

Workplace Tour Guide

Introduction

This Workplace Tour Guide is designed to help develop workplace tours that work for students, employers, and teachers. It is part of the Work-Based Learning Toolkit developed for NYS P-TECH that provides quality approaches and strategies to create high-quality, safe and legal Workplace Learning experiences for P-TECH students.

Workplace Tours Overview

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

Workplace Tours are designed to:

- Provide exposure to potential careers and jobs
- Build occupational knowledge
- Build knowledge about the education and training needed for entry into the industry
- Create awareness of the business's role in the community, as well as its functions, processes and products
- Foster an understanding of the business's workforce and its contributions to the community

A Workplace Tour is a prime example of the benefits to students, employers, teachers and schools described in section one of this toolkit. While Workplace Tours are part of the continuum of authentic Workplace Learning experiences provided to every student, not all P-TECH employer partners need to provide Workplace Tours.

The Importance of Structured Activity

All Workplace Tours should include structured activity before, during and after the experience. These activities help ensure that all involved parties have meaningful, productive experiences that result in enriched student learning. Proper planning and preparation, attention to legal and safety details, maximization of learning potential, and communication and support for the student and industry host will help ensure success.

Workplace Tour Support Materials

Tip sheets and checklists for P-TECH coordinators, employer partners, and students and teachers are provided in this toolkit to help design, structure and support Workplace Tours to maximize student learning. Each tip sheet supplements the Work-Based Learning essential elements described in section three of this toolset, and provides a set of success factors and lists of activities or tasks to perform before, during and after the experience. A fact sheet for prospective employers is also provided.

Tip Sheets and Fact Sheets

P-TECH Coordinator Tip Sheet: Workplace Tour Success Factors

A tip sheet for P-TECH coordinators or intermediary partners responsible for implementing Workplace Tours

Teacher Tip Sheet: Workplace Tour Success Factors

A tip sheet to help teachers connect the Workplace Tour to the classroom

Student Tip Sheet: Workplace Tour Success Factors

A tip sheet to help students get the most out of the Workplace Tour experience

Employer Tip Sheet: Workplace Tour Success Factors

A tip sheet for participating employers

- *What's my role in the Workplace Tour?*
- *How do I get matched up?*
- *What should I talk about?*
- *How does this work?*

Employer Fact Sheet: Workplace Tour

A fact sheet that describes what's involved in a company providing a Workplace Tour

P-TECH Coordinator Tip Sheet

Workplace Tour: Success Factors

A tip sheet for P-TECH coordinators or intermediary partners responsible for implementing and supporting Workplace Tours.

When designing and implementing Workplace Tours with your industry partners, keep the following success factors in mind.

Before the Workplace Tour

- Develop an effective employer engagement strategy.
 - ✓ Define the value proposition for employers.
 - ✓ Use the Employer Fact Sheet to explain Workplace Tours to prospective employers.
 - ✓ Identify appropriate employer partners for tours.
- Make the classroom training connection.
 - ✓ Assess how a Workplace Tour can support your teaching and meet curriculum goals.
 - ✓ Prepare students for the tour, including having them research the company and practice their personal introductory pitch.
- Support learning.
 - ✓ Identify and document desired student learning outcomes.
 - ✓ Help students research the company.
 - ✓ Prepare students to compare the culture and style of this workplace to others they have observed (either formally through your program or informally on their own).
- Coordinate activities with the Workplace Tour host.
 - ✓ Work with the employer to plan the tour.
 - ✓ Identify a point person at the school and with the employer.
 - ✓ Provide appropriate support materials for distribution to employees who will be part of the tour.
- Address logistics.
 - ✓ Arrange for transportation, permission slips, food, etc.
 - ✓ Find out if safety gear is required, and if so arrange for it to be provided.
 - ✓ Prepare program staff for the tour.

During the Workplace Tour

- Provide time and space for introductions, an overview of the business and its operations and what to expect during the tour.
- Ensure appropriate faculty attendance, including teachers and counselors.
- Ensure that students and teachers receive instruction in workplace safety and an orientation to workplace norms.

- Design an engaging experience. Arrange for students to experience the tour in small groups, engage in inquiry, and experience some hands-on activity during the tour.
- Facilitate learning.
 - ✓ Support employers in effective interactions with students.
 - ✓ Arrange for the opportunity to see the full spectrum of activities and occupations within the company.
- Offer role models.
 - ✓ Arrange for students to hear from and speak to “someone like me.”
 - ✓ Ensure students observe and interact with employees with different levels of responsibility in the organization.

After the Workplace Tour

- Reflect on learning.
 - ✓ Provide individual and group reflection activities for teachers and students.
 - ✓ Help students make the connection between academics and the workplace.
 - ✓ Support students in determining their next steps in learning about careers.
- Conduct follow-up activities.
 - ✓ Debrief with the tour host and have students write thank-you letters.
 - ✓ Assess the impact and value of the tour.
 - ✓ Utilize employer, teacher and student feedback to improve future tours.
- Document and archive information about the tour.

Go Deeper

There are a number of suggested activities to deepen the impact of a Workplace Tour. Consider the following activities.

- Make the tour part of a project and have students prepare and deliver a presentation about the company after the tour.
- Have students create a presentation and deliver it to the employer partner during the tour.
- Take pictures from the tour and provide them to the company for their website or newsletter.
- Publicize the tour and the business by placing a story in the local newspaper or posting on your webpage. (Make sure you clear this with the employer partner first.)
- Consider other potential public relations benefits and opportunities.

Teacher Tip Sheet

Workplace Tour: Success Factors

A tip sheet to help teachers connect the Workplace Tour to the classroom

A Workplace Tour presents a unique opportunity to support and augment the curriculum and get students more deeply engaged in their learning. If you are coordinating a Workplace Tour, have a look at the Coordinator Tip Sheet in the WBL Toolkit.

Workplace Tour

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Workplace Tours are designed to promote:

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

Teacher Tips

Workplace Tour Success Factors

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

Before the Workplace Tour

- Identify how and when a Workplace Tour might enhance a particular lesson or activity in the classroom.
- Familiarize yourself with the purpose and goals of the Workplace Tour.
 - ✓ Assess how the Workplace Tour can support classroom training and meet curriculum goals.
 - ✓ Identify and document desired student learning outcomes.
 - ✓ Review the Workplace Tour Guide and Tip Sheets.
- Prepare students to maximize learning.
 - ✓ Discuss expectations for the experience and what students may learn from the tour.
 - ✓ Have them research the employer website and prepare at least three meaningful questions for employer engagement.
 - ✓ Discuss what students know and want to know about the company and the industry.
 - ✓ Build excitement for the tour by connecting the experience to the real world (e.g. connecting the experience to personal goals, connecting the company's focus to current events and future career growth in the industry).
- Address logistics by working with the P-TECH coordinator to:
 - ✓ Find out if certain dress or safety gear is required and communicate any requirements to students.
 - ✓ Collect signed Work-Based Learning permission forms.

During the Workplace Tour

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

After the Workplace Tour

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

Go Deeper

There are a number of suggested activities to deepen the impact of a Workplace Tour. Consider the following activities:

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

Student Tip Sheet

Workplace Tour: Success Factors

A tip sheet for students on how to get the most out of a Workplace Tour

Workplace Tours are created so you can look behind the scenes and ask yourself if this is somewhere you can see yourself in the future. Keep these following tips in mind to help you have a successful Workplace Tour.

Before showing up to a Workplace Tour

- Turn in forms requested by your teacher and school.
- Make sure you learn what the dress code is for the place you are visiting.
- Do a little research and learn about what the company does, why they got started, and how they contribute to your community.
- Come up with at least five questions you want to ask about the company during your tour.
- Practice introducing yourself as a professional. (Name, grade, why you chose to go on this tour, and what you would like to do with your future.)

During a Workplace Tour

- Pay attention to what is going on at the organization/site. Can you see yourself working in a place like this?
- Actively participate. Ask your guide the questions you came up with before your tour.
- Pay attention during the tour and ask any additional questions that will help you figure out if a career in this industry is for you.
- Network! If you are interested in learning more, ask the people you meet for their business cards so you can follow up with them after the tour.

After a Workplace Tour

- Talk to your classmates and teachers about the Workplace Tour and your feelings about pursuing a career in that industry.
- Write a thank-you note to the people who hosted the Workplace Tour.
- Fill out the tour evaluation provided by your teacher. Be honest. That will help make future tours more meaningful experiences.
- What kind of jobs do you want to know more about? Would you be interested in going on another tour in the future?

Employer Tip Sheet

Workplace Tour: Success Factors

A tip sheet for NYS P-TECH employer partners

When designing and implementing a Workplace Tour at your company, keep the following success factors in mind.

Before the Workplace Tour

- Work with your P-TECH coordinator to design a tour of your workplace.
- Let the coordinator know who the main contact is, and provide emergency phone numbers at the workplace.
- Address logistics, including where to park and enter the building.
- Determine if safety gear is necessary and, if so, arrange for it to be available.
- Identify who at the workplace will be participating in the tour, and give them an overview of your partnership with the sponsoring school, what to expect during the tour, their role and why their involvement is important.

During the Workplace Tour

- Work with the P-TECH coordinator to make sure the tour showcases the full spectrum of your company's work.
- Provide a safety orientation to the group.
- Arrange for students to participate in small groups.
- Have students hear from and speak to employees with different levels of responsibility and roles in your company.
- Make sure students are exposed to a range of career options in your industry, and understand what it will take for them to be hired when they complete their education and training.

After the Workplace Tour

- Debrief with your team.
- Provide feedback to the P-TECH coordinator to improve future tours.
- Consider how you might use the tour to promote your company's visibility in the community.

Go Deeper

- Explore ways that you might further interest students and grow the pool of potential future employees.
- Talk to the P-TECH coordinator about being a classroom speaker or guest trainer, helping with curriculum, or hosting students for Job Shadows, Jobs or Internships.

Employer Fact Sheet Workplace Tour

A fact sheet that describes what's involved in a company providing a Workplace Tour

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

Program Level: Starts early in the P-TECH experience. Ongoing.

Employer/Student Ratio: Varies. 1 or 2 to 20

Duration: Usually 1.5 to 2 Hours

Frequency: One time

Location: Workplace

Costs: Staff time

Special Considerations: Safety, company policies, transportation

Why are Workplace Tours important for students?

- Provides exposure to potential careers and jobs, and helps identify potential interests as well as those occupations *not* of interest.
- Helps build occupational knowledge.
- Helps make the connection between academic theory and practical application.
- Builds knowledge about the education and training needed for entry into the industry.
- Creates awareness of the business's role in the community, as well as its functions, processes and products
- Fosters an understanding of the business's workforce and its contributions to the community

What are the benefits to my company?

- Exposes potential future workers to job opportunities and careers with your company.
- Exposes students to the skill needs, educational requirements and career opportunities in your industry.
- Promotes an understanding of the role and contributions of your business.
- Introduces P-TECH students to your employees and co-workers.
- Helps your employees understand how to communicate with the next generation of workers.
- Provides a way to introduce and engage multiple employees with your commitment to students and connect your company with the community.

What do I need to do next?

- Contact your NYS P-TECH coordinator.
- Arrange for a presentation to your employees who will be hosting the tour.
- Consider any impacts on company policy.

Resources

- Distribute the *Employer Tip Sheet: Workplace Tours* to interested employees.
- Review the *P-TECH Professional Skills*.
- Review *Employer Fact Sheet: Participation Options* to learn more about how to get the most out of your partnership with NYS P-TECH.