

# Experiential Work Based Learning Options

Experiential learning is the process of learning through experience then reflecting on the experience of doing.



Option	Description	Time Commitment
Expert Presenters	Experts from business and industry visit classrooms and share information about their careers, educational background, and personal choices that impacted their career success.	One class up to a full day of classes.
Tours and Field Trips	Students go to a business and/or industry to learn first-hand about the employability skills needed in the different career pathways.	One to three hours on a single day.
Teacher Externship	Teacher Externships offer a unique professional development opportunity connecting the classroom to the workplace. They provide an experience in which teachers spend time in a workplace to learn through direct experience about trends, skill requirements and opportunities in industries related to their subject in order to enrich and strengthen their teaching and bring relevance to student learning. (University of California-Berkley, Teacher Externship Guide)	Varies by Experience and Time of Year
Job Shadow	A short-term experience that is intended to help students explore a range of career options and begin to identify a career field or pathway of interest.	Varies. Could be one day up to two weeks.
Mentorship	A professional relationship that connect youth with a positive role model who can assist in career exploration.	Varies. Could be one hour per week, month, or quarter.
Internship (Unpaid)	Typically unpaid short-term experiences in business that involve youth working in professional settings under the supervision and monitoring of practicing professionals.	Typically one semester/one to two hours a day.
Internship (Paid)	Typically paid short-term experiences in business that involve youth working in professional settings under the supervision and monitoring of practicing professionals.	Typically one semester/one to two hours a day.
Work Experience (Unpaid)	Learning that takes place outside of the classroom and at the place of business. The student is not compensated and could earn credit to be applied to a high school and/or post-secondary transcript.	Typically one semester/one to two hours per day.
Work Experience (Paid)	Learning that takes place outside of the classroom and at a place of business. The student is compensated and could earn credit to be applied to a high school and/or post-secondary transcript.	Typically one semester/one to two hours a day.
Youth Apprenticeship	Employer paid work experiences for students in grades 11 and 12. Students are supervised by a licensed Work-Based Learning teacher in a state-approved program.	Typically one or more semesters/one to three hours a day.
Pre-Apprenticeship	Programs designed to prepare students for a Registered Apprenticeship program.	Varies according to Registered Apprenticeship Programming.

## Classroom Presentation

A classroom presentation by an industry and business professional is a structured career awareness activity in which students listen to a presentation to learn about the speaker's career, business, and/or organization and industry. Students are able to ask questions to help them consider whether they might like to pursue a career in the industry.

Classroom presentations are designed to promote:

- Exposure to potential careers and jobs;
- A realistic picture of the business, its role in the community and the career paths and occupations of its workforce;
- Help students make the connection between school and the workplace; and
- Inform career planning.

### Success Factors

- Confirm all logistical details with the school contact (date, time, duration, course/department, etc.).
- Ensure that the material and presentation is age-appropriate and engaging for high school students.
- Provide time for question and answer or other interactive strategies.

### Examples

- CEO In The Classroom, a program of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, includes PowerPoint template and additional resources. <https://www.mnchamber.com/workforce-toolkit>
- Speakers Bureau, a program of Southeast Service Cooperative's STEM Forward, sign up to be listed in a repository of businesses by sector who are willing to speak to classrooms in southeast Minnesota. <https://www.ssc.coop/Page/508>
- Pathways 8 class at Albert Lea High School - Quarter Class, 10 class days over five weeks of class with multiple presenters from the business community to speak in small groups with students.

## Site Tour or Field Trip

A site tour is a career awareness activity in which students visit a workplace, learn more about the business, meet employees, ask questions, and observe work in progress. This is also an opportunity for the business to showcase their company and the career opportunities available.

Site Tours are designed to promote:

- Exposure to career and jobs;
- Building occupational knowledge;
- Showcase local and regional industry and business.

### Success Factors

- Make sure the site tour is connected to curriculum/programming at the student's high school.
- Allow students exposure to as many career fields and pathways as possible at the site.
- Identify the education and training required and the skills needed for the various occupations at the site.

### Key Legal, Safety, & Health Issues

- Relevant company safety and health rules should be reviewed with the school personnel and students prior to the site visit.
- School-sponsored site tours are usually considered field trips. School district policies regarding transportation and liability insurance apply.
- Students and staff participating in site tours should receive relevant safety instruction and gear.

### Examples

- Manufacturing Week, a collaborative program administered by nine southeast Minnesota organizations that brings over 350 students into 24 local manufacturers during Manufacturing Week in October. <https://www.ssc.coop/Page/499>
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville toured two southern Minnesota nurseries, an operational dairy farm, and an operational elk farm in 2017-2018.
- A group of Red Wing High School students toured U.S. Bank Stadium (Minneapolis, MN).
- A group of Wabasha-Kellogg High School students toured Red Wing Shoes (Red Wing, MN).

## Career Day/Fair

A Career Day/Fair is an event held in which students are given the opportunity to learn more about local and regional business and industry. Typically Career Day's are one day events and consist of multiple employers stationed in a common area for students to interact with.

Career Days are designed to promote:

- Exposure to career and jobs;
- Building occupational knowledge;
- Showcase local and regional industry and business.

Success Factors

- Arrive early with a hands-on, interactive display.
- Bring promotional material and consider giveaways.

Examples

- Southeast Minnesota Regional List of Career Fairs. <https://www.ssc.coop/Page/508>
- Winona Chamber of Commerce Career Expo (Winona, MN)
- Southwest Minnesota Career Expo (Worthington, MN and Marshall, MN)
- Hastings College and Career Fair (Hastings, MN)
- Southwest Middle School Tiger Career Expo (Albert Lea Area Schools, Albert Lea, MN)

## Job Shadow

Job shadowing is a great opportunity for our future workforce to gain valuable insight through real and relevant learning as they begin to determine the paths they will take post-high school. The goal is for students to come away with a better understanding of their field of interest and the skills needed to be successful. Job shadowing takes the form of a student being at the work site and staying connected to a professional at the business. Job shadows should include a site tour and interaction with stakeholders, including attending meetings and appointments.

Job Shadow experiences are designed to promote:

- A better understanding on the part of students of their field of interest and the skills needed to be successful.

### Success Factors

- Determine the program's focus and target career field and student participation groups.
- Determine the goals for program participants, as well as methods to measure success.
- Address all of the related logistics (start/end times, duration of program, transportation, etc.)

### Key Legal, Safety, & Health Issues

- Relevant company safety and health rules should be reviewed with the school personnel and students prior to the site visit.
- School-sponsored site tours are usually considered field trips. School district policies regarding transportation and liability insurance apply.

### Examples

- Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Service Cooperative's STEM Forward, Byron Public Schools, and Dover-Eyota Public schools. View business toolkit.  
<http://www.rochestermnchamber.com/job-shadowing>
- Byron High School, Dover-Eyota High School, and Plainview-Elgin-Millville High Schools run successful Job Shadow programs. View School Toolkit.  
<https://www.ssc.coop/cms/lib/MN06000837/Centricity/Domain/100/Job%20Shadow%20Toolkit%20Final.pdf>

## Mentorship

Mentorship is a professional relationship that connects youth with a positive role model who can assist in career exploration. Students are matched one-to-one with an adult professional in a chosen field of interest to explore a career and related issues. The career mentor serves as a resource for the student by sharing insights and providing guidance about the workplace, careers and education. The career mentor critiques the student's work, problem-solves with the student and works in consultation with the school and the workplace. The development of a trusting relationships between the student and the mentor is the key to a successful experience. Research shows that career mentoring relationships should be at least six months in duration and include structured activities as well as career and education-related activities agreed to by the school, workplace, and student.

Career Mentoring experiences are designed to promote:

- Exploration of a field of interest;
- Student's exposure to jobs, careers and working adult role models;
- Development of pre-employment and work maturity skills;
- Building occupational knowledge; and
- Opportunities to build mentor/mentee relationships.

Success Factors:

- Develop clear, written policy and procedures materials for all parties.
- Match students with career mentors based on career interest and personality. Allow the mentor and mentee to interview and select each other.
- Have the students and career mentor set and communicate expectations that are assessed on a regular basis.
- Provide ongoing support and training for career mentors.

Key Legal, Safety, & Health Issues:

- Career mentoring should focus on career exploration, training, and related education.
- Mentoring should take place at the school, workplace or an approved outing.
- Career mentors that participate in activities with students outside the workplace must be approved by the principal and the parents. A Permission Form must be utilized when setting up career mentoring.

Examples:

- Red Wing Youth Outreach and Red Wing High Schools partnership with lunch-n-learn activities - this program provides a topic once per month and then lunch with mentors/mentees at the school.

## **Work Experience (paid or unpaid)**

Work experience is a career preparation activity in which students are at a worksite doing real work, often for pay but not always. They are held to the same expectations as all employees. The workplace supervisor conducts evaluations based on workplace expectations and performance. These experiences range from regular, paid employment to subsidized employment and learning-rich work experience.

Work Experiences are designed to promote:

- Exposure of the student to careers and jobs;
- Development of pre-employment and work maturity skills; and
- Building occupational knowledge and technical skills.

Learning-rich work experience is a career preparation activity that is highly structured to promote learning. Students participate in planning the work and problem solving. Worksite supervisors act as coaches. The experiences are generally based on projects (instead of tasks) where students interact with other employees, often work in teams.

Success Factors:

- Assist students with making connections between workplace duties and related coursework.
- Provide students with training about potential workplace hazards and how to protect themselves.
- Arrange for students to receive academic credit for learning completed on the job.

In subsidized work experience, the student's wages are subsidized (i.e., paid not by the workplace but by the program through an outside funding source, usually a state- or federally funded program). In these cases, the program is the actual employer, subsidizes all wages and is responsible for taxes and workers' compensation insurance. Students must be paid at least the federal minimum wage for all hours worked.

Key Legal, Safety & Health Issues:

- The employer or the entity responsible for student wages is also responsible for all taxes, liability and workers' compensation coverage.
- The student should be oriented to all safety and health issues.

Examples:

- Multiple employers across the region participate in work experiences for students. Workforce Development, Inc. is an organization that provides paid (subsidized) work experiences.
- Caledonia High School has multiple work experiences, all based on a student's peaked interest and with a local employer that has a similar position to showcase.
- Rochester ALC provides work experience opportunities with multiple employers in Rochester, and offer school credit to coincide.

## **Internship (paid and unpaid)**

An internship is a career preparation activity in which students are placed in a workplace for a defined period of time to participate in and observe work within a given industry. Internships are highly structured, time-limited experiences that occur at a worksite. Unlike work experience, internships often allow students to rotate through a number of departments and job functions. Internships may be paid or unpaid, depending on whether the student is performing productive work. They are designed to give students hands-on experience, providing them a deeper understanding of the occupation and industry.

Internships are designed to promote:

- Exploration of a field of interest;
- Exposure to careers and jobs; and
- Building occupational knowledge and technical skills.

Success Factors:

- Provide a classroom orientation and concurrent activities that support workplace learning.
- Obtain clear and specific information from the workplace partners about the expected projects and duties the intern will perform.
- Develop and use an educational and learning contract that detail objectives and roles of each party.
- Maintain ongoing communication with workplace partners.

Key Legal, Safety & Health Issues:

- If the student is paid by the workplace, the employer is responsible for all wages and taxes as well as liability and workers' compensation coverage.
- If the school pays the student, the school district is responsible for all wages and taxes as well as liability and workers' compensation coverage.
- Interns should receive training about potential workplace hazards and how to protect themselves.
- Students participating in internship activities can participate in mock situations, shadow employees or even participate in the operations of the workplace as long as the person typically responsible for the duty is observing the students' actions. (US DOL Fact Sheet No. 013, Employment Relationship Under the Fair Labor Standards Act).