dress or appearance standards at all times throughout the experience.

13. Arrange reliable transportation and back-up plan.

14. Adhere to all safety regulations, including use of protection devices, as recommended by the business representative throughout the experience.

15. Demonstrate courteous, professional behavior at all times, including adherence to all company policies, procedures and regulations.

16. Understand and adhere to the school's attendance and notification policies, including the "no school, no work" stipulation.

17. Provide timely notice of any absences or intent to withdraw from the program.

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Name of School
School's Address
School's Phone Number

PARENT/STUDENT AGREEMENT

_____ has employed your daughter or son as part of work-based
(Business)
education. So that parents and students understand their responsibilities, they acknowledge that:

1. The student's primary responsibility is to school activities.
2. The student may not terminate the experience with a business or transfer to another organization without the consent of the coordinating teacher.
3. The student may not hold any other employment without the consent and agreement of the coordinating teacher.
4. The student agrees to follow all policies, rules, and regulations in the business and at the school.
5. All safety regulations must be followed while on the job.
6. The student will discuss such matters as transfers and work-based problems with the coordinator before addressing them with the employer.
7. The student is to be available at the time scheduled by the business and the coordinating teacher.
8. The student's participation with a specific business or organization must be approved in advance by the coordinating teacher.
9. The student is responsible for transportation to and from work.
10. The student agrees to notify the school and the employer in case of inability to attend school and work.
11. The student is not allowed to work without being in school.
12. The student is expected to attend an annual recognition ceremony and to incur the cost of two meals.
13. Dishonesty in school or at work may be grounds for terminating this experience and may result in further action by either the school or business or both.

Parent or Guardian _____ Date _____

Student _____ Date _____

Description of planned experience: _____

_____

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School's Name
School's Address
School's Phone Number

TRAINING AGREEMENT
-- Employment-based Experience --

Student _____ Job Title _____
Business _____ Phone _____
Supervisor/Employer _____ Title _____
Training Period Begins _____ Ends _____ Pay Rate: _____
Career Objective _____

The school's work-based program prepares students for employment in jobs whose primary responsibilities include:

To participate in the program, all parties must agree to the following:

Everyone

1. All parties agree that the primary purpose of this employment-based experience is educational.
2. The agreement will not be terminated without the knowledge of all parties concerned.
3. Learning experiences and job tasks will be planned and managed on the basis of a written training plan.
4. The coordinating teacher and training sponsor will jointly develop and update the student's training plan.
5. The student may withdraw or transfer from a training station after providing appropriate notification when it would enhance the student's educational opportunities.
6. The student will work a minimum of 15 hours each week, but not more than 25 hours.
7. All complaints should be addressed to and resolved by the coordinating teacher and assigned mentor/sponsor.

Student

1. The policies, rules, and regulations of the school and the business will be upheld.
2. Actions, attitudes, and appearance will reflect positively on the school and the business.
3. Advance notification of absence will be given the employer and the coordinating teacher.
4. The student will attend an annual employer appreciation banquet.
5. Participation in the career-technical student organization is expected.
6. Additional part-time employment will not be pursued while enrolled in this program.
7. Records of work experiences will be completed and submitted as required by the school.
8. Work-based activities will be chosen and completed as designated by the coordinating teacher.
9. Approval of the coordinating teacher must be obtained before quitting or changing jobs.

Parents

1. Responsibility for the personal conduct of the student at school and at work resides with the parents.
2. Transportation to and from the work station must be provided by the student's parents or guardians.
3. Participation in the career-technical student organization is expected.
4. The student will be encouraged to carry out duties and responsibilities effectively.

Employer

1. The student will be employed for an average of not less than 15 hours nor more than 25 hours each week.
2. The student will be assigned a supervisor/mentor who will work with the coordinating teacher in developing the student's training plan and evaluating the student.
3. State and federal employment and compensation regulations apply to the student.
4. The student will be prohibited from working if he or she has not been in school.
5. The student will be paid the prevailing wage of others doing similar work.

Coordinating teacher

1. Will observe and evaluate the student's on-the-job performance periodically throughout the year.
2. Will assist the student in securing an appropriate employment-based experience.
3. Will work with the mentor to develop a training plan for the student.
4. Will counsel the student about her or his progress on the job.
5. Will determine the student's final grade for co-op.
6. Will provide activities for the student to complete on the job.
7. Will reinforce on-the-job experiences with related classroom instruction.
8. Will fairly enforce policies, rules, and regulations.

_____	_____
Employer Date	Coordinating Teacher Date
_____	_____
Student Date	Parents/Guardians Date

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WEEKLY WAGE AND HOUR REPORT

Student _____ Type of Work/Job Title _____

Training Station _____ Supervisor _____

Hourly Wage _____ Bonuses/Tips _____

Directions: Put date in upper right-hand corner.
Indicate presence in class at school in upper left corner.
Show hours worked and total (see example).
Below each day, identify key responsibilities.
Write comments in the spaces provided.
Verify the hours and pay by signing the appropriate signature block.
Show hours scheduled to work in following week in spaces provided.

Example:

✓	2/23
1:00 - 4:30 3.5 hrs.	

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.	HOURS	GROSS PAY
							Hours for Next Week	
							Sunday	
							Monday	
							Tuesday	
							Wednesday	
							Thursday	
							Friday	
							Saturday	

Comments

Student: _____

_____

_____

Supervisor: _____

_____

_____

_____
(Student) (Date)

_____
(Supervisor) (Date)

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Guest Speaker Guidelines

Thank you for agreeing to meet with our students. We very much appreciate your time and willingness to share with them some of your professional experiences.

The purpose of this series of guest speakers is to help our students better understand the nature of the workplace and to provide them a general overview of the key points outlined below. As you organize your thoughts for this presentation, please consider the following:

1. The more personal and anecdotal your presentation is, the more impact it will have.
2. Interactive presentations (i.e., asking and allowing questions throughout) work best.
3. Audiovisual materials (e.g., video tapes) are welcome; however, please keep in mind that it's you and your experiences students will learn the most from.
4. Be candid and forthright about your experiences (appropriate to a young audience).
5. Key points that we hope you will address include:

    - Short personal history, with anecdotes, of your professional growth beginning with high school and part-time jobs, and including comments on what you believe was good and what you might do differently (and why!)

    - Description of your current job in terms of

- your overall responsibilities
- why/how you believe you earned the position or responsibility
- required general skills (e.g., technology, people, problem-solving, time and project management, teamwork)
- a day in the life (i.e., what's a "typical" day like for you)
- working conditions
- major projects or initiatives and your role with them
- pros and cons of your current position

    - Overview of compensation and benefits associated with your industry

    - Opportunities in your industry, including ways to get involved, specific need for continuing education, near-term and long-term potential.

    - Summary based on a very candid discussion of what you do and do not value in your current professional role.

Again, please know how much we appreciate your time and willingness to contribute in our efforts to better connect our students' education with the real world!

CONFIRMATION:

Teacher Name: _____ School: _____

Presentation Time/Date: _____ Contact #: _____

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Student Worksheet for
Guest Speakers

Use the following guidelines to complete a one-page report on our guest speaker. (Standard format.) Due at the beginning of our next class.

1. Summarize relevant information about the speaker and his/her background, including name and details of current position.

2. Summarize her/his key responsibilities.

3. Key skills required for the position?

4. Critical decisions you would expect someone in this position to make over the course of time?

5. Positive and negative aspects of the position relative to your own interests, goals, and skills. (Be very specific in terms of different aspects of the position. Do not generalize in terms of the job or company. Example: "Although I would not want to work in a hospital, I am interested in how Mr. Samuelson used their lab to work with basic chemistry problems.")

6. What else would you like to know about this industry in general or about the specific career position in particular?

7. Based on what our presenter shared of his/her own background, how do you believe s/he could have done a better job of preparing?

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Job Shadow Checklist

Coordinating Teacher

- Obtain signed training agreement
- Work with sponsor/mentor to develop training plan for each visit
- Schedule students (master calendar)
- On-site visit to monitor student progress
- Monitor completion of on-site assignments
- Collect supervisor evaluations
- Be available for emergencies

Sponsor/Mentor

- Negotiate details of training agreement with coordinating teacher
- Work with coordinating teacher to develop training plan for each visit
- Inform student of rules and regulations
- Use training plan as guide for student activity while on site
- Answer relevant questions about profession, work activity, and facility
- Monitor student and contact instructor about problems, as appropriate
- Complete written evaluation of student's participation
- Review experience with coordinating teacher and student, as appropriate

Student

- Complete application to participate
- Obtain written parental permission
- Identify specific areas of career interest (not companies)
- Complete preliminary assignment(s), age appropriate (e.g., careers research paper)
    - 5 broad responsibilities
    - 5 learned skills critical to career
    - 5 natural aptitudes relevant to career
    - 5 examples of class content relevant to career
    - Summarize employment demand (current and projected)
    - Summarize compensation
    - Identify career ladder and "typical" time lines
    - Summarize general working conditions
    - Identify licensing or certification requirements
- Develop list of key questions to be addressed during job shadow
- Review school policies and procedures for participation, including:
    - Dress requirements
    - No food, drink, or gum except as specifically provided by mentor
    - Prompt, ready-to-work arrival
    - Advance calls in event of emergency absence
- Complete all activities at work site
- Complete evaluation of experience
- Complete reflection worksheet
- Write and send thank you letter

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Job Shadow
-Student Worksheet-

Name: _____ Date(s) of Activity: _____

Company: _____ Contact: _____

Time in: _____ Time out: _____

1. Was business contact prepared for your visit? _____

2. Would you recommend this site to other students? _____

3. Would you recommend this individual contact for other students? _____

4. List five specific activities that you observed that you believe were significant aspects of the overall career area:
   a) _____

   b) _____

   c) _____

   d) _____

   e) _____

5. What is the point of entry for new employees in the organization you visited?

   _____

   _____

6. What types of technology did you observe? How is that technology likely to change in the next five years? Be very specific.

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. What specific skills and education are required for the types of career options you observed? Be very specific:

   _____

   _____

8. What specific physical/mental attributes are required for the position you observed? Be very specific:

   _____

   _____

9. In this particular organization, what promotion/advancement opportunities are there to move from the

position you observed to other assignments?

_____

_____

10. What are the most common reasons that people leave this organization?

_____

_____

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School
Record of Coordination Visit

Student:_____ Coordinating Teacher: _____

Site:_____ Mentor:_____

Date of Visit: _____ Time: _____

√ all that apply:

_____ Observed student on-task
_____ Met with student
_____ Met with mentor
_____ Reviewed general performance of student
_____ Reviewed specific skill-set performance, per training plan
_____ Added additional skills for future review, per training plan
_____ Scheduled specific off-clock work-based assignments
_____ Identified specific training needs for classroom work
_____ Identified additional potential mentors ___ Met: _____
_____ Met with HR representative, if applicable
_____ Courtesy _____ Problem-solving _____ Prospecting
_____ Provided mentor training/recommendations:
_____
_____ Discussed other opportunities for mentor participation in program:
_____
_____ Scheduled next visit: _____

_____ Committed to follow up:
_____
_____ Other activities, discussions:

Attach relevant training plan documents.

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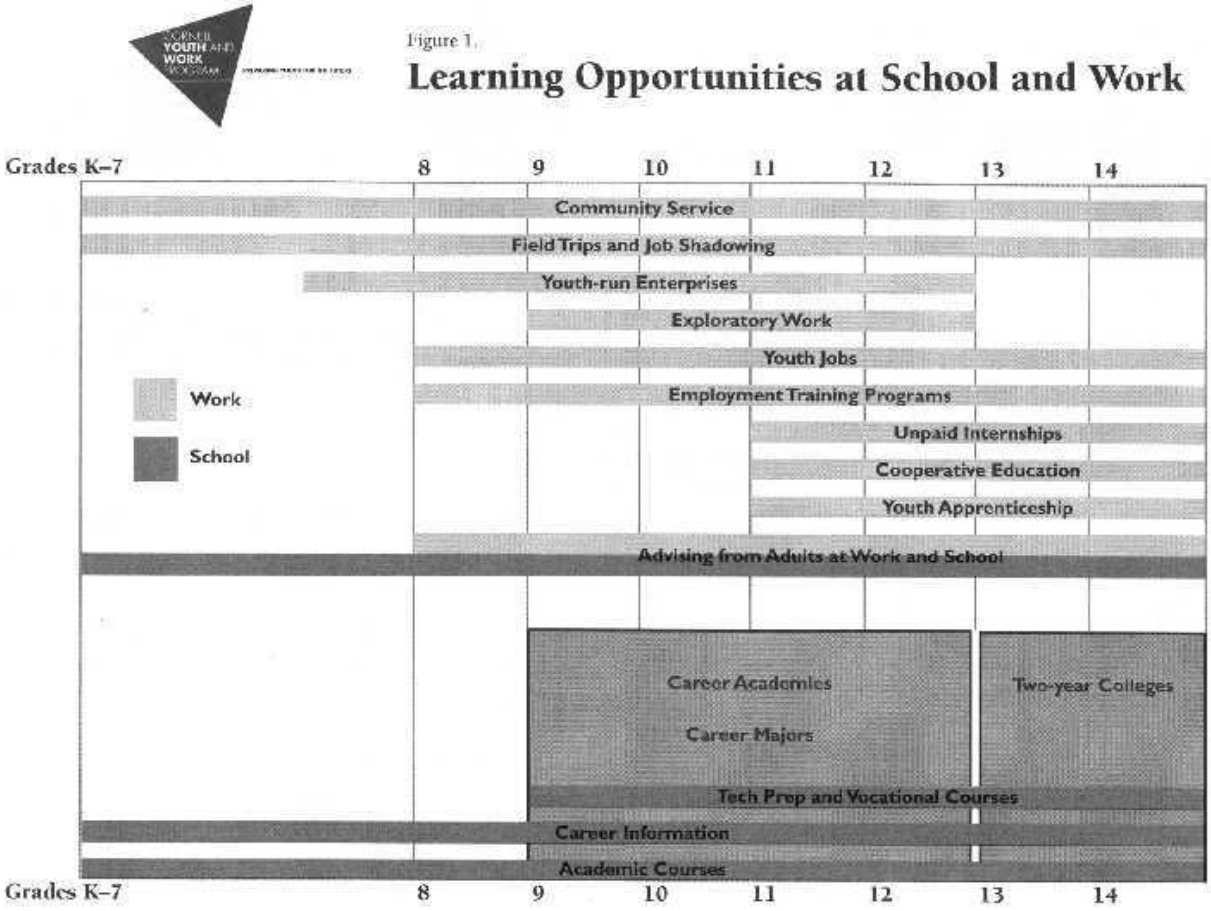
Continuum of Experiences



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UNIT: Pricing Goods and Services

COMPETENCY: Explain the nature and scope of pricing

ACTIVITY: 1. Talk with the person responsible for pricing at your place of employment to find out how pricing relates to other marketing functions. Discuss your findings with the class.

TIME: Workplace 15 minutes

LEVEL: A

UNIT: Pricing Goods and Services

COMPETENCY: Describe factors affecting selling price

ACTIVITY: 1. Talk with the person responsible for pricing at your place of employment to determine what factors are considered when setting prices of products. Analyze the information obtained, and write a brief paper explaining which factors you feel most significantly affect the prices of products at your place of employment.

TIME: Workplace 15 minutes
Self-study 30 minutes

LEVEL: C

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UNIT: Managing Business Risks

COMPETENCY: Follow safety precautions

ACTIVITY: 1. Determine what safety procedures are given to employees at your place of employment. Discuss your findings with the class.

TIME: Workplace 15 minutes

LEVEL: A

UNIT: Managing Business Risks

COMPETENCY: Follow safety precautions

ACTIVITY: 2. While at work, follow safety precautions. Write a short paper identifying the precautions that you have taken. Share this information with your supervisor. Evaluate your ability to follow safety precautions by completing the following performance checklist.

TIME: Workplace 30 minutes
Self-study 30 minutes

LEVEL: C

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UNIT: Exploring Career Development Opportunities

COMPETENCY: Conduct a job search

ACTIVITY: 1. Identify sources of job information to identify job openings which match your career interests. Discuss your progress with your instructor.

TIME: Self-study 1 hour

LEVEL: A

UNIT: Exploring Career Development Opportunities

COMPETENCY: Conduct a job search

ACTIVITY: 2. Conduct a job search based on the self-analyses used in class. Evaluate your progress in conducting a job search by completing the following performance checklist. Discuss your progress with the class.

TIME: Self-study 2 hours

LEVEL: C

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UNIT: Exploring Career Development Opportunities

COMPETENCY: Prepare a résumé

ACTIVITY: 1. Identify errors contained in sample résumés provided by your instructor. Check the résumés for spelling, grammar and punctuation. Indicate on the résumés how the errors should be corrected. Discuss your findings with the class.

TIME: Self-study 30 minutes

LEVEL: B

UNIT: Exploring Career Development Opportunities

COMPETENCY: Prepare a résumé

ACTIVITY: 2. Prepare a résumé for a job in marketing. Ask your supervisor to evaluate your résumé by completing the following performance checklist.

TIME: Workplace 15 minutes
Self-study 1 hour

LEVEL: C

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JOB PLACEMENT AGREEMENT[1]
For Supervised Occupational Experience in Agriculture

To provide a basis of understanding and to promote sound business relationships, this agreement is established on _____ 20___. Placement will begin on _____ 20___ and will end on or about _____ 20___ unless the agreement becomes unsatisfactory to either party.
School _____ Student _____ Career Objective _____
Name of business _____ Employer _____
Person responsible for training _____
The usual working hours when attending school will be _____
The usual working hours when not attending school will be _____
Provision for overtime _____ Maximum work hours per week _____
Liability insurance coverage (type and amount) _____
Length of trial period _____ Wage rate during trial period _____
Wage rate for the remainder of agreement period _____
Frequency of payment or payment dates _____

The employer agrees to:

1. Provide the student with opportunities to develop proficiency in as many competencies as possible with special consideration to those contained in the job training program.
2. Assist the instructor in evaluating student performance.
3. Assign the student new responsibilities in relationship to student progress.
4. Cooperate with the instructor in arranging a conference with the student immediately on supervisory visits.
5. Instruct the student on job safety and avoid subjecting the student to unnecessary hazards.
6. Notify the parent and instructor immediately in case of accident, sickness, or any other serious problem.
7. Notify the instructor of serious employment problems before dismissal of the student.
8. Conform to all federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including nondiscrimination against any applicant or employee because of race, color, sex, or national origin. This policy of nondiscrimination shall also apply to otherwise qualified handicapped individuals.
9. _____

The student agrees to:

1. Be courteous and considerate to everyone.
2. Keep accurate records and reports of occupational experiences, hours of work, earnings, and others required by employer or instructor.
3. Follow instructions, use appropriate safety practices, and be alert to unsafe working conditions.
4. Be punctual, dependable, and loyal; and keep the employer's interest in mind.
5. Notify the instructor and employer when it is necessary to be absent from school and work.
6. Learn to do well as many jobs as possible with special consideration to those contained in the occupational training plan.
7. Be appropriately groomed and dressed for the job.
8. Provide a full day's work for a fair wage and justify employment.
9. Acquire proper work permit.
10. Abide by the regulations and policies of the employer and the school.
11. Not leave the training program without first receiving the consent of the instructor.
12. _____

The instructor, in behalf of the school, agrees to:

1. Review and approve the placement center.
2. Provide copies of the agreement to the employer, school, and parent.
3. Assist the student in obtaining a work permit and developing a job training plan.
4. Schedule class instruction to prepare students for occupational experience.
5. Meet with the student on the job at frequent intervals for the purpose of instruction, evaluation, and progress on training plan.
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

The parent agrees to:

1. Cooperate with the instructor and employer in promoting the fulfillment of the occupational training plan and agreement.
2. Be knowledgeable of working conditions, training agreement, and plan.
3. Assist in assuring that the student has transportation to and from the job placement center.
4. _____
5. _____

All parties agree to:

1. An initial period of _____ working days to allow the student to adjust to the job.
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Student _____
(signature) *(date)*
(date)

Address _____

_____

_____

Telephone # _____

_____

Social Security # _____

Birth date _____

_____
(month) *(day)* *(year)*

Grade in school _____

_____

Parent _____
(signature) *(date)*

Address _____

_____

_____

Employer _____
(signature)

Address _____

_____

_____

Telephone #

Instructor

(signature) *(date)*

Address

_____

_____

School telephone # _____

Home telephone # _____

Telephone # _____

[1]Source: Agricultural Education Job Placement Record Book, Ohio State University, 1992

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School's Name
Report of Coordination Activities

Name _____ Course _____

DIRECTIONS: Code the contacts with businesses as to purpose:
C = Counseling, E = Evaluation, O = Observation, P = Prospecting, and M = Miscellaneous

Day	Contact Code	Contacts (business/student)	Notes	Reimbursable Mileage
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

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SAMPLE

Business Site Visit
PARENT CONSENT AND RELEASE

This consent and release is executed by the undersigned student and the undersigned parent or guardian legally responsible for the undersigned student.

In consideration of the selection of the undersigned student to participate in the

___ Field Trip to:_____ on:_____

___ Job Shadowing Day to:_____ on: _____

___ Other:_____ on: _____

the undersigned herewith agree to the participation by the undersigned student and hereby, for ourselves, our heirs, executors and administrators waive, release and forever discharge any and all rights and claims for damage which the undersigned may have or which may hereafter accrue against the district or their respective officers, agents, representatives, successors, and/or assigns, for any and all injuries which may be sustained and suffered by the undersigned student in connection with or arising out of participation in the above indicated activity.

This consent and release shall apply to the above activity on the date indicated OR on any alternate date that may be selected by the school.

I have read and understand the enclosed information.

_____ _____
Student Signature Date

_____ _____
Signature of Parent or Person Responsible Date

For questions regarding this community-based experience, parents or guardians may contact:

_____ _____
Coordinating Teacher Best time to call

To ensure student permission, this consent and release must be returned to the coordinating teacher or his/her designee by:

_____
Day Date

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SAMPLE
Informed Consent/Parental Permission

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Your son/daughter has requested permission to participate in our work-based learning program, including activities that occur off the school premises. These activities will include site-visits to area business and industry and interaction with adults and other students outside of the immediate control of the school. The purpose of these activities is to help students acquire a better understanding of the overall work environment, potential careers, and skills/education required for entry and advancement within the industries studied.

Your permission is required for your son/daughter to be considered for participation. In giving your permission, you should consider the following:

- Activities may occur throughout the school year.
- You and your child will be responsible for transportation except for special instances.
- Students may share transportation (i.e., provide rides for other students) to various activities.
- Bus or comparable transportation will be provided for some, but not all, activities.
- Although the coordinating teacher and other school staff will make every effort to look out for the safety of your child, representatives of the school will not be present for many of the activities.
- Off-site activities, particularly those within some industries, pose safety risks different from routine in-school activities.

In signing this document, you agree to hold harmless the school, school employees, participating businesses and, authorized representative of the businesses who are participating in the school's work-based learning program.

Permission is granted for my son/daughter's participation in activities organized as part of the school's work-based learning program. I have read and understand the materials provided which explain the nature of the program and types of activities in which my child may participate.

_____ _____
PRINT: Parent or legal guardian Date

of_____
PRINT: Student Name

_____
SIGNATURE: Parent or legal guardian

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Ideas

Developing an effective work-based education program that will meet the needs of a wide range of students is challenging, time-consuming, and very different from traditional teaching. Following is a collection of ideas that may be of use in some situations:

- Always require student documentation of their experience, along with their own evaluation and comments. Use them as you arrange for the following year's activities.
- Students know many people who might be available to support various activities – including mentoring; their parents know others. Include both in your networking efforts to make contacts in the business community.
- Create and scrupulously maintain an electronic database with enough detail to be of value from year to year. Take time to design the data tables so that you will have access to any sort or subgroup needed throughout the year. (For example, include industry, job, list of activities, etc.) Your memory and note cards will not get the job done over time.
- Take careful notes when you have a guest speaker, including notes on his/her delivery. When you invite the speaker back another time, include your content notes, with suggestions on where to spend more and less time. **Guest Speaker**
- Prepare a worksheet for students to use when listening to a guest speaker. Be certain that the worksheet is incorporated into your assessment process. **Guest Speaker Student Worksheet**
- Plan activities well ahead. Any activity involving business people should be initiated not fewer than four weeks in advance. Getting on a busy calendar is far easier three months ahead than three weeks.
- Brief your students before each activity. Be certain to include very specific expectations regarding acceptable behavior. Many young people simply have no idea what is or is not appropriate in a business setting. **Meeting Business People**
- Debrief every activity.
- Consider the student reward structure. Make it feel good to have completed a particular activity, especially if they are doing so on their own time. Think about how hard some students work to earn Boy and Girl Scout merit badges. Gold stars work.

Job Shadow Student Worksheet

Share your best ideas! E-mail your suggestions and we'll make every effort to include them in our next revision of this page. Send your ideas to: In the subject line, enter "work-based idea."