

Offering workplace experiences to young people is crucial for helping them develop essential skills, understand career options, and make informed choices about their future. The experiences you give will provide your business opportunities to shape your workforce and address skills gaps by inspiring and supporting the next generation of talent.

We've pulled together key things to consider that will help you create an engaging and useful talk - for the pupils, the school/college and for your business.

Preparation

Before you begin, coordinate with your point of contact at the school/college to find out what will make your talk align with their careers programme. Some things you can discuss to help with your planning include:

- What do you want the students to know or understand after the talk?
- What are the relevant curriculum topics?
- How can you highlight your industry to subjects they are studying?

It is best practice to share with students an invitation to the talk and a breakdown of what to expect. Students might also enjoy preparing questions to ask when you visit.

Key information to find out

- Which age range of the student/s will you be speaking to?
- How many students will be attending?
- Where will the talk take place?



iStock™
Credit: Xavier Lorenzo

Planning your talk

Activity title

Consider the audience age and what might spark their interest and drive engagement

Inclusivity

To make your talk relatable and accessible, use plain English and avoiding business jargon helps, as does considering the diverse demographics and their needs.

Accessible

Keep the content easy to understand and accessible for students to digest. Keep in mind additional learning needs that some students may have.

Resources and visual aids

Consider if additional materials and resources would improve the experience for students.

Structuring your talk

Below is an example you can follow to keep your talk informative, engaging and on schedule. Be aware of how much time you have and break the session down into manageable chunks.

1. Introduction (5 minutes):

Briefly introduce yourself and your company.

2. Main Content (20 minutes):

Discuss the industry, career paths, and skills needed.

3. Personal Stories (10 minutes):

Share experiences from recent school-leavers in your company.

4. Q&A (10-15 minutes):

Answer pre-collected and live questions from students.

Tips

Engaging - Ask regular reflection questions to make sure that the students are accessing the content being delivered. You can also try quizzes, paired or group discussions and mini challenges to help students build on and develop their knowledge and understanding.

Try and practice the talk in full to at least one other colleague or practice audience volunteer. Their feedback will help to improve and strengthen your talk for students.

After your talk

How will you gauge student and teacher feedback? Will you ask for on-the-spot feedback from students and the teacher? Or follow up afterwards with a questionnaire or feedback form?

Will you provide follow-up activities? Will students benefit from a follow-up activity or task? For example, some research, further information, signposting or an individual, group, class or family challenge?

What's next?

Once you've had some experience in delivering careers outreach activities, you may be interested in reviewing and refining your offer.

The Careers and Enterprise Company has developed **The Employer Standards**, a framework and tool to improve quality in employer outreach in careers education. The framework shows what good looks like and the free online tool helps those who want to evaluate their outreach and plan improvement.

It's free and takes just 25 minutes to use.