

CAREER READY **SD**

Business Industry Tours

A Project of:



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Work-Based Learning: Business and Industry Tours

Work-Based Learning (WBL) connects students with industry to engage in professional-world experiences and bridge academic, technical, and employability skill development. Business tours are a WBL activity that can help students build an understanding of a broad scope of careers and how their skills and interests can relate to the world of work.

As a business, these tours allow you to identify and promote career opportunities to students in your community. Connecting with students in your company's work environment, can help you engage with young people as your potential future workforce. Below are Key Steps for designing and conducting a Business Tour with students.

1. Partner with Your Local School(s)

Identify local schools you can connect with to provide industry tours to their students. Tours can be conducted with elementary, middle school, or high school students. Tailor your script and discussion points to be age-appropriate for the grade group touring your business.

2. Invite Your Employees to Participate

Ask your employees to speak with students about their jobs and responsibilities at the company. Ask the employees to focus on 1) the skills and training needed to do their jobs, and 2) what they enjoy about working at your company (flexible work schedule, great benefits, company culture, etc.). This can be a leadership development opportunity for employees participating in the Business Tour experience.

3. Confirm Tour Area(s) in Your Business

Identify in advance the specific areas of your business that students will tour. Inform employees and managers in those areas that students will tour the worksite, the approximate time when the group will be in the work area, and the amount of time students are expected to be in the work area. Identify a location to have a wrap-up conversation with the students at the end of the tour. A meeting room or lobby area will allow you to discuss what the students observed, and the students can ask questions in a conversation-friendly area.

4. Define Success & Measure Progress

Business tours are an investment of time and potential resources. To ensure your tours are successful and beneficial for your company and students, you need to determine how you will measure success for your business tour. Success can be the number of student participants, level of employee engagement, increased partnerships with local schools, etc.

5. Prepare Your Agenda

Identify the amount of time you have available for the tour. Have a clear agenda with work areas the students will visit and information you intend to share with them. You can adjust the items covered to meet the time you have available for the tour. An example agenda is provided below.

6. Conduct Your Business Tour

- **Set expectations for students.** Provide them with any company or safety guidelines they need to follow while onsite.
- **Identify company needs.** Discuss the knowledge and skills all employees at your company need. Discuss the variety of jobs available at your company, even if you are not touring all of the jobs or areas that day.
- **Lead the tour.** Explain to students what they are seeing as you walk through the business. Introduce the students to employees and work areas as they tour the business. Identify the skills needed for each of the jobs and areas they see. Discuss training and promotion opportunities your company offers.

6. Refine Your Tour

After each business tour, identify the level of success based on your company's definition in #4. Decide if you want to adjust your tour or information shared based on tour results and feedback from students, teachers, and your employees.

Example Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Expectations for Students (safety and conduct)
- Your Company's Story
 - How it started
 - Your Customers and People You Serve
 - Products and Services You Provide
 - Careers at Your company
- Company Tour
 - Careers and Work Areas Being Toured
 - Knowledge and Skills Needed
 - Equipment, Tools, and Technology Used
- Wrap-Up with Q&A