

# Work-Based Learning Employer Planning Checklist

## **WHY** are we doing this?

**What are the ultimate short/long-term goals of providing work-based learning?**

- Consider specific goals before doing anything else! (Talent attraction, development, retention, etc.)
- What do you wish more people knew about your company, industry, community, etc.?
- Are there specific metrics to define “success”? (# application increase, % employee satisfaction growth, etc.)
- Consider viewing students as “consultants” who can benefit your company by offering a unique and valuable perspective, who may also represent your target audience. What projects could they help you start or complete?

## **WHAT** will everyone be doing?

**How do we keep everyone engaged and benefiting towards our outcomes?**

- Plan engaging, hands-on activities for students that help them ‘experience’ the careers you offer and that may break misconceptions/stereotypes of the industry. Consider things they can’t do or see online or on their own!
- Determine types of work-based learning opportunities you are able/willing provide:
  - Classroom/Guest speakers
  - Career Fairs and Career Experience Days
  - ‘Visit Parents at Work’ days
  - Facility/Site tours
  - Informational interviews with students
  - Job shadows/Work observations
  - In-classroom projects/Team challenges
  - On-site student projects/Team challenges
  - Mock interviews/Resume assistance
  - Volunteer experiences
  - Paid or Unpaid internships
  - Summer/Part-Time employment
  - Pre-apprenticeships/Partner with high school or other training provider
  - Apprenticeships (any type)
  - Clinical or Lab experiences
  - On-the-Job training program
  - Mentorship/Sponsorship of a current or prospective student
  - Sponsor Career Pathway Certificates or Degree Programs at Community Colleges

## **WHO** will be involved?

**Work SMARTER, not HARDER by leveraging other partners and resources!**

- Determine desired number, grade level, and ages of students for each work-based learning opportunity
- Connect and secure partners from your local Iowa Intermediary Network contact, community college, Iowa Area Education Agency (AEA), economic/workforce/community development, and/or K-12 school districts
- Find champions at your company who connect well with youth and are willing to be speakers, tour guides, job shadow hosts, mentors, etc. (Consider employees interested in advancement or who show leadership potential.)
- Attend local meetings for sector boards, advisory boards, Intermediary advisory committees, high school and college career and technical program advisory committees, etc. to connect with others and support existing work-based learning initiatives. (Your local community college can assist you in joining with these groups)

## **WHERE** will these experiences take place?

## What is the best environment for this type of experience?

\_\_\_ Is travel necessary for participants? Who will provide transportation to/during/from a learning experience?

\_\_\_ Consider ways to engage educators and parents in the opportunities you offer such as evening/night open houses, STEM externships, educator tours, speaking engagements with educators for professional development, etc.

\_\_\_ Establish necessary training for participants for each type of work-based learning opportunity you plan to offer on-site (confidentiality, safety, standard operating procedures, etc.)

## **WHEN** will these experiences take place?

## When is the best time for both you and the students to begin?

\_\_\_ Schedule times/days that work best for your company to engage in work-based learning. Consider holidays, budgets/fiscal year, class schedules, shift schedules, sports events, etc.

\_\_\_ Determine information that students should receive in advance such as dress policy, privacy policy, confidentiality, permission slips, etc. (Create a process to distribute and collect signed forms from student/intermediary if needed)

\_\_\_ Determine if lunch will be included for students (if applicable) or if they are responsible for their own meals and communicate this to intermediary/student. Consider food allergies, sensitivities, and other dietary restrictions.

## **HOW** will we achieve our goals?

## How do we ensure participants have a positive and lasting experience?

\_\_\_ Develop policies and procedures for work-based learning at your company/organization. (Intermediaries can help with examples and lessons-learned)

\_\_\_ Make sure tour groups are not too large! All students should be able to hear, participate, and learn from the experience. (Consider a tour headset system if noise or confidentiality are concerns)

\_\_\_ Share personal stories about your career path, why you chose this company/career, promotion pathways, actual work-based learning examples and outcomes, etc. Bring real examples of work and products if possible. Students appreciate genuine, authentic interactions.

\_\_\_ Encourage student questions and be prepared for anything to come out of their mouths!

\_\_\_ Ensure internal Human Resources is familiar with state and federal codes regarding student learners, including liability and other considerations based on your specific type of organization, products, etc.

\_\_\_ Train employees working with student learners so they are familiar with “hazardous occupations” orders:

<https://www.youthrules.gov/documents/for-employers/YouthRulesBrochure.pdf>

<https://www.youthrules.gov/support/toolkit/index.htm>

<https://www.youthrules.gov/documents/news/EmployerGuides/EmployerGuideEnglish.pdf>

\_\_\_ Determine if internship opportunities can be paid or unpaid using Department of Labor standards:

<https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>

\_\_\_ Communicate with educator/intermediary placing student interns to ensure that all required documentation is in place for a student to receive high school/college credit for the experience

\_\_\_ Address student learner issues directly with student and involve educator/intermediary when necessary – remember this is a learning experience for the student on how to perform in a professional work environment!