Wayne County Schools Career Center
Education at its Finest

Employer Guidelines for Work-Based Learning

Employer Responsibilities

- Complete a learning/training plan with the student and teacher to:
  - Understand the student's goals and objectives in participating in the work-based learning program.
  - Be clear about work-based learning responsibilities with the student before the work-based learning experience begins.

- Communicate clear expectations for student behavior:
  - Reiterate the importance of nondisclosure/confidentiality as it applies to your specific department.
  - Reiterate the importance of conduct rules and conditions for immediate termination of the experience.
  - Review safety rules and emergency procedures, including the location of emergency exits, fire extinguishers and first-aid kits.
  - Clearly specify department procedures with students.

- Provide ongoing updates and feedback to the student:
  - Plainly explain changes in work-based learning responsibilities.
  - Be clear with the students if supervisors or managers change.
  - Review each student's work on a regular basis.
  - Provide feedback to the student on a regular basis.

- Communicate with the student's teachers or work-based learning coordinator when he/she makes supervisory visits.

- Complete an assessment on the student's performance at the end of the experience.

- Complete a brief feedback form on the program to support continuous improvement.

Communication

- Communicate with the teacher, district office and/or parent at agreed upon intervals and at any time needed.

- Email the work-based learning coordinator, Kristin Samson at ksamson@wcscc.org or call 330.669.7000 ext. 3150 if you have any questions or concerns.

Tips to Promote Learning

The workplace offers a unique environment for students to learn skills that they may not be able to learn at school — skills that will be critical for their long-term success. Here are some tips for fostering the development of these skills in the students you are supervising.

- Connecting school and work. Encourage students to relate their work-based learning experiences back to their classwork, asking questions such as:

  - What kinds of reading, writing and math do you do at school and at work — and how are they similar or different?
  - What skills do you need at work that also apply at school?
  - What kinds of things are you good at, or do you like, that you can explore further in school?
  - What could you learn in college that would enable you to pursue a well-paying career in our organization or another organization like ours?

- Applying math skills. Encourage students to use math, whether in measurement, counting change or completing accounting ledgers.

- Applying reading and writing skills. Encourage students to read manuals and write memos; do not hesitate to require students to complete work to the expected standards.

- Learning about careers. Provide opportunities for the student to be exposed to various departments and functions, including technical departments, marketing, human resources, finance/accounting, etc., by encouraging them to visit these departments, conduct interviews and/or shadow staff members throughout the organization.

- Learning about the workplace, understanding teamwork and building relationships. Provide opportunities for students to participate in staff meetings, project meetings, and other formal and informal exchanges among staff; introduce students to staff and encourage staff to welcome students to join them at lunch and breaks. Informal exchanges are often the best way to learn about an organization's culture.

- Fostering initiative, critical thinking and creativity. When possible, allow students to solve problems on their own, tackle small organizational issues or take on tasks requiring novel solutions, in addition to carrying out everyday responsibilities. These will help students develop and demonstrate initiative, critical thinking, problem solving and creativity — skills they will need in future careers that are difficult to learn in school.

- Encouraging productivity, accountability and collaboration. When possible, provide a project to the student — one that would enable the student to plan his/her time, organize tasks and work with others, in addition to performing basic workplace tasks.

- Practicing communication. When possible, ask the student to present the project to his/her teammates and supervisor to practice oral communication and presentation skills.

- Providing feedback to teachers as well as students. Provide input to the teacher or work-based learning coordinator during supervisory visits to the worksite; provide specific suggestions regarding the student's knowledge and skills that could benefit both the work-based learning program and other students.