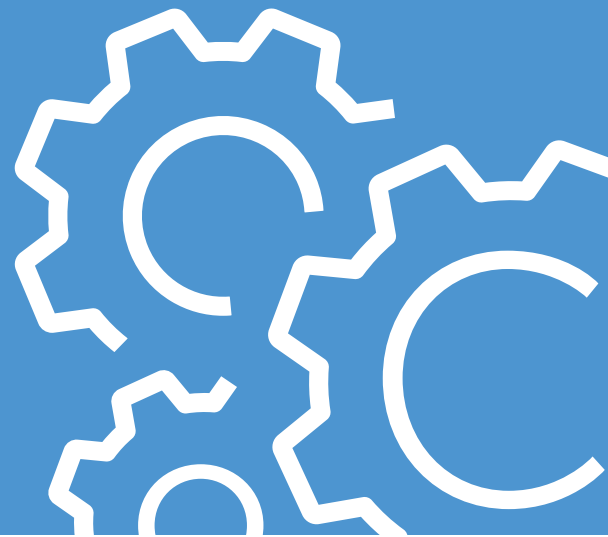


EMPLOYERS



Work-based Learning Toolkit

This toolkit contains the resources, tools, and guidance to successfully develop high-quality work-based learning experiences for students.



TOOLKIT CONTENTS

2 ABOUT

4 GETTING READY

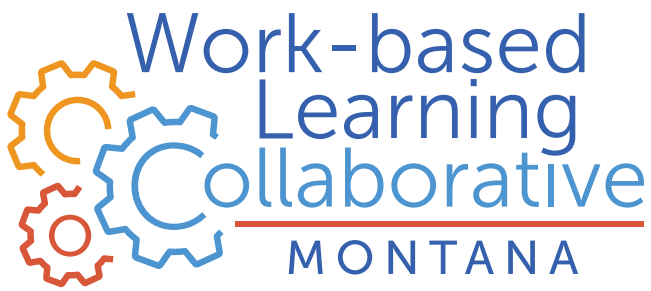
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& FEEDBACK**

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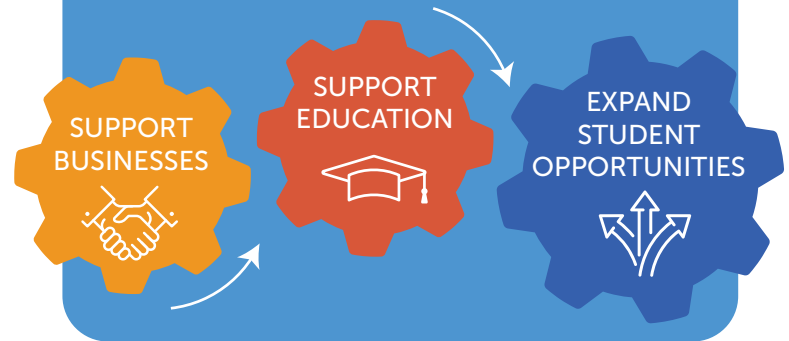
Our Vision

Every young adult in Montana will have multiple pathways to economic self-sufficiency, supported by a statewide work-based learning system that honors the potential of students and addresses the workforce needs of Montana businesses, today and tomorrow.

Why Now?

Work-based learning opportunities span a continuum from workplace tours to youth apprenticeship (and many models in between). While large employers may have the capacity to offer work-based learning experiences for students, small employers often become quickly overwhelmed trying to navigate work-based learning.

From a policy perspective, there are components of work-based learning in the K-12 education system, the postsecondary education system, and the public workforce system – but no single entry point for students or employers to access them, and limited coordination across agencies.



Who We Are

A cross-section of public and private sector organizations with a stake in work-based learning, determined to work together to find a better way to ensure Montana students, educators, and businesses are supported by high-quality, accessible, relevant, and measurable work-based learning opportunities.

Get Involved

Reach Higher Montana (RHM), a statewide nonprofit organization working at the intersection of education and careers, is the intermediary for this work, RHM provides coordination, bridges connections, and focuses on long-term and system-wide outcomes.

To learn more or to join the Collaborative, contact us at WBL@ReachHigherMontana.org



AMB WEST PHILANTHROPIES | AMERICAN JOBS FOR AMERICA'S YOUTH MT | BIG SANDY ORGANICS | BILLINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS | CENTRAL MONTANA WORKS | EDCHOICE | FLATHEAD VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE | GIANFORTE FAMILY FOUNDATION | HELENA COLLEGE | LIVINGSTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL COLLABORATIVE | LIVINGSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS | MILES COMMUNITY COLLEGE | MONTANA ACTE | MONTANA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | MONTANA DEPT OF CORRECTIONS | MONTANA DEPT. OF LABOR & INDUSTRY | MONTANA FFA FOUNDATION | MONTANA HIGH TECH BUSINESS ALLIANCE | MONTANA MANUFACTURING EXTENSION CENTER | MONTANA OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | MONTANA PRIMARY CARE ASSOCIATION | MONTANA STATE WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD | OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION | OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR | PEOPLE'S PARTNERS FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT | SALISH KOOTENAI COLLEGE |

WORK-BASED LEARNING TOOLKIT

This Toolkit is a resource to help grow the number of high-quality work-based learning experiences for students in Montana by providing best practice-informed guidance on work-based learning that can support employers and school staff to develop programs more easily.

The toolkit draws on programs used by employers as well as national best practices. Since many strong work-based learning materials originated in the college environment, often materials have been adapted to better focus on high school students and the work-based learning experience.

Because of the variety of work-based learning models, we have opted to use the term “student worker” throughout this guide. “Student worker” can be interchanged with intern or apprentice, depending on the work-based learning model you are developing.

*Within the toolkit, you will find **THREE** types of tools:*

1



SAMPLE DOCUMENTS
Draft examples

2



TIPS
Implementation advice

3



CHECKLISTS
Step-by-step guidance

Whether you have been hosting student workers for years or are completely new to the idea, there are a lot of resources here to help you. We encourage you to pick and choose the tools that are most useful and relevant to you. Hosting students can be a great benefit to your company, as well as students, so we are excited to support you.

SPECIAL THANKS

Christina Henderson

*MT High-Tech
Business Alliance*

Mark Branger

MT ACTE

James Easton

*MT Chamber
of Commerce*

Kelly Cresswell

Reach Higher Montana

Kelli Street

Reach Higher Montana

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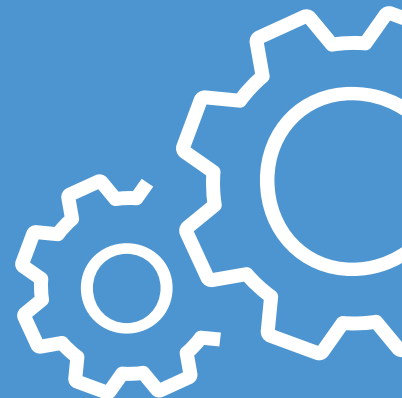
*Office of the
Commissioner of
Higher Education*



**DALLAS
THRIVES**

Thank you to Dallas Thrives!
www.dallasthrives.com

*This resource was adapted,
with permission, from their
Virtual Internship Toolkit.*



Getting Ready



.....TOOLS IN THIS SECTION.....

Are you considering starting a work-based learning program, but don't know where to start?

Hosting student workers can be a rewarding experience for employers big and small, across a range of sectors, we're excited you're thinking about it! This section includes information and tools to help you plan for and promote your work-based learning experiences.



Talking Points and Email – Making the case for hosting a student worker



When is work-based learning the right choice



Readiness self-assessment



CHECKLIST:
Work-based learning program planning

WHAT IS WORK-BASED LEARNING?

In simple terms, it is learning about work, at work. Work-based learning happens through several different structures and can be customized to fit the needs of students, businesses, and communities, here are a few examples:

WORK-SITE TOURS AND JOB SHADOWS

Brief, observational, onsite visits to work places.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Brief on-the-job experiences. Can be paid or unpaid. Focused on skill based learning.

INTERNSHIPS

Short-term on-the-job experiences (3-6 months). Can be paid or unpaid, focuses on career exploration. Can be done virtually, in-person, or as a hybrid (in-person and virtually).

APPRENTICESHIPS

1-5 year commitment, pairing classroom instruction with paid, supervised, on-the-job training leading to industry recognized credential(s).

TYPICAL WORK-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:

TYPICAL WORK SITE TOUR

Total Hours 1-2 hours (depending on the number students and type of business)

When Usually during the school day or part of an after school program.

Student Age 6th Grade through high school.

Paid No

TYPICAL JOB SHADOW

Total Hours 4-8 hours (depending on the number students and type of business)

When Usually during the school day or part of an after school program.

Student Age 6th Grade through high school.

Paid No

TYPICAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Total Hours 20-40 hours

When During the summer, weekends or during or after school.

Student Age 10th through 12 Grade; College.

Paid Yes or No

TYPICAL INTERNSHIP

Total Hours 80-120 hours

How long 4 weeks @ 20 hours to 16 weeks a semester @ 7.5 hours/week.

When During the summer or over a semester during the school year.

Student Age 11th or 12 Grade; College.

Paid Yes

TYPICAL YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP

Total Hours Usually 2,000 hours

How long 3-5 years

When Can start during the summer and/or after school, and continues after high school graduation.

Student Age 16-24 years old

Paid Yes! With increases provided based on growth in skills, competencies, and time on the job.



WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL WORK-BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCE?



MEANINGFUL PROJECTS
Whether one major project or several smaller projects, employers engage students in meaningful work that is based in a real-life challenge, allows them to problem solve, and leads to a tangible product or outcome.



WELCOMING COMMUNITY
Employers create a welcoming environment and build community among student workers and staff with strong onboarding, points of connection, and celebration.



NETWORKING AND MENTORSHIP
Student workers have networking opportunities to explore careers and grow their professional network, as well as a mentor(s) who can help them navigate the workplace and support their career development.



CLEAR EXPECTATIONS AND FEEDBACK
Student workers are provided clear expectations about performance and workplace standards, are engaged in regular goal setting, and receive frequent, constructive feedback that helps them stay on-track and learn.

Work-based Learning incorporates
FOUR KEY ELEMENTS

MAKING THE CASE: Why Your Company Should Host Work-based Learning Experiences

Work-based Learning Experiences

ALLOW EMPLOYERS TO...

Show that community investment is an important part of company brand: Offering work-based learning experiences is a tangible demonstration of your commitment to the long-term prosperity and growth of your community. As a Montana-based employer, the students and families in your community are your customers, your employees, and your community -- today and in the future.

Increase employee engagement: Work-based learning provides a meaningful engagement opportunity between your team and the student workers, allowing your staff to directly interact with young people and gain fresh perspectives on existing business problems. Employers who have conducted work-based learning report high levels of employee satisfaction from the experience of working with students.

Build employee management experience: Work-based learning experiences are excellent development tools for employees looking to build their skills as managers. As student worker supervisors, your employees will be developing project management, team leadership, evaluation, and communication skills every day.

Create a more diverse talent pipeline and bring more diverse voices into your work: Creating a work-based learning experience allows you to bring diverse voices into your work for the summer, and to develop connections with diverse talent pools to meet your future employment needs.

Engage perspectives of youth on important issues impacting your company: Generation Z (youth born after 1997) represent future talent and customers for your company. As digital natives, they tend to have added savvy around communicating using video and social media, and are often leading voices on issues like racial equity and climate change. Work-based learning experiences can be opportunities to leverage their unique skills and perspectives to meet your business needs.

Increase awareness of your company and brand: Participating in a work-based learning experience raises awareness of your company and brand within the local community, including with local students, families, other employers, and local government.

BENEFITS OF VIRTUAL WORK-BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Virtual work-based learning experiences have a few specific benefits for students and employers:

Wider talent pool	Employer can choose from student workers across Montana, regardless of their proximity to the office.
Student workers are more free to focus on giving their best performance	Student workers work from home or from a workspace at school and do not have to figure out how to arrange transportation, special clothing, money for food, etc. Working from home can also make the work environment less intimidating for students, freeing them up to do their best work.
Not as demanding on your physical space	No need to find space for desks, create badges, or set up phones and workstations for the student worker.
More efficient for the student worker and your team	Student workers spend their time efficiently, focused on achieving a learning goal and/or building a specific skill. They have less downtime that a supervisor has to figure out how to fill, and their work is more meaningful. This also means supporting a student worker takes less of your team's time. Student workers typically spend only 20/hours per week "in the office" with much of that time being independent or group project work.

MAKING THE CASE: Why Your Company Should Host Student Workers For Work-based Learning

EMPLOYER STORY: IMMANUEL LUTHERAN COMMUNITIES

Employer

Immanuel Lutheran Communities

Program:

Youth Apprenticeship

Focus:

Heating, Ventilation, Air-conditioning and Refrigeration (HVAC) Apprentice

Description:

Immanuel Lutheran Communities and Flathead Valley Community College's Running Start Program gave Christian Schlicht the chance to explore a career path with a unique support system in place. One year into the program, Christian continues to earn a paycheck while exploring aspects of building maintenance while simultaneously using Running Start to take classes in FVCC's HVAC CTS program in the evening. All of that in addition to continuing his high school classes and other extracurricular commitments.



An apprenticeship program is focused on a certain skill or a trade. It is a earn to learn program, they are earning a wage while they learn and we help with their tuition.

The program is very flexible, it allows students to work around their schedule, both at the college and workplace.

– Jason Cronk, Director, President & CEO, Immanuel Lutheran Communities



MAKING THE CASE: Why Your Company Should Host Student Workers For Work-based Learning

EMPLOYER STORY: ST. JOHN'S UNITED

Employer
St. John's United

Program:
Youth Apprenticeship

Focus:
Nursing Apprentice

Description:
The St. John's United Nursing Apprentice Fellowship program was launched in June, 2020. The purpose of the program is to provide nursing school tuition assistance and career applicable employment to students pursuing their LPN or RN degrees. This program is a collaborative venture between St. John's United and seeks to increase opportunities for Montana's young people to prepare for in-demand careers through the development and expansion of youth apprenticeship program models.



"The Nursing Fellowship program was really created out of a need to find future workforce, especially around healthcare. Traditional education has its place and it is very important, however education in a postsecondary world is not for everyone"

– David Trost, CEO & President, St. John's United



WORK-BASED LEARNING PREPARATION

High school students in typically have access to work-based learning preparation training that may include:

- Resume and Interview Prep
- Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook)
- Business and Meeting Etiquette (including Zoom)
- Goal Setting and Teamwork
- Written and verbal communication

Many students receive specialized training depending on the school or Career and Technical Education pathway they are on. In your student worker application, you can indicate targeted skill requirements that you are seeking and work with school partners to help identify students who might be a good fit for your projects.



TOOLS



SAMPLE:

Talking Points and Email – Making the case for hosting a student worker

If you are interested in hosting student workers at your company but need support on how to talk to leadership or HR about the idea, these talking points and draft email can help you prepare and initiate the conversation.



TIPS:

When is a work-based learning the right choice?

These tips will assist you in determining if work-based learning makes sense for your company.



CHECKLIST:

Readiness self-assessment

Whether you are just exploring the idea of a work-based learning, expanding an existing program, or launching a work-based learning program for the first time, the readiness self-assessment helps you walk through some of the initial planning and role considerations that will support success. This is a great tool to support discussion for your team to align on your decision to move forward and the exciting steps ahead.



CHECKLIST:

Work-based learning program planning

This is a comprehensive checklist that will support you through all the steps to launch an incredible work-based learning program for high school students. Use this as a reference to get started and adapt as you see fit. You may find certain steps unnecessary because you already have some resources in place. Some upfront investment in program design, planning, and onboarding can ensure a great experience for your company.



Meaningful Projects



..... **TOOLS IN THIS SECTION**



Work-based learning projects by skill area



SAMPLE:
Detailed work-based learning project plans

MEANINGFUL PROJECTS



Meaningful Projects:

Whether one major project or several smaller projects, employers engage student workers in meaningful work that is based in a real-life challenge, allows them to problem solve, and leads to a tangible product or outcome.

Working with a student worker is an opportunity to bring in new talent to tackle real projects within your organization. A project could be a collaboration between a group of student workers, between student workers and your employees, or engagement with customers.



TOOLS



SAMPLE:

Work-based learning projects by skill area

Having trouble identifying project ideas? This is a list of example projects aligned to skill areas. In particular, these leverage universal skills that most high school students have gained and also highlight projects where Generation Z has particular expertise that can inform your company's work. You may also have a project that requires more technical skills. In that case, you will want to align with the school district on identifying students with the required training (e.g., coding, Adobe tools, etc.).



SAMPLE:

Detailed work-based learning project plans

These example project plans provide a detailed view of how a meaningful project can be broken into steps over a four-week or eight-week internship (and can be adapted for a longer work-based learning experience). This helps students plan how they use their time and provides intermediate deliverables where they can receive feedback from their manager as they go to ensure they stay on track to completion. These detailed project plans also share how the other key elements of work-based learning experiences (welcoming community, networking and mentorship, and clear expectations and feedback), can be integrated throughout the course of the student's work-based learning experience. Generally it is recommended that a student worker day be 4-6 hours (e.g. 20-30 hours per week) rather than 8 hours. This more accurately reflects what a student is accustomed to in a typical school day.

WORK-BASED LEARNING BY CAREER PATHWAY

Work-based learning happens through several different structures, for example:

Career Pathway	Work-based learning experience			
	 Job Shadow and Work-site Tours	 Internships	 Apprenticeships	 Events or Other Opportunities
Advanced Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job shadow a machine operator or measurement inspector Tour a CNC manufacturing facility or manufacturing business Visit the photonics program at Gallatin College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Research project Marketing/Comms project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CNC Machinist Production Worker Equipment Operator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TekNoExpo at MSU Northern Manufacturing Day at Gallatin College Women in Gear at Helena College Industrial Expo at Missoula College Skills USA
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a Supervised Ag Experience (SAE) Shadow an Extension Agent, Brand Inspector, or Livestock Broker Tour a farm or ranch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Research project Marketing/Comms project Montana Conservation Corps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural Service Worker Restaurant Manager Agricultural Commodity Grader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4-H FFA FCCLA
Agriculture, Mechanics & Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a Supervised Ag Experience (SAE) Shadow an Agriculture Mechanics/Construction Professional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Job Site Ready Training OSHA 10 Training Assist with a construction project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welder Landscape Gardener Diesel Mechanic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build Montana Skills USA
Arts, A/V Technology, Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job shadow a docent at a museum Field Trip to TV Station or Graphic/Web Design Company Volunteer for community theater production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Events via Social Media Work at School-Based Enterprise/School Store Build a website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Video Editor Graphic Designer Digital Marketer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media Arts in the Public Schools (MAPS)
Business Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an Interview with a Business Manager/Owner Shadow a corporate trainer, human resources professional, or office assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Work at School-Based Enterprise/School Store Research project Marketing/Comms project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Sales Representative Accounting Technician Project Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BPA DECA Junior Achievement PROSPECTS JMG

WORK-BASED LEARNING BY CAREER PATHWAY *(cond.)*

Work-based learning happens through several different structures, for example:

Career Pathway	Work-based learning experience			
	 Job Shadow and Work-site Tours	 Internships	 Apprenticeships	 Events or Other Opportunities
Design & Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tour a Materials Testing Lab, Lumber Yard, or Construction Site Shadow an interior designer, landscape architect, or plumber Volunteer to help design and build sets for community theater production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Job Site Ready Training OSHA 10 Training Assist with a construction project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plumber Stonemason Interior Designer Carpenter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat for Humanity High School House
Design & Construction (Family & Consumer Sciences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tour a commercial design center Shadow an interior designer, fashion designer, or CAD technician Volunteer to help design and construct costumes for community theater production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Design and build product displays Research project Marketing/Comms project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interior Designer Design and Pattern Maker Industrial Sewing Machine Operato 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat for Humanity High School House FCCLA 4-H
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job shadow teacher(s) in various grade levels and settings. Conduct informational interviews with teachers or coaches. Volunteer at an after school program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Camp Counselor Sports Coach or Referee Childcare Tutor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K-12 Teacher Teacher Aide Counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech & Debate BPA JMG DECA
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an Interview with an Accountant or Financial Planner Work at School-Based Enterprise/ School Store Tour the Federal Reserve Bank Job shadow a Chief Financial Officer, Budget Analyst, or Financial Advisor Volunteer on a nonprofit board of directors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Research Project Develop materials for financial education program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Services Representative Accounting Technician Bank Teller Finance Business Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stock Market Challenge Big Sky Biz Sim

WORK-BASED LEARNING BY CAREER PATHWAY *(cond.)*

Work-based learning happens through several different structures, for example:

Career Pathway	Work-based learning experience			
	 Job Shadow and Work-site Tours	 Internships	 Apprenticeships	 Events or Other Opportunities
Health Professions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct interviews with health professionals Job shadow an athletic trainer, dentist, or radiologist Volunteer at a blood drive or vaccination clinic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job CPR/First Aid Certification Certified Nurse Aide Training Research Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurse Community Health Worker Medical Record Technician Paramedic Dental Assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HOSA Regional Area Health Education Centers - Medstart Summer Camp, AHEC Montana PLTW
Hospitality & Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job shadow a hotel manager, conference coordinator, or tour operator Interview the CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Work the School Concession Stand or Food Service Volunteer at a food bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Research project Marketing/Comms project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baker Butcher Hotel Associate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prostart FCCLA
Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job shadow a cosmetologist, personal trainer, or childcare provider Interview a social worker or funeral director Volunteer at a shelter or food bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Research project Develop materials for a human services program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AEarly Childhood Education Teacher Community Health Worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JMG FCCLA
Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep statistics for school sports teams Assist with school website Job shadow a web developer, database administrator, or computer programmer Interview a cybersecurity expert, game developer, or virtual reality specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Research project Review and update website, or create a website Map business processes and identify areas for automation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer Support Specialist Computer Programmer Cybersecurity Support Technician Data Analyst 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JMG DECA BPA Code Montana/Kids Who Code/Girls Who Code TSA PLTW

WORK-BASED LEARNING BY CAREER PATHWAY *(cond.)*

Work-based learning happens through several different structures, for example:

Career Pathway	Work-based learning experience			
	 <p>Job Shadow and Work-site Tours</p>	 <p>Internships</p>	 <p>Apprenticeships</p>	 <p>Events or Other Opportunities</p>
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote community events Job shadow a graphic designer, social media specialist, or merchandiser Interview a marketing director, brand manager, or small business owner Volunteer to help a nonprofit group with their marketing plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Research project Develop PowerPoint templates and presentation materials Develop a social media plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Marketer Graphic Designer User Experience Designer Merchandise Displayer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JMG DECA BPA
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep statistics for school sports teams Volunteer at a science museum Job shadow an engineer, GIS technician, or survey technician Interview a climate change analyst, robotics technician, or mathematician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Research project Track and record data Help prepare reports of scientific findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Scientist Logistics Engineer Mechanical Engineering Technician Robotics Technician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code Montana/Kids Who Code/Girls Who Code Robotics Science Club Math Club TSA PLTW
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview an air traffic controller, certified flight instructor, or pilot Job shadow a dispatcher, auto technician, or avionics technician Visit an airport, distribution center, or dispatch center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer/Part-time Job Research project Track and record data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logistics Engineer Aviation Support Equipment Repairer Diesel Mechanic Load Dispatcher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TekNoExpo at MSU Northern Manufacturing Day at Gallatin College Women in Gear at Helena College Industrial Expo at Missoula College Skills USA TSA
Welding & Fabrication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job shadow a production manager, machinist, or metal artist Interview a welder, structural metal worker, or quality control technician Visit a fabrication business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job Site Ready Training OSHA 10 Training Assist with a fabrication project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance Machinist Welding Technician Fabricator Engraver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TekNoExpo at MSU Northern Manufacturing Day at Gallatin College Women in Gear at Helena College Industrial Expo at Missoula College Skills USA TSA



Welcoming Community



..... **TOOLS IN THIS SECTION**



Memo announcing work-based learning program



TIPS:
Using student-friendly communication



CHECKLIST:
Onboarding



Celebratory closing event agenda



SAMPLE:
Community-building activities

WELCOMING COMMUNITY



Welcoming Community:

Employers create a welcoming environment and build community among student workers and staff with strong onboarding, points of connection, and celebration. For many high school students, this will be their first career experience, and the environment may be unfamiliar. Creating an environment where they feel comfortable will enable them to do their best work on your projects.

Just like any new employee, a student worker should be made to feel like a valuable member of the team, and included in the company culture. Even if a student worker is not in your physical office, you can still take steps to create a welcoming environment. For example, you can introduce the student worker to company leadership, include them in staff meetings, send them swag, or share virtual brand tools like Zoom backgrounds and virtual badges. These activities not only benefit the student, they also create opportunities for team-building for all your employees.

TOOLS



SAMPLE:

Memo announcing work-based Learning program

As the first day of your program approaches, reach out to your staff to let them know what to expect and how they can get involved. This sample memo provides an example of how you might announce your work-based learning program to staff.



CHECKLIST:

Onboarding

Strong onboarding to your work-based learning program helps student workers feel welcome and valued, and can set them up to do their best work on their projects. Like with your own employees, good onboarding can also save staff time later by answering common questions and putting student workers on a path to start working right away. This onboarding checklist walks you through recommended items to touch on during the first day or week of your work-based learning program.



SAMPLE:

Community-building activities

It is beneficial to integrate student workers into your company culture and to help student workers and employees build meaningful connections. This not only creates a welcoming atmosphere, but it also provides employees opportunities to share about their work and the company while getting to know student workers they may work with on projects. This list provides example activities that can help build community.



TIPS:

Using student-friendly communication

While employers should treat student workers much like any other new hire, we've included some tips and tricks to help employers and students communicate effectively.



SAMPLE:

Celebratory closing event agenda

Company staff often do a lot to support student success and build great pride in their student workers. Similarly, students put a lot of hard work into completing their projects. It is important to celebrate these accomplishments, highlight student work, and show off professional growth. This is a sample agenda for a closing celebration that includes other considerations.



Networking & Mentorship



..... **TOOLS IN THIS SECTION**



Mentorship plan



Student worker
information sheet
for mentorship matching



Mentorship best practices



Networking activities



***Networking and Mentorship:
Student workers have networking opportunities to explore careers and grow their professional network, as well as a mentor(s) who can help them navigate the workplace and support their career development.***

Working with student workers through mentorship is one way to engage your employees in your work-based learning program -- especially early career employees. This gives employees an opportunity to work on management and leadership skills, while also providing the student worker with a "go-to" person outside of their supervisor who can support their challenges and growth as they navigate their work-based learning experiences. Building networking events into your program is an additional way to boost employee engagement while improving your student workers' experiences. High school students are still early in their career identity formation and thinking about their post-high school pathway, so they are eager to interact with as many different career paths as possible. Employees grow their own communication and soft skills as they share their stories and guide students through career exploration.

TOOLS



SAMPLE:

Mentorship plan

Mentoring can be a rewarding experience for employees and can also make a big impact on a student's school and life success. Incorporating a mentorship plan within your work-based learning program provides added support for student workers to build a long-term connection to your company and guidance to do their best work, while enabling employees to deepen their connection to the local community and gain inspiration from potential future employees. Here we provide a sample mentorship plan that outlines how to recruit mentors, frequency of meetings, and ideas for how mentors and mentees can engage.



TIPS:

Mentorship best practices

If you are considering adding a mentorship component to your work-based learning program, these tips provide best practice guidance for employee mentors, including ways they can best support students and things to avoid. These tips can ensure mentorship experiences are fun and valuable for both mentor and mentee.



SAMPLE:

Student worker information sheet for mentorship matching

This form will help you get to know your student workers before they start. It can be included in your welcome packet and can also be used to help match mentors with student workers based on interests or other needs (e.g. time availability).



SAMPLE:

Networking activities

Networking events and activities create opportunities for student workers to connect with other employees in your company to learn about different roles and pathways that other professionals took to advance their careers. They are also a fun way to engage your employees in building connections to the future pipeline of talent. These activities show different examples of how you might support networking and highlight some perspectives students hope to gain.



Clear Expectations & Feedback



..... **TOOLS IN THIS SECTION**



Workplace norms and expectations for the work-based learning experience



SAMPLE:
Weekly manager student worker evaluation form



Manager best practices



Weekly student worker report form



30-minute manager check-in agenda



End of program "exit ticket" for student worker

CLEAR EXPECTATIONS & FEEDBACK



Clear Expectations and Feedback: Student workers are provided clear expectations about performance and workplace standards, are engaged in regular goal setting, and receive frequent, constructive feedback that helps them stay on-track and learn.

Setting clear expectations and providing timely feedback will help your student worker be productive and effective. Setting student workers up for success means setting goals, having structured regular check-ins, and frequently re-centering on norms and expectations throughout their experience. This is good practice for the supervisor as much as the student worker, and gives the supervisor an opportunity to work on their skills developing and encouraging new talent.



TOOLS



SAMPLE:

Office norms and expectations for the workplace

Employers can support high school students to navigate the workplace and better align to their company's culture and norms by clarifying expectations. For example, is your company more formal or casual about attire? How do employees typically communicate with their supervisor when they have questions - email, Slack, during scheduled check-ins? Often we have workplace norms that we adopt over time but aren't made clear. This sample list of common workplace expectations can be adjusted to your own workplace.



TIPS:

Manager best practices

Providing clear expectations and regular feedback for student workers ensures that they can thrive on their assigned project. This list offers tips for managers supervising high school students, from how often to meet to suggested topics to cover in feedback.



SAMPLE:

30-minute manager check-in agenda

Just like with other company employees, regular check-ins can help your student worker feel supported and ensure that you are aligned on next steps. These short check-ins help managers learn how student workers are doing and where additional support might be needed so that high quality deliverables are achieved. This sample outlines an example agenda of topics and discussion questions for a routine check-in.



SAMPLE:

Weekly manager student workers evaluation form

This is a student work evaluation form that covers the key professional skills students learn during their work-based learning experience. You can customize it with any important skills specific to their project. The form is designed to be used weekly, but you may want to modify it to fit the cadence of your work-based learning program or your management approach. Typically a manager will set aside 15-20 minutes to complete the form and 30-minutes for the conversation with their student worker to walk through the evaluation.



SAMPLE:

Weekly student worker report form

This is a form that students can complete weekly to update you on their progress and prepare for their weekly check-in. It is meant to be a companion form to the weekly manager evaluation form. Depending on the length of your work-based learning program, it can be modified to be a tool that is used biweekly, monthly or on a timeframe of your choosing.

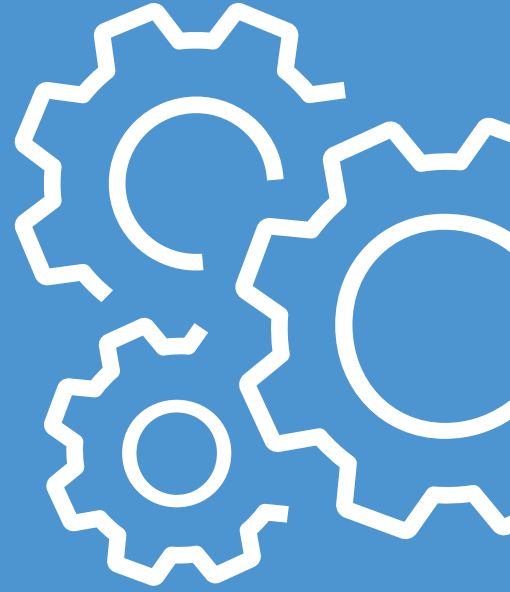


SAMPLE:

End of program "exit ticket" for student worker

This is an end of program evaluation that gives the student a chance to provide feedback to the employer and manager about their overall experience, - what do they feel they've learned, would they recommend this experience to a friend, what did their manager do well/could have done better to support them, etc. Employers can use this feedback to understand if they are reaching internal goals with their work-based learning program, and to facilitate discussions with school and/or nonprofit partners about system improvements for future student workers.

Tools



Draft examples



*Implementation
advice*



*Step-by-step
guidance*

SAMPLE: Talking Points And Draft Email – Making The Case For Hosting A Student Worker



TALKING POINTS

Hosting a student worker will:

Show that community investment is an important part of our brand

- This is a clear and tangible demonstration of our commitment to our community.
- Many of our employees are parents or family members of Montana students. This shows that we are committed to them and invested in the future of this community.

Create a more diverse talent pipeline and bring more diverse voices into your work

- These high school students come from very diverse backgrounds. The perspectives they can bring to our business problems is different from our usual recruitment pool.
- Having a diverse workforce makes our company more competitive, and building that workforce has to begin with early investments.
- We'll be making a first impression on these students that will stick with them, through college and into their careers.
- The college talent pipeline is very competitive, so starting to cultivate our talent pool earlier can give us an edge down the road.

Increase employee engagement and build employee skills

- Employees like working with and mentoring high school students. They can see the difference it makes in their lives.
- Working with student workers can also be a low-cost way to offer management and leadership development opportunities to employees who are looking for new challenges.
- Employees can make even more intentional and meaningful connections with students by helping the student accomplish their project goals, not just coming up with tasks for them to do to stay busy.

DRAFT EMAIL

re: business case for work-based learning

SUBJECT LINE: Creating a work-based learning program

Greetings:

This summer, I think [company A] should host a student worker from [District or program]. Here are a few things I think a student worker could do for our organization:

Show that community investment is an important part of our brand

Hosting student workers shows our commitment to and investment in this community. It also raises the awareness of our company and our brand within the community, with government, industry, and community stakeholders.

Bring more diverse talent into our organization

The student worker brings an important voice and a different perspective to our work. We can assign them to real business problems and gain insights we wouldn't normally get.

Increase employee engagement and build employee skills

Other employers who have worked with student workers reported high rates of employee engagement and positive employee feedback from the program. Employees like mentoring students and it gives them a chance to build their own leadership and project management skills.

What's next?

I'd like to meet with you to discuss next steps, including what project we might assign to the student worker and what we need to do to prepare.

TIPS: When is Virtual Work-based Learning the Right Choice?



A work-based learning program might be right for you if...

- It's your first time hosting student workers and you want to test the experience.
- You've hosted student workers before and you want to scale up your program without overwhelming your business.
- Your work is project or deliverable-based and your managers are comfortable supervising project-based work.
- Your workforce is already entirely or partially remote.
- You want your team to be able to easily balance student worker supervision and their core responsibilities
- You don't have enough space to host student workers on site.
- You have liability or safety issues that make it difficult for you to have minors on site.

You may also want to consider a hybrid approach -- where student workers work from home most of the work-based learning experience but spend a few days per week or per month at the worksite. This could be right for you if...

- You want student workers to experience the company culture in person, but you don't have capacity to support them on site every day.
- You want to have the option of bringing your student worker to your workplace so they can observe a business function in person.
- Your student's project can be completed from home, but you prefer to have mentorship and networking events in-person, on site.
- Your students are completing a project with a lot of "blue sky" thinking where in person collaboration is preferred -- white boarding, brainstorming, etc.



CHECKLIST: Readiness Self-assessment



Goals and Fit

A work-based learning program clearly aligns to our mission and goals. Strongly Agree Agree Unsure Disagree Strongly Disagree

What are we trying to accomplish? What's our organization's "Why" for the program?

Would a work-based learning program fit our organizational culture?

When and where have we supported work-based learning initiatives in the past? What went well and what were challenges?

Leadership and Support

We have a high level of support for a work-based learning program at various levels in our organization Strongly Agree Agree Unsure Disagree Strongly Disagree

Who would be key champions for the work-based learning program?

Who would be in charge of the work-based learning program?

Do we have managers who can set aside time and would like to supervise student workers? Strongly Agree Agree Unsure Disagree Strongly Disagree

Where/with whom does additional buy-in and/or capacity need to be built?

Initial Planning

We have the time and resources to support a work-based learning program Strongly Agree Agree Unsure Disagree Strongly Disagree
This includes the ability to pay student workers, having a point of contact for the school district and student recruits, and managers who can support regular check-ins.

Can our company support multiple student workers? Yes No If yes, how many?
Keep in mind with virtual internships it may be easier to support multiple interns, but you should still plan to have a dedicated supervisor.

What are some of the projects that we could have student workers work on during their work-based learning experience?

What is our ideal time of year to host student workers? Summer School breaks (e.g. Spring Break) After school

What is our ideal duration for a work-based learning experience?
Intensive: 30 hrs/ week for 4-weeks 6-weeks
Less condensed: 7-10 hrs/ week for 3-months
Other:

Overall Assessment

Overall, we feel we have the purpose, leadership, and capacity to support a successful work-based learning program Strongly Agree Agree Unsure Disagree Strongly Disagree

What are our next steps?

CHECKLIST: Work-based Learning Program Planning

Activities To Be Completed 1 To 6 Months Prior To Program Start



Activity	Tool included in this toolkit
Decide if a work-based learning program is right for you Complete readiness self-assessment.	✓
Design a work-based learning program Decide how many student workers you have the capacity to host, length of your program and timing. Identify funding for student workers pay. Determine meaningful project(s). Develop position description, include project description(s) and skill requirements. Scope project(s) and create weekly schedule with objectives, tasks. Identify point of contact at school district.	✓ ✓ ✓
Recruit students Meet with school district to introduce program and align to school policies (e.g. appropriate communication channels for work with students). Create application and advertise position description. Solicit applications and respond to interested candidates. Schedule and conduct interviews and selection process. Send offer email and call candidates selected. Provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants. Gather acceptance agreement from candidates accepting work-based learning positions. Send company announcement introducing student workers. Order company "swag" to send to students.	✓
Onboard students Determine the technology tools the student worker will need to be successful (common list below). Identify information about your company and culture that you want to ensure student workers receive. Set onboarding plan for the first day and week.	✓ ✓
Outline expectations and establish management plans Select managers for incoming student workers. Set clear expectations and policies for managers to ensure common management practices. (e.g. Tasks, time commitment, schedule for check-ins, workplace standards, performance evaluations). Provide managers and mentors training (include management approach/policies and engagement best practices).	✓
Set-up mentorship and networking opportunities Develop mentorship approach. Identify mentors for incoming student workers and match them. Identify opportunities for networking.	✓ ✓ ✓
Plan for celebration and wrap-up Plan celebratory closing event. Create a survey or "exit ticket" to get feedback from students, managers and mentors on the program. Schedule a meeting with the school district to receive their feedback. Schedule a meeting with student worker team to process feedback, evaluate success and make recommendations for any improvements or updates.	✓ ✓

Technology Access

Prior to onboarding a student worker, employers should confirm technology needs with the school district or nonprofit contact. Depending on the student's specific needs, employers may be asked to provide:

- Technology device for completing work (e.g. laptop or tablet)
- Security protocols needed to safely share and access your network and/or documents (e.g. VPN, anti-virus software)
- Internet hotspot
- Microsoft Office
- Access to any other work productivity tools your company plans to use with the student worker (e.g. Slack, Zoom, email)





SAMPLE: Work-based Learning Projects by Skill Area



<i>Skills Developed</i>	<i>Project Idea</i>
<i>Business development and analytics</i>	Create a data visualization of the demographics of customers using a specific product or service, and recommend how we could grow the underrepresented customer base.
<i>Communications</i>	Develop a social media campaign that encourages Generation Z to try a new product or service at your company.
<i>Community Outreach/Community Relations</i>	Design a public information campaign or community outreach strategy.
<i>Finance</i>	Create a budget for an employee meal delivery benefit.
<i>Human Resources</i>	Redesign company LinkedIn page and/or recruiting materials to better attract Gen Z employees.
<i>Human Resources</i>	Create a "Get to know our communities" program to help new employees from out of town learn about the community.
<i>Management</i>	Create an employee recognition program for a department or division -- including threshold for recognition, types of recognition.
<i>Management</i>	Revise internal employee communications (newsletter, social media, etc.) to be more engaging to early career employees.
<i>Marketing</i>	Develop a pitch and/or a marketing campaign around a new product.
<i>Research</i>	Conduct focus groups or implement a survey for a program or service to identify improvements that can be made.
<i>Research</i>	Research a community or neighborhood and recommend how we should market or provide a service to that specific community.
<i>Sustainability/Strategy</i>	Create a sustainability strategy for internal cafeteria or other office area.


SAMPLE: Detailed Work-based Learning Project Plans



Dewberry Beverages Work-based Learning Program	Project: Create a social media strategy for promoting Dewberry Beverage's new Watermelon Seltzer to Gen Z consumers			
	 MEANINGFUL PROJECTS	 WELCOMING COMMUNITY	 NETWORKING & MENTORSHIP	 CLEAR EXPECTATIONS & FEEDBACK
Week 1	Understand what Watermelon Seltzer is, and how and why it was developed .	Introduce student worker to company, social event for other students.	Student worker meets with mentor, sets goals for the work-based learning experience.	Review company expectations, project milestones, hours, meetings student must attend.
Week 2	Understand current social media strategy, success metrics, and how to use logos and brand materials, review social media used by other brands and note what stands out to you.	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Weekly check-ins with mentor.	Discuss students initial brand research and any questions they have about branding.
Week 3	Present to manager elements of the product that most appeal to Gen Z consumers – basis of the strategy.	"Company tour" presentation from different staff/team/ department.	Speed networking event – pick at least one person to follow up with.	Check in with student 2-3 times during week to provide feedback on Gen Z research.
Week 4	Create 2-3 sample posts and present for feedback.	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Mid-point check-in with mentor.	Mid-point check-in – how are things going? What could improve?
Week 5	Make revisions based on feedback, discuss success metrics.	"What I wish I knew" lunch with early career employees.	Follow up from speed networking.	Check in with student 2-3 times during week to confirm on track with revisions.
Week 6	Publish and begin tracking social media campaign.	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Discuss after program plans with mentor.	Walk through initial campaign impact metrics with student worker.
Week 7	Present campaign and initial results to company.	Lunch and Learn with C-suite.	Help student frame work-based learning experience on resume, LinkedIn	End of program evaluation
Week 8	Evaluation, celebration, wrap up.	End of program celebration.	End of program celebration.	End of program celebration.





SAMPLE: Detailed Work-based Learning Project Plans



AcmeCorp Sales Co. Work-based Learning program	<i>Project: Create an employee recognition strategy for the AcmeCorp enterprise sales team</i>			
	 MEANINGFUL PROJECTS	 WELCOMING COMMUNITY	 NETWORKING & MENTORSHIP	 CLEAR EXPECTATIONS & FEEDBACK
Week 1	Student worker has met the enterprise sales team, understands what enterprise sales does, and why it's important to the company	Introduce student worker to company, social event for other students.	Student meets with mentor, sets goals for the work-based learning experience	Review company expectations, project milestones, hours, meetings student must attend
Week 2	Understand what performance metrics are, how enterprise sales staff performance is currently measured Write interview questions for next week's sales team interviews, and schedule interviews	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Weekly check-ins with mentor.	Check in with the student 2-3 times during the week to provide feedback on their interview questions and confirm they've successfully scheduled interviews. Offer to practice an interview individually or as a group.
Week 3	Interview team about what types of recognition and incentives are meaningful to them. What would they like to have more of? What would they like to have less of?	"Company tour" presentation from different staff/team/ department.	Speed networking event – pick at least one person to follow up with.	Follow up with student about interviews -- do they need any help?
Week 4	Present to manager on learnings from interviews, write 2-3 proposed incentives/recognitions to offer the enterprise sales and identify the metrics for earning the recognition	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Mid-point check-in with mentor.	Provide feedback on draft metrics/recognition. Mid-point check-in – how are things going? What could improve?
Week 5	Revise employee recognition plan and metrics based on manager feedback; Prepare presentation on new recognition program to give to sales team	"What I wish I knew" lunch with early career employees.	Follow up from speed networking.	Check in with student 2-3 times during week to confirm on track with revisions, presentation.
Week 6	Present to sales team on new recognition program, work with manager to select recognition/ incentive vendors	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Discuss after program plans with mentor.	Provide feedback on presentation.
Week 7	Implement new recognition program --begin tracking the metrics,	Lunch and Learn with C-suite.	Help student frame work-based learning experience on resume, LinkedIn.	Review implementation progress with student.
Week 8	Evaluation, celebration, wrap up	End of program celebration.	End of program celebration.	End of program evaluation. End of program celebration.




SAMPLE: Detailed Work-based Learning Project Plans



Lone Star International work-based learning program	Project: Create a "Welcome to Community" Orientation for Newly Arrived Employees			
	 MEANINGFUL PROJECTS	 WELCOMING COMMUNITY	 NETWORKING & MENTORSHIP	 CLEAR EXPECTATIONS & FEEDBACK
Week 1	Meet with HR, learn where new employees are moving from, their background and demographics, and the goals of the orientation.	Introduce student worker to company, social event for other students.	Student meets with mentor, sets goals for the work-based learning experience.	Review company expectations, project milestones, hours, meetings student must attend.
Week 2	Student prepares interview guide and schedules interviews with recently hired employees from out of town/state.	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Weekly check-ins with mentor.	Check in with the student 2-3 times during the week to provide feedback on their interview questions and confirm they've successfully scheduled interviews. Offer to practice an interview individually or as a group.
Week 3	Interview recent hires about their experience getting oriented to coming to their new job. What was the hardest thing? What did they wish they knew?	"Company tour" presentation from different staff/team/ department.	Speed networking event – pick at least one person to follow up with.	Follow up with student about interviews -- do they need any help?
Week 4	Present to manager on the themes from the interviews, student and manager discuss how to respond to these themes -- what are the five big things that the "Welcome to our community" tool will try to address?; Pick a format for the tool (video, PowerPoint, Google map, etc.).	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Mid-point check-in with mentor.	Work with student on identifying the "five big things" for the project. Mid-point check-in – how are things going? What could improve?
Week 5	Work on first draft of presentation.	"What I wish I knew" lunch with early career employees.	Follow up from speed networking.	Check in with student 2-3 times during week to confirm on track with revisions, presentation.
Week 6	Continue presentation work, test draft presentation with new hires from interviews.	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Discuss after program plans with mentor.	Provide feedback on presentation.
Week 7	Revise presentation based on feedback.	Lunch and Learn with C-suite.	Help student frame work-based learning experience on resume, LinkedIn.	Review final presentation.
Week 8	Present "Welcome to our community" tool evaluation, celebration.	End of program celebration.	End of program celebration.	End of program evaluation. End of program celebration.

SAMPLE: Detailed Work-based Learning Project Plans



Metroplex Green LLC work-based learning program	<i>Hybrid Internship (4 days remote work, 1 day on site)</i> <i>Project: Create an environmental sustainability plan for the company cafeteria</i>			
	 MEANINGFUL PROJECTS	 WELCOMING COMMUNITY	 NETWORKING & MENTORSHIP	 CLEAR EXPECTATIONS & FEEDBACK
Week 1	Virtual: Learn about company's sustainability goals and why they are important. In person: Visit company headquarters, meet team, tour cafeteria.	Introduce student to company, social event for other student workers.	Student meets with mentor, sets goals for the work-based learning experience.	Review company expectations, project milestones, hours, meetings student must attend.
Week 2	Virtual: Create plan for observing waste in cafeteria -- what do people throw away? What gets reused? What are 1-2 questions you want to ask cafeteria users about sustainability. In person: Observe cafeteria and note findings.	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Weekly check-ins with mentor.	Check in with the student 2-3 times during the week to provide feedback on their observation plan.
Week 3	Virtual: Write up notes from observation day and talk about what you saw with your manager. Identify 5 big things you want to focus on for the sustainability strategy. In person: Brainstorm with your manager or team how to use your five big things in a strategy -- what could it look like? What do you need to learn more about? At the end of your in person day, have a research plan for week 4.	"Company tour" presentation from different staff/team/department.	Speed networking event – pick at least one person to follow up with.	Work with your student worker virtually on finding 5 big things from their observation day. Meet with your student in person to brainstorm ideas for using 5 big things in a strategy. Work with them on a list of things to research next week.
Week 4	Virtual: Research topics/issues for strategy identified in week 3 brainstorm. In person: Share with your manager what you learned. Discuss possible changes to recommend for the cafeteria based on your research.	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Mid-point check-in with mentor.	Check-in with student to troubleshoot research issues. Provide feedback on possible changes. Mid-point check-in – how are things going? What could improve?
Week 5	Virtual: Write first draft of recommendations for creating a more environmentally sustainable cafeteria -- what would you change? In person: Review draft of recommendations with manager and get feedback.	"What I wish I knew" lunch with early career employees.	Follow up from speed networking.	Check in with student 2-3 times during week to confirm on track with draft recommendations. Review draft recommendations in person and provide feedback.
Week 6	Virtual: Revise recommendations based on manager feedback. In person: Present second draft of recommendations, discuss how you will present final strategy.	Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Discuss after program plans with mentor.	Provide feedback on presentation; advise on final strategy presentation.
Week 7	Virtual/in-person: Complete final strategy presentation.	Lunch and Learn with C-suite.	Help student frame work-based learning experience on resume, LinkedIn.	Review implementation progress with student.
Week 8	Virtual/in-person: Present final strategy. End of program evaluation, celebration, wrap up.	End of program celebration.	End of program celebration.	End of program evaluation. End of program celebration.

TEMPLATE: Design Your Own Work-Based Learning Project



Company Name	Project			
	 <p>MEANINGFUL PROJECTS</p>	 <p>WELCOMING COMMUNITY</p>	 <p>NETWORKING & MENTORSHIP</p>	 <p>CLEAR EXPECTATIONS & FEEDBACK</p>
Week 1		Introduce student worker to company, social event for other student worker.	Student worker meets with mentor, sets goals for the work-based learning experience.	
Week 2		Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Weekly check-ins with mentor.	
Week 3		"Company tour" presentation from different staff/team/department.	Speed networking event – pick at least one person to follow up with.	
Week 4		Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Mid-point check-in with mentor.	
Week 5		"What I wish I knew" lunch with early career employees.	Follow up from speed networking.	
Week 6		Student-organized social or team building meeting.	Discuss after program plans with mentor.	
Week 7		Lunch and Learn with C-suite.	Help student frame work-based learning experience on resume, LinkedIn.	
Week 8		End of program celebration.	End of program celebration.	

SAMPLE: Memo Announcing Work-based Learning Program



SUBJECT LINE: Welcome 2023 Student Workers – announcing our new work-based learning program

[Company A] is excited to launch our new work-based learning program for high school students and to welcome our first-ever cohort of [xx] student workers. The program is a partnership with [blank] School District.

Why high school workers?

Offering high school work-based learning experiences is part of our long-term talent recruitment strategy, introducing these early career learners to our industry and our company. Working with students also helps us connect with a diverse pool of talented, driven young people, who can bring unique insights to our work.

Creating a work-based learning program allows us to work with a wider pool of students from across Montana – not just those located close to our office. The project-based model at the heart of the program works well with our company's needs and allows us to assign both in-person and remote staff to student worker management.

What to expect?

Students will be joining [Company A] for 4-weeks during the month of July, and will get to know our company, functions and roles (including XXX, YYY, and ZZZ), and complete one short-term project.

We encourage you to take advantage of several opportunities to meet Montana's future leaders. The first opportunity to meet is on July 1 (see below) and additional events and gatherings will be announced over the course of the coming weeks.

We are also looking for individuals who are interested in serving as mentors for the new student workers, helping them to acclimate to our company culture and guide them in achieving their personal and professional goals. This can be an excellent development opportunity for staff who are looking to build their own leadership and management skills. If you are interested in serving as a mentor, please contact the work-based learning program lead – early career staff are especially encouraged to consider this opportunity.

Welcome and student worker mentorship/networking

You're invited to join a full staff meeting to welcome the new student workers on July 1st, we hope you can attend. Student worker managers have been identified, and we still have one-on-one networking opportunities on Fridays that we would like to fill. Please email work-based learning program lead, [X at X] if you are interested in participating.

Thank you in advance for your hard work and supporting our class of 2023 student workers!

CHECKLIST: Onboarding



Sample First Day/Onboarding Checklist

STEP	SAMPLE INFORMATION SHARED
Warm-up activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fun activity for students and staff to be able to introduce themselves and learn something about each other.
Introduce key people that will be part of their work-based learning experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome by office lead or CEO • Share who students will be working with or can go to for different needs including: work-based learning program lead, managers and other mentors or support staff.
Provide an overview of the company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What your company does • Size and characteristics of the company • Array of jobs represented • Company culture • Tour of physical office
Preview their work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share why the company wanted them as student workers • Discuss their specific project and why it is important to the company • Dive more fully into their work as students on day two
Set expectations and workplace standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share typical schedule, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Frequency of check-ins or meetings with manager – Specific hours (if any) they should be working • Workplace etiquette and expectations, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Professional dress/attire – How quickly they should respond to a message – What to do when they have down time – Preview what weekly check-ins will look like – Best way to communicate a question or problem to their manager (what channels to use and when) – Taking breaks
Explain any compensation or benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hours • How to get paid/timesheets • Finalize any key paper work
Introduce technology and information security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the virtual meeting platform you use and its functionalities (e.g. Zoom, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams). • Introduce any other productivity tools students will use (e.g. Slack, GoogleDrive, Microsoft). • Don't assume students have knowledge of particular technology or software unless you have learned they have those skills through the application and interview process.

Tips:

- Limit orientation session to maximum 90-minutes, this is a lot of information and students are used to class schedule time blocks.
- Mix-up your facilitation techniques.
 - Integrate discussion into your onboarding, don't just present "at" students (e.g. students might share what they're excited to learn during their work-based learning experience).
 - Use tools like Mentimeter or Poll Everywhere to engage students in sharing information about themselves, gather their ideas or advice, or quiz them on learning.
- Make it fun!
 - Send student "swag" ahead that they can wear.
 - Use pictures to "show" not just tell (e.g., What not to do--Zoom background edition).
 - Gameify information to make it more fun and check for understanding.
 - Examples: Create a challenge that requires use of platform's functions, make a quiz on.
- Designate an "onboarding buddy", to be available during the first week to answer questions.

SAMPLE: Community-building Activities



GENERAL COMMUNITY-BUILDING TIPS

- Set up an early meeting with your students focused entirely on community building.
- Incorporate community-building activities for a few minutes at the beginning of recurring meetings throughout the program.
- Have students design their own social activities -- this can be a mini-project in and of itself.
 - You can incentivize students by allowing a certain number of their work hours to go towards planning.
 - Make the connection that community-building is an important part of developing a company's culture.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Get to know you video chats and ice breakers

- Come with different prompts for discussion, many ice breaker question lists can be found online like this [one](#).
- Examples:
 - Take two minutes to find an object that is important to you and talk about why it matters.
 - Find a picture on your phone or online that matches a certain theme (color blue, a sport you love, your best friend, a goal for the future).
- There are fun ice breaker templates and ideas for many online engagement tools like **Mentimeter**, **Mural** and **Zoom**.

In-person or virtual game nights

- Find fun "minute to win it virtual games" to play online, there are many fantastic YouTube videos with family friendly ideas.
- There are also online games that have minimal cost such as those that are available at Jackbox games (Drawful 2 is a favorite).

In-person or online scavenger hunt

- A scavenger hunt is a game where individuals or teams have a list of items they must find within a designated time.
- Create a short list of items participants have to find. Examples might include: your workspace, item you can't live without, favorite food item in your house, take a selfie with your best surprised face, or perform a Tik Tok dance.
- For each item, participants have to share an image or video (via email, Slack or other chat method), to show that they have found it.
- You can make the scavenger hunt a competition that takes place in a few minutes with a prize for the winner, or have it take place over a week's time.

Create a team music playlist

- You can choose a theme, for example: what is your favorite hype song, a song that makes you happy, or a song that would introduce you.
- Each student shares their song.
- Add it to a team playlist that you share through Spotify or YouTube.
- This song can also be used when you introduce students at your closing celebration.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

In-person or virtual company tour

- Make a photo-based slide show using PowerPoint or another tool that includes pictures of different parts of your office and departments (you can also use video!).
- Invite 1-2 people from each department to talk briefly about their department and its role in the company.
- It can also be helpful to show students how people personalize their workspaces and common spaces in the office.

Professional development workshops

- Have staff in your organization lead professional development workshops for students.
- Topics might include:
 - What I Wish I Knew
 - College Talks
 - Employability skills like leadership, teamwork and collaboration, interpersonal skills, flexibility and adaptability.

Right way/wrong way skits (This can be done virtually!)

- Break into small groups (could be only student, or mixed student/staff teams).
- Assign each group a professional soft skill they are using during their work-based learning program or a workplace standard (e.g. teamwork, time management, interviewing, presentation skills, appropriate attire).
- Have small groups learn about the skill and develop a skit that models the "wrong" way and the "right" way to do the skill.
- Return everyone to the full group.
- Have each group present their skit and the other teams will guess their skill/standard, and which is the "right" way and which is the "wrong" way.

Gameify project progress

- Provide badges or create digital leadership boards (Excel is great!) to show progress across projects.

TIPS: Using Student-friendly Communication



STUDENT-FRIENDLY COMMUNICATION

Try to repeat or share your most important messages multiple ways.

Students are often taking in a lot of new information during their work-based learning experience, so it can be helpful to reiterate important information and share it through different channels (e.g. in a meeting and via email or a document that can be referenced).

When explaining something to your student worker, check for understanding.

Ensure your student worker understands the direction they've been given and can take action. Do they understand the format you expect the final deliverable to be in? Do they understand the deadline and the schedule for interim check-ins? Do they know who to ask for help and understand the importance of asking for help when needed?

Try to use simple language to explain things and demystify acronyms, technical terms, or workplace jargon.

We often use terms that students might not be familiar with, try to share what those words mean and provide examples. A few common examples include using COB for close of business, PR for public relations, or terms and sayings like "the cloud" and "think outside the box."

Avoid making assumptions about your student worker's existing experience, particularly with specific technology.

While Generation Z are digital natives and typically pick up tech quickly, they aren't necessarily familiar with some of the specific software programs or online tools used in the workplace. Try to introduce technology and help them understand when and how they are to be used at your company.

Identify clear points of contact whenever possible, so that students understand who to reach out to about what.

For example, who do they speak with during the application process, when they have a technology problem, or if they have questions about their project work – these could be the same person, or all different folks.

SAMPLE: Celebratory Closing Event Agenda



Virtual or in-person?

Even if your work-based learning program is virtual, we suggest having your final celebration in-person. It's an opportunity to bring in the broader network of people who have supported your student workers. This is a chance for student workers to feel valued and celebrated for their accomplishments, as well as highlight your company's commitment to local talent.

Who to invite?

Beyond the students, student managers and lead staff you can invite:

- Mentors
- Other company staff or leadership
- School staff who have supported student workers or coordination.
- Student family members or supporters -- Give students the opportunity to invite people who have been important in their lives.

Activity	Description
Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share agenda• Why you're gathering -- to celebrate!• Acknowledgement of student worker contributions by leadership.
Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fun activity to introduce who is in the room.
Student Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5-7 minute PowerPoint presentation• Students should share:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Project overview and purpose– Impact of their project on the company– Favorite parts of their work-based learning experience and challenges they encountered.– What they've learned and how they've grown during their work-based learning experience.
Student Graduation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managers share on the accomplishments of each student worker and key professional strengths they've demonstrated.• Student presented with certificate or something to commemorate their experience.<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Mail it in advance if virtual, so that students can hold it up to the screen.
Company Staff Thank You	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thank the staff and mentors who have supported student workers.<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Have students organize this segment, or provide space for them to share personalized thank yous, but let them prepare in advance

Ideas for making it fun!

- Provide students with something that commemorates their work-based learning experience, this may be a certificate or a t-shirt.
- Quiz or raffle with prizes and giveaway:
 - Quiz the students on fun facts they would have learned about your company during their work-based learning experience.
 - Use this virtual raffle wheel to draw names.
- Food always improves a celebration, so add a food component to the event.
 - This is still possible when you are remote. A special treat like lunch or dessert can be delivered to students' homes before, during or after the event. Just gather addresses and let them know in advance. Depending on allergies, pizza tends to be a popular student choice.
- Include an image slide show of student activities and work samples.
- Share fun superlatives ("Most likely to..") about each of your students and support staff.
- Provide professional headshots to students on their graduation day (this is applicable if you are having your celebration event in-person).

SAMPLE: Mentorship Plan



Recruiting mentors:

- Mentoring is a fantastic way to engage staff at your company and provides them an opportunity to feel more connected to their community and get to know student workers.
- Early career staff make great mentors and through mentoring they can grow their own leadership and interpersonal skills.
- Try to pair students with mentors who share their interests, background, or goals -- the student information sheet in this toolkit can help gather this information.
- When recruiting mentors, be clear about the role and time commitment, and share the opportunity widely via your company's primary communications channels (e.g. announce at company-wide meetings, post with affinity groups or in company chat channels, etc.).

Typical mentorship schedule and guidelines:

- Mentors should plan to meet with their mentee weekly or biweekly in a scheduled setting.
- Provide an orientation or short training for mentors; walk through the mentorship best practices in this toolkit.
- Set clear boundaries for communication (e.g. during work hours, on work-based Zoom or telephone).
- It can be helpful for mentors to focus their sessions on particular topics and to discuss the goal of the meeting at the beginning. They can also include ongoing check-ins on the students' work.

Mentor engagement ideas:

On the following page, there are seven example topics for mentors and mentees to explore together. These can serve as guides for weekly sessions across a summer work-based learning experience. Keep in mind it's best if mentorship sessions are conversational, and that both mentor and mentee are sharing and listening.

Continued on the next page...



SAMPLE: Mentorship Plan (cont'd)



Topic	Mentorship Sharing	Discussion Questions for Student Worker
In addition to covering a topic, each week learn how your student's experience is going and check-in on if they need any support.		
Getting to know each other and work-based learning program goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share about yourself: what is your role at the company and how long have you been there, what are your interests, things you like to do for fun, etc. Identify some of the things you have in common Share why you decided to become a mentor and your goals for mentor sessions 	<p>Learn about their interests, things they like to do for fun, what classes they're taking, etc.</p> <p>You can even do a series of fun rapid fire questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When are you most happy? What's one of your favorite places to go in your community? What is a big issue you'd like to see solved? Who are two people you admire and why? <p>Learn about what they're hoping to gain from their work-based learning experience (these can be fun to write down for reflection at the end of the program):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are you most excited to learn during your work-based learning experience? What do you think is going to be challenging? Is there anything you'd like to cover in future mentoring sessions?
High school as a launchpad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was your high school experience like? What skills did you learn or experiences did you have in high school that helped you most in work? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the best thing about school right now? What do you like least? What are you most looking forward to next year? What feels the most stressful or are you the most nervous about for next year? What are some of your classes or activities that you feel are most helpful to developing skills you'll use in your career?
Exploring careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share your career story--How did you get to where you are now? What prepared you for this job? Challenges you've overcome What did you think you wanted to be when you were younger and what have been different path changes you've taken? Where do you want to go in the future? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are careers you're interested in or could see yourself doing in the future? If you could invent a job for yourself, what would it be? What kind of jobs would you like to learn more about? Is there any work skill you would like to learn?
Identifying key things you want in a workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are your job responsibilities? What do you do in a typical day? What do you like about your job? What were things that mattered to you in a workplace (e.g. work on a team, work in an office) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's interesting to you about my job? What about my job would you not like? Is there anyone's work you've seen at this company that seems particularly interesting to you? What are other factors do you want to consider when identifying a job that is right for you? (e.g. company culture, pay, commute) What are the most important things to you in a work setting? (e.g. work outdoors, want every day to look different, work alone)
Building on your strengths and growing your network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share some of your professional strengths; how did you become good at those things? How have hobbies and interests you've developed in your personal life further your success in the workplace? Who are important people in your life and career networks? Share how they support your success; how have you gotten to know them? 	<p>Have them share their strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are two things you do really well? What are two things you could teach someone else? What do your friends or parents say you're good at? <p>Have them identify people and supporters in their network now, and who else they would like to connect with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are some of the important people in your life? (family, friends, adults in the community, etc.) How can they help you on your career path? (e.g. support, teach a skill) Who would you like to add to your network? Who are some people at this company you'd like to connect to?
Post-High school and college planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share your experience with on-the-job training or college. How have you leveraged continuing education and professional development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you thinking about going to college or getting some other type of training after high school? If so where? How are you feeling about the process of searching and applying? What type of support do you have for navigating the college process? What else would be helpful?
Reflecting on the work-based learning experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share how you've seen your mentee grow over their experience and some of the great qualities they bring to their work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the beginning of the program, you said you want to learn X, do you feel you've done that? How do you feel you've grown during your work-based learning experience? What has been challenging that you weren't expecting? Has this experience changed how you're thinking about your future and life after high school?

TIPS: Mentorship Best Practices



Set your mentor/mentee relationship up for success by following these best practices:

- Set specific times when your mentee can reach you, during normal working hours (e.g. 8am-6pm). If a mentee needs to talk with you before a planned check-in, encourage them to request a time to talk rather than call impromptu.
- Communicate with your mentee by work phone or Zoom.
- Share your personal story with your mentee, let them know about your high school experiences and how skills you learned in high school and after got you to where you are now.
- Help your mentee set goals for their work-based learning experience -- what do they want to learn about the company? How do they want to grow personally?
- Talk to your mentee about their project -- what are they doing well and where are they struggling?
- Time management can be a challenge for students. Talk to your mentee about how they are planning their day, share with them how you manage your time and calendar, and how you stay productive during the day.
- Encourage and motivate your mentee. Help them problem solve when necessary, but encourage their independence in taking action and learning through their own experience rather than stepping in.
- Work with your mentee on communicating effectively in the workplace. Offer to role play scenarios with them to practice skills like taking and giving feedback, asking questions, and asking for help.
- Set a strong example and model the behavior and skills you expect from your mentee.
- Help your mentee set up a LinkedIn account and show them how it can help them.

Watch out for these common challenges as you're working with your mentee:

- **Give your mentee an opportunity to learn through practice.** As a mentor, your role is to give feedback and help them think through situations, but ultimately let them make -- and learn from -- their own decisions.
- **Model good professional boundaries for your mentee.** Don't follow your mentee on social media, other than LinkedIn. Don't have your mentee text, call or meet with you outside of work hours (unless it's for a company or district sponsored activity). Encourage them to schedule time to talk to if they want/need to communicate in between regular check-ins.
- **Keep it confidential, unless you have a serious concern.** You should make it clear to your mentee that you will not share what you discuss with their school or with their supervisor unless they share with you information about abuse, neglect, or if you think they intend to harm themselves or others. If this happens, share your concerns immediately with their school representative or program intermediary.
- **Be patient, relationship building takes time.** Your mentee may need some time before they feel comfortable opening up to you, so be patient and keep working on the relationship. Take the time to actively listen to your mentee and remember, you will learn as much from them as they will from you.

SAMPLE: Student Worker Information Sheet for Mentorship Matching



Student Contact Information		
Name:		
Mailing Address:		
Cell Phone:		
Email:		
About You		
High School Name:		
Year in School: (e.g. Junior, Senior)		
Pronouns: (e.g. she/her, he/his, they/them)		
School subjects you like or career interests:		
Hobbies/interest/things you do for fun:		
Something you're hoping to learn in your work-based learning experience:		
Student Class Schedule		
List your current class schedule or those you took this past spring.		
Materials to Support Students in Virtual Work-based Learning Programs		
We want to make sure you have everything you need to participate in your work-based learning experience. Please let us know if you have the following:		
	YES	NO
Computer		
Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel)		
Relatively quiet space for remote meetings		
Internet/WiFi Access		
How reliable is your Wifi access?		
What online tools or programs do you have experience using?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media (e.g. Instagram, TikTok): • Virtual platforms (e.g. Zoom, Google Hangouts): • Email (e.g. Gmail): • Other: 		

SAMPLE: Networking Activities



EXAMPLE NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

Informational Interviews

- Support students to set up informational interviews with employees at your company throughout their work-based learning experience.
- Encourage them to brainstorm questions in advance and send a follow-up thank you.

Department “Meet and Greet”

- Highlight different departments through a series of meetings.
- At each “Meet and Greet” have the department share their role in the company, a typical “day in the life” within their department, and highlight a cool project they have done. They may want to use slides to be able to show and tell their department’s story.
- Then move into breakouts where students are paired or in small groups with members of the department. Have student workers rotate 2-3 times so that students have the opportunity to speak with multiple staff from the department.

Speed Networking

- Speed networking uses a one-on-one or small group format and allows for more dialogue between students and employees than traditional panels.
- It is a great way to engage lots of employee volunteers who can give one hour of their time.
- In order for speed networking to work virtually, you will need a video call platform that allows for pre-assigned breakouts, like Zoom. You will also need your full list of participants in advance so that you can create groups. It can be a good idea to pair employees together from a department (e.g. 2 employees from sales).
- First introduce speed networking, the purpose, and how it will work.
- In the virtual setting we recommend 3 rotations, 7-10 minutes in length, more than that and it can get repetitive.
- Between breakouts, you will need to bring everyone back to the large group and you can do a quick game, icebreaker, or share out.

Elevator Pitch Workshop

- An elevator pitch is a helpful tool to teach students because when they network with employees, they will be introducing themselves a lot and want to give a sense of who they are and help jump start further conversation.
- Introduce the idea of an elevator pitch and the components (introduction, hook, solution).
- Have two employees model their own elevator pitch.
- Give students a few minutes to draft their own elevator pitches.
- Break them into small groups or pairs with employees at your company to practice their elevators pitches and get feedback.

LinkedIn Workshop and Support

- LinkedIn is the primary networking tool used by working professionals. Hold a workshop where you introduce LinkedIn.
- Have two employees (possibly someone early in their career and someone more mid-career), walk through their LinkedIn profiles.
- After the introduction, have students split up into pairs or small groups with an employee to either brainstorm development of their LinkedIn profile or to review an existing profile.
- If this is done in-person, you can also include LinkedIn profile photo taking.

GENERAL NETWORKING ACTIVITY TIPS

• Provide students and employees with sample questions before networking activities

- With students, you can have the group brainstorm questions they want to ask in advance so they are prepared.
- With employees, remind them to learn about the students, as well. It should be a two-way conversation.

• Students want to see themselves and their experiences represented. Consider this when recruiting employees for your networking events. In particular, high school students want to meet:

- **Young Professionals:** Staff who are closer in age and may be more relatable and represent paths that feel attainable.
- **Diversity:** Make an effort to include employees from diverse backgrounds in the activity.
- **Alumni:** It can be especially exciting for students to meet employees who are alumni from their district or school.
- **Mix of pathways:** Students want to hear from employees who have taken all different paths to get where they are. That may include employees who worked first after high school, as well as those who completed different types of training programs like apprenticeships, technical and 2-year degrees, or the military.
- **Varied roles:** While a student’s main project may be focused in a particular department, by networking with employees in other roles and departments, students can learn about the range of career options available to them, including those they might not have considered before.

• Examples of things that students want to learn from employees:

- Employee career pathways and how they got to where they are now.
- Typical day in the life at work, including what type of tasks they do or problems they’re solving, do they work alone or with other people, where they do their work.
- What they like and don’t like about their job.
- Challenges they’ve overcome.
- How they manage work life balance and how are they involved in their community.
- What did they want to do in high school and how it compares to what they do now.
- How much an employee gets paid.

• Be prepared for salary questions

- High school students will frequently ask about employee salaries during networking, and this makes sense! They want to understand what a person’s pay allows them to do in life. Encourage employees to answer with a typical salary range in their position, how their salary changes (or does not change) over time, and how their pay connects to job training, education, or experience they’ve had.

SAMPLE: Office Norms and Expectations for the Virtual Workplace



Set your mentor/mentee relationship up for success by following these best practices:

Below is a sample list of common workplace expectations that can be used to guide students. Every workplace is unique in its values and norms, and we encourage you to adapt these based on your company's needs and discuss them with student workers.

Attire/Appearance

- Even if you're working from home, your clothes and appearance should be work appropriate -- dress like you're going to an important occasion.
 - Examples of appropriate dress include: polo or collared shirt, plain clean t-shirt or sweater, and khakis or jeans.
 - Do not wear pajamas, clothes with holes, or clothes with slogans or images.
- Present your best self! Give yourself time to get ready for work -- clean up, brush your teeth, do your hair -- before you come to work
- Get good rest so that you can be alert and present in meetings (not sleepy).
- Make sure you're working in a place that allows you to be alert and focused on work.
- Use a digital background for virtual calls -- ask your manager if your company has digital logo backgrounds to use .

Dependability

- An important part of any job is learning how to manage your own time. This is a skill and it takes time to learn how to do it well -- you can talk to your manager or mentor about advice for managing your time.
- Especially if you're working virtually, you need to schedule time for bathroom breaks, lunch, and work. It may help to write out a plan for each day -- when are you going to work on your project? Do you need to plan a bathroom break before a long meeting?
- Remember, any time you're not in a meeting is not "free time" -- it's time for you to work on your project.
- Attend scheduled meetings on-time.
- If you are going to be arriving late, let your supervisor or the lead of the meeting know in advance.
- Work to meet deadlines and communicate if you are not able to meet them -- ask for help early if you are struggling or don't understand something. Don't wait until the day things are due to say you're having a problem.

Communication – Interpersonal

- When you are given an assignment by your supervisor, make sure you understand:
 - What format should this be in (PowerPoint, email, document, etc)?
 - When should this be finished?
- Who should you ask if you have questions? Treat people in ways you would like to be treated -- remember that everyone is important in the workplace. Treat everyone with respect regardless of their position or title.
- Learn other people's names -- write them down if it helps.
- Try not to interrupt people -- raise your hand or ask your manager about meeting norms for your employer.

Communication – Phone and Email

- Return phone calls and emails within 24 hours -- even if only to say you will provide the information requested at a later time.
- All emails should be written professionally, this means they have:
 - Correct grammar and punctuation, and don't have spelling errors. Use full sentences or complete thoughts
 - Always include a subject line, introduction, and sign-off with signature.
 - Try to use consistent fonts.
 - Never say in an email anything you wouldn't say to someone's face.

Communication – Virtual Calls (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams)

- Mute yourself when not speaking.
- Be present and participate in meetings. This includes staying on camera as much as possible.
 - It can be okay to be "off camera" in specific instances -- such as a slow internet connection.
- Limit multi-tasking (e.g. checking your phone, sending private messages to other staff) -- listen actively in the meeting, and use your eye contact to show you're paying attention.
 - If you're having trouble concentrating in meetings, try using a concentration tool. Have a piece of paper nearby you can doodle on, or a small object to hold off camera. Just make sure it's helping you pay attention, and not becoming another distraction.
- Avoid eating during meetings unless it is a specific lunchtime engagement.
- Be aware of what you have in your background and make sure it is appropriate for co-workers to see. You can use a simple digital background if you aren't able to tidy up what shows in your camera.

Sharing Standards with Students:

- When sharing expectations with students, it can be helpful to use images as illustrations.
- Bring in humor of "what to do/what not to do" to further illustrate.
- If your workplace uses many communication channels, make sure to clarify what methods of communication are appropriate for what activities (e.g. email, phone, video call, productivity platform).

TIPS: Manager Best Practices



Considerations when recruiting managers:

- Select managers who are excited about supporting student worker learning and can set aside time to meet with students consistently.
- Managing students can be a great opportunity to build the leadership and supervisory skills of early-career staff.

Strong managers use these best practices to support student workers:

- Co-create goals with students and try to align aspects of their project work or training to those goals.
- Work with students to break down projects into smaller tasks that will support them to complete deliverables; this will help them transition from the familiarity of school assignments to the kind of project management that happens in professional settings.
- When giving assignments, make sure to clearly state:
 - The format for the final deliverable (PowerPoint, Word, etc.).
 - The deadline for the deliverable, and when the student worker should expect to do interim check-ins.
 - The importance of asking for help and the specific person the student should go to for support.
- Talk to your student worker about how they are managing their time -- make sure they know they are responsible for scheduling in time for bathroom breaks, lunch, and project work – unlike during school this is not scripted for them during the workday. Share your own calendar, and show them how you manage your time.
- Welcome and encourage students to ask questions proactively and try to be available and responsive.
- Provide honest feedback -- help the student understand the things they are doing well that they should continue to build upon and encourage their development in areas where they can improve.
- Share how student's work ties into the company and future career opportunities there, as well as build their understanding of the industry you're in and the associated career pathways more broadly.
- Not seeing as much progress as you'd expect on a project? Ask your student to share how they spend their days so that you can troubleshoot or help them prioritize tasks. They may need help breaking down a big project into smaller, manageable chunks or may be having technology challenges.

Sample Manager/Student Worker Check-in Schedule

Managers can structure their time with student workers in many different ways, below is one example for a full-time student worker. You may find that a scaled back version makes more sense for your company's work-based learning program. This schedule can be modified based on the hours a student works and specific management needs, but you should expect to check-in with your student worker at least once a day in order to help them stay on track.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Quick Check-in (30-minutes)	Daily Huddle (10-minutes)	Quick Check-in (30-minutes)	Daily Huddle (10-minutes)	Weekly Feedback (30-minutes)

End of program:

- 1-hour debrief meeting

Purpose of manager/student worker check-ins:

Weekly check-ins help a student workers:

- Stay on-track.
- Implement learnings.
- Assess progress towards established goals.
- They also provide a scheduled time for students to access their managers and ask questions, which can reduce interruptions at other times of the day.

Tips for regular check-in meetings:

- Mix up your check-ins -- if you have multiple students, try small group check-ins as well as individual check-ins.
- Because feedback is most useful "in the moment" or "as it happens," a daily 10-minute huddle can be a helpful tool for managers.
- Schedule extra connection check-ins at the beginning of the program, you can lessen these over time as your student worker becomes more independent.
- Some managers choose to facilitate a longer, more in-depth mid-point performance check-in and/or a final performance evaluation.

SAMPLE: 30-minute Manager Check-in Agenda



1. **Warm-up check-in or get to know you question (both share)**

Example questions:

- What are you looking forward to this week?
- Tell me the top two things from your day/week, thus far. What was the best part of this week?
- What's something new and interesting you've been thinking about lately as a result of your work-based learning experience?
- What's something that brings you joy and energy at work?
- What is one thing you're really good at? (or you're known for among your friends)
- If you could have any superpower, what would it be?
- What topic do you wish you could learn as a subject in school that isn't a part of your classes?
- If you could invent one thing, what would it be?
- What is your catchphrase, or a word you say a lot?
- If you had a million dollars, what would you do with it?
- If you could know one thing about the future, what would it be?

2. **Describe how things are going**

This helps to open up conversation and provides an on-ramp to talk about different issues that come up during the week.

3. **What has been challenging?**

This can be an opportunity to diffuse concerns or to help them problem solve.

4. **What can I do to support you?**

Providing examples or adding a time frame, "what can I do to support you today?" can make this question more tangible for your student worker.

Sample: 10-minute daily huddle

1. **Share any wins** – What did you accomplish since yesterday? What's a good thing that happened yesterday?
2. **Share priorities** – What things are you working on today?
3. **Share where you feel like you need help** – Is there anything that has you stuck?

Note: This works great with a group of student workers.

SAMPLE: Weekly Manager Student Worker Evaluation Form



Note: Weekly check-ins are recommended, but may not be necessary for semester-length internships or work-based learning experiences where the student is only “in office” 1-2 days per week. Adjust your check-in schedule to meet your specific management needs.

To supervisor: The form below is used to support regular feedback with your student worker. Supervisors are encouraged to complete the form (set aside 15-20 minutes) and then review it with their student worker in a scheduled one-on-one meeting. Help the student think about the feedback and share how they might make any changes for the next week.

To student: Work-based learning is a learning opportunity. This form allows your supervisor to provide you feedback each week to help you learn about your strengths and areas where you need to focus to improve and grow professionally. This form evaluates core skills that support your success in the workplace, such as are you on-time, are you prepared, and your communication with others.

Supervisor:			
Student Worker Name:			
Work-based Learning Program Title:			
Date /Program Week:			
	YES	PARTIALLY	NO
Student completed their assigned tasks for the week			
Student met with his/her mentor this week			

Please provide feedback on the student’s ability for the following categories:

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT	N/A
Attire/Appearance					
Student’s appearance is work appropriate.					
Student is focused and ready to work each day.					
Dependability					
Student was present and on-time to remote meetings or communicated any schedule changes.					
Student uses time efficiently.					
Project Management & Initiative					
Able to organize and prioritize assigned tasks.					
Seeks out resources and/or asks for help when unsure about how to proceed on tasks.					
Meets deadlines, and follows through until projects are complete.					
Interpersonal Communication					
Listens attentively to managers, colleagues and peers (includes limiting distraction in virtual meetings).					
Effectively participates in virtual meetings and group settings.					
Demonstrates motivation to learn and accepts suggestions and constructive feedback.					
Verbal and Written Communication					
Demonstrates good verbal communication skills.					
Communicates ideas and concepts clearly in writing over email or in documents.					

SAMPLE: Weekly Manager Student Worker Evaluation Form



Evaluation Comments

What is one area where the student excelled this week or gained new skills, insights, confidence, etc.?

What is one area where the student can work to grow or improve next week?

Key tasks for next week:

SAMPLE: Weekly Student Report Form



Student Name:	
Supervisor:	
Work-based Learning Program Title:	
Date:	

	YES	PARTIALLY	NO
<i>I completed my assigned tasks for the week</i>			
<i>I met with my mentor this week</i>			

Description of tasks performed this week:

List one thing that went well this week:

List one thing that was challenging this week (issue, problem, etc.):

List one thing you want to accomplish or improve next week:

Do you have any feedback on how the program is going?

SAMPLE: Student Worker "Exit Ticket" Evaluation

for the end of the Work-based Learning Program



The exit ticket is intended to provide feedback to the student worker's manager on their experience during the work-based learning program, and to be used for future planning of work-based learning programs by employers.

Student Name:	
Supervisor:	
Work-based Learning Program Title:	
Date:	

	YES	MAYBE	NO
I would recommend my employer host student workers next summer.			
I would recommend my manager host a student again next summer.			
I would recommend this work-based learning program to a friend.			

Why or why not would you recommend this experience to a friend?

	YES	MAYBE	NO
I learned new skills during this worked-based learning experience.			
I practiced/improved skills I already had during this worked-based learning experience.			

List three skills you think you gained or improved during this work-based learning experience (examples: public speaking, data analysis, social media, communication, project management, time management, problem solving, teamwork, leadership, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What is one area where your manager really helped you gain skills or confidence?

What is one area where your manager could have helped you more during your work-based learning experience?

If you could change one thing about this program, it would be...

CONTACT INFORMATION

Are you interested in hosting a student worker
or learning more about work-based learning?

Visit our website: wblmt.org

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