



Toolkit for Career Fairs

Students will find out what the future holds for them. Students will spend time interviewing business representatives about skills, training, salary and other aspects of their work.

Benefit to Students

- Better grasp of school subject concepts and better understanding of real world application of abstract concepts.
- Increased awareness of career opportunities.
- Development of special interests, e.g., science fairs, research reports, job shadowing, internships, etc.
- Improved portfolio items (resumes, letters of recommendation, on-the-job photos).
- Friendship, encouragement, and support from adult role models.

Benefit to Teachers

- Help in covering assigned curriculum.
- Exposure to new approaches and ideas that can be incorporated into teaching concepts.
- Familiarization with recent developments in the world of work.
- Interaction with other professionals not a part of the educational community.
- Better understanding between educators and the private sector.

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Career Fair “How To” Basics

1. Coordinate the Career Fair with your principal and share date, time and location with staff.
2. Choose the location – gym, auditorium, cafeteria, etc. and secure the room for the afternoon before the day of the Career Fair well in advance. You may want access to outside areas to display large equipment like fire engines, tractors, police cars, delivery trucks, various work vehicles, etc.
3. Choose the date – Pay attention to other activities already planned. **Set the date as early as possible.** You may even want to mail a “save the date” postcard to previous participants so they can get it on their calendar.
4. Establish a time for your event.
5. Decide how students will visit exhibitors (by grade, class, building location, etc.).
6. Design a form to mail, fax or handout to potential exhibitors. Sample attached.
7. Recruit businesses to participate.
 - Recruit businesses in the state’s 15 clusters of study and majors. Try to have at least one exhibitor from each cluster. See SPIE’s Career Presenter List on the website, www.stanislauspartners.com.
 - Contact your local Chamber of Commerce and ask for their assistance in letting their members know of your event.
 - Invite parents to participate and discuss their career.
 - Invite postsecondary institutions to discuss financial aid, admissions, etc.
 - If you are an elementary/middle school, consider inviting your high schools Career & Technology programs to display courses offered in high school or at the local Career & Technology Center. (Older students have a great impact on the younger students.)
 - Invite guidance counselors from high schools to participate.
 - Invite business partners or marketing/business teachers to do mock interviews with the students or give “mini-sessions” on job skills techniques and suggestions.
8. Get several “reliable” volunteers to help recruit participants. You will also need someone to take photos, greet and direct participants and to assist with “traffic patrol” inside the career fair. You may want to have students help with carrying materials in for the business partners as well as out after the event is over.
9. Have refreshments for the participants i.e. coffee, water, juice, etc. If the fair goes through lunch, be sure to build in a time to eat and have lunch for the participants. Have this area staffed by an adult.
10. Keep a list of participants. Fax, mail or email a confirmation to the participants so they will know exactly when and where to go and what to expect. You may also want to call several days in advance of the event as a reminder!

11. Make a master layout of your area and distribute to folks helping the day of event.
12. Figure out table arrangements. Be sure to keep in mind folks who need electrical outlets, TV's, VCR's or other equipment, or those that may have larger than usual props/displays.
13. Set up display area the day prior to event if possible.
14. Make table signs for ALL participants. (This would be a great project for a computer/graphics class.)
15. Write a press release (before and after) to inform the community of the activity. Remember to include contact information for folks to participate. Share with district PR.
16. Remind your teachers about the activity at staff meetings.
17. Get on staff meeting agenda to share career day sample activities. Encourage teachers to share ideas with each other about how to make the day more meaningful. The more that is done to discuss careers prior to the event, the more the students will gain from the experience.
Do not have a career fair just to have a career fair! Make it meaningful!! Have a theme i.e. clusters, etc.
18. Arrange for parking and loading/unloading of materials and/or busses. Include parking instructions with confirmation letter.
19. Have a central check-in spot for participants with all information they may need – map, refreshments, restroom locations, etc.
20. Personally walk around during the activity and thank each business participant. Give some sort of thank you gift, i.e. school pen, mug, hat or certificate of appreciation.
21. Encourage students and teachers to write thank you notes. Proof spelling and grammar before mailing.
22. Write thank you notes to teacher/staff/student helpers.
23. Develop business partner, teacher and student evaluation forms. Distribute at end of career fair to business partners and the next day to faculty and students.
24. Tally evaluations and compile findings/remarks.
25. Get on staff meeting agenda to summarize and thank group for their efforts.
26. Breathe and set your date for next year.

Sample questions to ask during Career Fair (Customize for age/grade)

1. What is your name and job title? Where do you work?
2. Describe your occupation and duties.
3. What is your educational background? What school subjects do you feel would be most helpful to prepare for this position?
4. What work experience did you need and how do you use those skills to do your job?
5. Describe working conditions associated with your position (i.e. physical working conditions, amount of overtime required, stress level, amount of responsibility, amount of travel required, etc.).
6. What do you find most difficult, stressful, etc. about the position?
7. What kind of clothes do you need to wear for your job? Are uniforms worn? Is protective gear required?
8. Where do you work (inside, outside, at a desk, on an assembly line) and what special tools or equipment are used?
9. What recommendations do you offer to someone who is interested in entering a similar position?
10. What do you enjoy most about this position?
11. In your opinion, what type of attitude and personality traits are important in order to be successful in this career field?
12. What opportunities are there for advancement in this career field?
13. What communication skills do you need for your job? With customers? With other employees?
14. Describe your role in supervision. Do you supervise other people? What is involved in supervision? Who supervises your position?
15. What are the starting salaries and educational requirements for people who hold positions similar to yours?
16. What does this company do to encourage its employees to continue their education?
17. What are some good ways for students to find out more about this career?

Remember to thank the individual for taking the time to come and talk with you about their career. Give them a firm handshake with good eye contact.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SCHOOL OPENS DOORS TO BUSINESSES AND COLLEGES AS STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT PLANNING EARLY FOR CAREER SUCCESS

Students at _____ School will find out all about what the future can hold for them on _____ . Businesses and college representatives will be coming to the school to talk with students about their careers. This Career Fair is scheduled from _____ to _____ .

Students will spend time interviewing business representatives about the skills, training, salary and other aspects of their work. There will also be college representatives and students available to meet with the students to discuss postsecondary options.

_____ School is located at _____ .

For more information, contact _____ at _____ .

Sample Public Announcement System

Career Fair Announcement

We have some exciting news. On _____ in the _____ there will be representatives coming to the school to talk with students about career opportunities. The Career Fair will be from _____ to _____. Your teachers will be talking more about the Career Fair with you. Please invite your parents to come.

The Career Fair will be held next week from _____ to _____ in the _____. Don't forget to invite your parents to come. Your teachers will be working with you this week in preparation for the Career Fair.

The Career Fair is tomorrow. Remember to greet our guests with a firm handshake, smile and respectful attitude. Thank them for taking time from their schedule to be with us. Remember to invite your parents!

We'd like to welcome all our visitors and parents to today's Career Fair. Thank you for taking the time to be with us as we plan for our future. We appreciate your working with us to ensure our children a successful career. Enjoy the Career Fair!

Faculty, staff and students, we want to thank you for making the Career Fair a huge success. You showed great respect to our guests and learned a lot about the importance of early planning for your career path. Thanks again, and a special thanks to _____ our Career Fair coordinator for volunteering to plan the event for us. She/he did a great job!

SAMPLE

Career Fair Evaluation Business Partner

Please take a few moments to complete the following questions. Your answers will ensure that our career fair continues to improve and is valued. Thank you for your time and participation!

Please make additional comments at any time.

1. Did you feel the location was convenient?
2. Did you find the time convenient?
3. Did you find the date to be convenient?
4. Did you find the space provided to be adequate?
5. Do you think this activity was a good use of your company's time? Why or why not?
6. What suggestions would you offer to make next year more successful?
7. Will your company or school return next year?

Optional

Name: _____

Company/School: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

SAMPLE

Career Fair Evaluation Educator

Please take a few moments to complete the following questions. Your answers will ensure that our career fair continues to improve and is valued. Thank you for your time and participation!

Please make additional comments at any time.

1. Did you feel the location was convenient?
2. Did you find the time convenient?
3. Did you find the date to be convenient?
4. Did you feel the career fair was a good learning experience for you and your students? Why or why not?
5. What type of activities could we provide to make this a more meaningful educational activity?
6. What suggestions would you offer to make next year more successful?
7. Will you attend this career fair next year?
8. Will you encourage your students to attend next year?
9. How did you encourage students to participate this year? (extra credit, class assignment, homework, etc.)

Optional

Name: _____

School: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Career Fair Assignment

- Have students write a paper on why they would be good for a chosen career. Encourage students to accentuate the positives about themselves when writing this paper. This activity can also be tied into your districts “Character Education” activities. Students can then report to the class their positive characteristics and career selection.
- Have students cut pictures out of magazines about the career of their choice. Take pictures and paste them to construction paper or poster board. Present posters to class. (Alternative – do the above activity with positive characteristics, again, tie into character education.)
- Have students research a career that they are interested in (prior to career fair or after). Have them talk to people in that area at the career fair. Talk about: skills needed, schooling required, salary, benefits, personal traits needed, why they like their job, what challenges do they face, and career opportunities.
- Form teams and assign above project. Have student’s present projects with some type of visual (i.e. poster, photos, handouts, video, etc.). Students should be grouped according to their specific interests or career majors. Refer to the sixteen clusters of study and majors.
- Have students talk with business people and get signatures on sheet provided in Resource Section.

SAMPLE

Career Fair Questions K-5

Answer the following questions according to what you saw at the career fair. (Or what you will see)

1. Where would I work if I like animals?
2. Where would I work if I drive a big red truck that sprays water?
3. Where would I work if I help people – my car has blue lights?
4. Where would I work if I help people with their money?
5. Where would I work if I like to work outside? I also like to use a hammer and nails and I have to wear a hard hat.
6. Where would I work if I like to cook and help make people happy? (several choices)
7. Where would I work if I like to help people who are sick?
8. Where would I work if I drive a big brown truck and deliver packages to people?
9. Where would I work if I help supply people with power?
10. Where would I work if I tell people what the weather is going to be?

Answers

Career Fair Questions K-5

Answers the following questions according to what you saw at the career fair

1. Where would I work if I like animals? **zoo**
2. Where would I work if I drive a big red truck that sprays water? **firehouse**
3. Where would I work if I help people – my car has blue lights? **police dept.**
4. Where would I work if I help people with their money? **bank**
5. Where would I work if I like to work outside? I also like to use a hammer and nails and I have to wear a hard hat. **construction site**
6. Where would I work if I like to cook and help make people happy? (several choices)
restaurant/catering company
7. Where would I work if I like to help people who are sick? **hospital/doctors office**
8. Where would I work if I drive a big brown truck and deliver packages to people? **United Parcel Service - UPS**
9. Where would I work if I help supply people with power? **electric company**
10. Where would I work if I tell people what the weather is going to be? **weather service**

School Name Career Fair

School Name invites you and your business to participate in an school wide Career Day. This wonderful opportunity will give you a chance to speak directly to approximately three hundred (300) students, parents and teachers from our junior high school about programs and opportunities in your career field. Thank you for considering your participation in this worthy endeavor!

WHEN:

WHERE:

TIME:

_____ Yes, I would like to confirm my table at the Career Day.

_____ No, I am unable to attend at this time.

Please fax back – no later than

COMPANY NAME:

Address:

Phone:

Contact Person:

Will you need an electrical outlet? YES _____ No _____

Sample Letter of Commitment

Date

Dear

On behalf of school name I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in our first ever Career Fair on day, date from time. Exhibitors will set-up in the location beginning at time. Students will be scheduled to visit with you from time until time. Refreshments will be available during the event.

During the career day, students and teachers will have an opportunity to discuss first-hand the many career opportunities in your areas. They will also learn about the educational requirements, salaries, skill requirements, and many other pieces of valuable information, as well as have one-on-one interviews with company representatives.

You may want to bring with you hands-on activities, samples, brochures and any other material you feel will be beneficial for participants.

If you have any other questions regarding the Career Faire please call or email person, phone and email.

We look forward to seeing you there! Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Title

Sample Thank You Letter

Dear

On behalf of school name I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in our first ever Career Fair on day, date from time.

During the career day, students and teachers had an opportunity to discuss first-hand the many career opportunities in your area. They also learned about the educational requirements, salaries, skill requirements, and many other pieces of valuable information. Say something personal.

Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Title