

## Teacher Tip Sheet

### Workplace Tour

*A tip sheet for teachers on how to help students get the most out of a Workplace Tour. A Workplace Tour presents a unique opportunity to support and augment the curriculum and get students more deeply engaged in their learning. If you are coordinating a Workplace Tour, have a look at the Coordinator Tip Sheet in the WBL Toolkit.*

### Workplace Tour

A Workplace Tour is a highly structured Career Awareness activity in which students visit a workplace, learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions and observe work in progress. More than a simple field trip or site visit, a Workplace Tour is designed and structured to meet specific learning outcomes, be educationally rich, and build awareness of the business, its industry sector, its role in the economy and the career options it provides. A Workplace Tour is conducted at a workplace for small groups and involves preparation and follow-up in the classroom, including research and reflection by students.

### Workplace Tours are designed to promote:

- Exposure to potential careers and jobs
- The development of occupational knowledge
- Knowledge about the education and training needed for entry into the industry
- Awareness of the business's role in the community, as well as its functions, processes and products
- An understanding of the business's workforce and its contributions to the community

### Teacher Tips

#### Workplace Tour Success Factors

When planning and implementing a Workplace Tour, keep the following success factors in mind.

#### Before the Workplace Tour

- Identify how and when a Workplace Tour might enhance a particular lesson or activity in the classroom.
- Familiarize yourself with the purpose and goals of the Workplace Tour.
  - ✓ Assess how the Workplace Tour can support classroom training and meet curriculum goals.
  - ✓ Identify and document desired student learning outcomes.
  - ✓ Review the Workplace Tour Guide and Tip Sheets.
- Prepare students to maximize learning.
  - ✓ Discuss expectations for the experience and what students may learn from the tour.
  - ✓ Have them research the employer website and prepare at least three meaningful questions for employer engagement.
  - ✓ Discuss what students know and want to know about the company and the industry.
  - ✓ Build excitement for the tour by connecting the experience to the real world (e.g. connecting the experience to personal goals, connecting the company's

- focus to current events and future career growth in the industry).
- Address logistics by working with the P-TECH coordinator to:
  - ✓ Find out if certain dress or safety gear is required and communicate any requirements to students.
  - ✓ Collect signed Work-Based Learning permission forms.

### During the Workplace Tour

- Provide time and space for introductions, an overview of the business, its operations and what to expect during the tour.
- Ensure that students receive instruction in workplace safety and an orientation to workplace norms.
- Arrange for students to experience the tour in small groups and engage in inquiry when possible.
- Facilitate learning.
  - ✓ Support employers in effective interactions by making sure students are attentive, polite and engaged.
- Offer role models.
  - ✓ Arrange for students to hear from and speak to “someone like me.”
  - ✓ Ensure students observe and interact with employees with different levels of responsibility in the organization.

### After the Workplace Tour

- Reflect on learning.
  - ✓ Provide individual and group reflection activities for students.
  - ✓ Help students make the connection between training topics and the workplace.
  - ✓ Support students in determining their next steps in learning about careers.
- Conduct follow-up activities.
  - ✓ Assess the impact and value of the tour.
  - ✓ Utilize employer, program staff and student feedback to improve future tours.
  - ✓ Have students write thank-you notes to the employer partner.
- Document and archive information about the tour.

### Go Deeper

Here are some activities that can help deepen the impact of a Workplace Tour.

- Discuss behavioral expectations for the experience by guiding students to compare the culture and style of the workplace with others they have observed (either formally through your program or informally on their own).
- Make the tour part of a project and have students prepare and deliver a presentation to others at your school about the company.
- Take pictures from the tour and provide them to the company for their website or newsletter. Ensure you have signed releases for all photos.
- Publicize the tour and the business by placing a story in the local newspaper or posting on the school or agency webpage.
- Consider other potential public relations benefits and opportunities.