

Coordinator Informational Interview Checklist

Quick tips for Work-Based Learning Coordinators¹ to ensure a successful informational interview.

Before the Informational Interview

- Identify all interested teachers and help them plan for the informational interviews.
- Address any relevant school policies that may apply (in the way that field trips may be handled).
- Make sure the employer partners are good matches for the careers students are interested in.
- Prepare teachers and encourage them to support the informational interviews and reflect them in their classroom activities. Share the Teacher Tip Sheet.
- Have teachers help create learning objectives and work with students to prepare and create a list of questions to ask in the interview.
- Create and provide appropriate support materials for distribution to employees who will participate in an interview.
- Work with employees to help them prepare for the interview.
- Discuss best methods for being real with and engaging students.
- Arrange for student transportation and other logistics.
- Find out if safety gear is required and, if so, arrange for it to be provided.
- Have the student call or email the staff member/company to confirm the details for the informational interview. Ideally, it should take place at the worksite. If it's an online hybrid activity confirm the technical details, time and format.
- Ask for permission to record and share the interview with others in the future.
- If conducting the activity in a virtual classroom or online, test and practice with the interface prior to the presentation.
- If students are interviewing employer partners over the phone or using another technology, ensure appropriate permissions, guidance and protections are in place and share those policies with employer partners and students

Sample Informational Interview Timeline

Beginning of the school year: Identify interested teachers and brainstorm companies that could participate.

Two months in advance: Invite business partners to participate. Find out the best days and time for the employer partners.

One month in advance: Confirm student participation. Have students research the industry or company.

One week in advance: Send employers logistics for the day and questions to expect. Have students confirm the interview day and time. (If an online activity, test systems and launch interface prior to the activity)

After the Interview: make sure thank-you notes, reflection activities and Employability Skills Profile updates are completed.

After the Informational Interview

- Document the informational interview. Review feedback from interviewed employees, students and teachers and summarize results. Make recommendations for improvements.
- Help students update their Employability Skills Profile and think about any next steps they would like to take to further their career goals.
- Work with teachers to connect the informational interview to the classroom.

¹ In New York State, this includes certified work-based learning coordinators and others who facilitate, arrange and support work-based learning activities for students.

- Send thank-you notes to employer partners.
- Publicize the informational interviews and the companies that participated by placing the story in the local newspaper or posting on the school website or social media.
- Suggest the students share their experiences on social media and tag the partner businesses.
- Consider other potential public relations benefits and opportunities.
- Post the Informational interview recording on a shared drive or website.

Tips for Conducting Hybrid Informational Interviews

- Select and personally practice using the selected technology.
- Make sure all students have access to appropriate technology.
- Do a test run with your students as well as the presenter.
- Have all students who will participate in the activity brainstorm and prepare questions they would like the Interviewee to answer.
- Select a small group of students (or individual student) and have them pose the group's questions to the interviewee using the selected on-line platform or conduct the interview yourself. Record the activity.
- Decide how you want to organize and moderate the session. Sometimes it takes one person to manage the session and another to monitor the technology and address questions.
- Decide which student reflection activities will take place and how you will support them.
- Remember, it's possible that parents or guardians will be around and would be a good resource for potential future speakers,
- Make sure you get feedback on the activity from the interviewee and the students.
- Record and post the presentation for others to view and use in their classrooms.