



EMPLOYEE-LED ACTIVITY

Share My Career Session

Career Profile Exploration

Welcome and thank you for taking the time to contribute to the education of students in your community! Sharing your knowledge of and passion for your work can be extremely valuable for students and educators. By doing so, you can inspire students to dream, set goals, focus more on their school work, and engage in and explore new subjects. You will also guide students as they begin to think about the many options they have for pursuing a career that they will enjoy, that will challenge them, and that will help support their families, communities, and the world.

EMPLOYEE INTRODUCTORY NOTES

This *Employee-Led Activity: Career Profile Exploration Session*, along with the Employee Guide, is designed to help you have a positive and meaningful experience as you share your career expertise with a group of students in your community. This session could take place at a school during a regular class period, an after-school club, an evening community night, or a career fair event.

Holding a preplanning conversation with the classroom teacher or adult facilitating the group of students is critical to ensure your session is valuable for the students. Be sure to reference the Employee Guide for helpful information to plan your school visit. The end of this document also includes sample questions students may ask of you during your visit.

This *Employee-Led Activity: Career Profile Exploration Session* could run as short as 20-30 minutes in length or extend to 45-50 minutes, depending on the time frame available to you and your preplanning with the teacher or adult facilitator.

The information below is designed to help guide your discussion with the students. There are two options presented, so you can choose what fits best for you, the students, the setting, and the time frame. You do not have to cover every topic noted below but can choose which items make the most sense given your preplanning conversations with the classroom teacher, the age/grade level of the students, and the amount of time you have for the session.

Students will value an authentic and clearly-worded presentation that engages them and inspires them to ask questions. Think of this document as a guide to help you think about your presentation, but be sure to value the preplanning session and be open to adding other elements to your session as well. Your company may also have brochures, a job-search website, summer internships, and/or other experiences/events that students would find both informative and interesting.

OPTION #1

Welcome and Introductions

5–10 Minutes

- Introduce yourself and extend a warm welcome and thanks to the students and teacher for inviting you into their classroom and school.
- Tell students they can raise their hand at any time to ask questions.
- Briefly share your career title, the department or division in which you work, and the company that you work for. Dress the part if you can, and wear your work clothes so students see how you look on an average day.
- At this stage of your introduction, consider asking: “What kind of work do you think I may do? What do you think I may be responsible for?” This question may spark comments from students that could reinforce correct information and/or give you a chance to correct misconceptions that students may have.
- Remember to keep the age level of the students in mind and consider whether you’ll need to define any technical vocabulary to help them better understand your job. Be prepared to define words in simple, relevant, and relatable language.

Career Profile Viewing & Discussion

10–15 minutes

- Explain that before you share more details about your specific job, you’re going to show a career profile video that explains the overall field in which you work.
- Show the career profile video that best relates to your career.
- When the video is complete, ask students to summarize:
 - What are the main roles and responsibilities of this career as a whole?
 - What challenges or problems does this career seek to solve?
- Go on to explain that the video broadly described your career. Within this career, every person’s role is a little different. Take a few minutes to describe:
 - How your day-to-day work experiences and responsibilities are similar to those mentioned in the video.
 - How your day-to-day work experiences and responsibilities are different from those mentioned in the video.
 - If (and how) your role solves similar or different challenges.
 - Any other important or interesting differences.

Your Personal Career Path

10–15 Minutes

Now that students understand what you do, as well as your overall field, use this section of your presentation to help them understand what led you on the path you are on today.

Be prepared to explain any of the following items, and allow time for students to ask you questions:

- Your favorite subjects in school while you were growing up
- What interests you had (both inside and outside of school) while you were the students' age
- When you became interested in STEM and why. Was there a defining moment?
- Once you knew you were interested in STEM, what you did to pursue this passion?
- What your path looked like from high school to the job you have today
- Why you wanted to work for your company
- Why your company's work is important and relevant
- How your company contributes to the local community and the world at large
- What STEM skills—math, science, engineering, technology—you use in your job
- How you use other skill sets—such as art, design, writing, reading, creative thinking, or problem-solving skills—in your work
- Explain how your career may relate to your hobbies or interests.
- What you like best about doing your job
- What challenges or problems you hope to tackle next in your career

Advice for Students

5–10 Minutes

In this section of your presentation, offer advice and recommendations to students who may want to pursue a similar career path or a STEM career in general. Depending on what you have heard from the class over the course of the session, decide which of the following points may be applicable to share and, again, allow time for students to ask you questions:

- Academic advice for students who want to pursue a career like yours or another STEM career
- Personal advice for students who want to pursue a career like yours or another STEM career
- What you learned in school that has helped you in your career, as well as if there is a subject area that you wish you had studied more
- How students can keep learning about STEM—both inside and outside of school
- What you do to keep learning and stay up-to-date on STEM topics

● Closure and Summary Notes

5 Minutes

When you come to the end of your session, thank the students and teacher again for their time and participation. Please be sure to share resources from your company and from the STEM Careers Coalition website (stemcareerscoalition.org) that students or teachers can explore for more information.

Also, be prepared to share 2-3 succinct closing points that help pull together the experience for the students. These points could be:

- Words of encouragement to get students excited about your industry or specific job.
- Specific advice to stay engaged in school and/or to seek opportunities to learn about diverse topics in order to discover what they may want to consider as a career path.
- Additional resources that students could access from your company, if available, such as a website, internships, summer camps, or extension experiences to learn more about your field.

OPTION #2

This option is designed if you know you only have 20-25 minutes to speak with students and/or if you are possibly speaking to many groups of students throughout a school day or during an after-school career fair or community night event.

Of course, you can also draw upon these ideas if you are conducting a longer session in a classroom with one group of students.

● Introduction

5 Minutes

Allow time for the students to get to know who you were when you were their age. Where did you grow up? What did you enjoy doing in middle school or high school? What were your favorite subjects in school? Also briefly share your career title, the department or division in which you work, and the company that you work for.

● Career Profile Viewing

5 Minutes

Show the career profile video that best relates to your career. When the video is complete, take a couple minutes to explain how your own career both resembles and is different from what the clip just portrayed. How do your day-to-day work experiences and responsibilities compare? How does your job seek to solve similar and different challenges?

● Career Path and Role

5 Minutes

Explain what led you on the path you are on today. How did you transition from the student you described in the introduction to who you are now? When did you know you wanted to pursue a STEM career and why? What specifically do you do in your career and how does this contribute to your company's work? How does your company contribute to the local community and the world at large?

● Advice for the Future

5 Minutes

What academic and personal advice do you have for students who want to pursue a career like yours? How about another STEM career? How can students keep learning about STEM, both inside and outside of school?

● Question and Answer

5 Minutes

Be sure to thank the students and teacher or adult facilitator at the end of your session. You may also share resources from your company or from the STEM Careers Coalition website (stemcareerscoalition.org) that students or teachers can explore for more information.

Samples of frequently asked questions by students:

Here are some sample questions that students may ask. It may be helpful to think about how you would answer these questions prior to your presentation.

- Are you doing what you wanted to do when “you grew up”?
- Where did you go to college and what degree(s) do you have?
- How long have you worked at your job?
- What projects are you working on now?
- What does your office or job site look like?
- What type of special training, if any, do you need for your job?
- What special equipment or tools, if any, do you use?
- How many hours do you work each day?
- Do you work outside or inside?
- Is your job ever dangerous?
- How much money do you make? (You may not want to state your actual salary, but you can provide a salary range for jobs like yours.)
- Would you ever want to switch jobs?
- What do you want to accomplish next?
- What do you think is the most important part of your industry?
- What do you find hardest or most challenging about your job?
- What do you really like about your job? (Have an answer prepared in advance for this question that is age-appropriate for the students with whom you are working. Older students may be interested in research, technology advancement, innovation, and/or the creative elements of your work, while younger students may be excited to hear about the equipment you use, the places you travel to, or what your work space looks like.)