OVERVIEW

The employee-led activities available through the STEM Careers Coalition™ were developed as grab-and-go activities to empower today’s STEM workforce to visit a local elementary, middle, or high school classroom or to work with an after school club, youth group, school career fair, or school/community evening event that has a career focus.

This guide was created to help employees bring STEM Careers Coalition™ resources to schools or youth organizations and prepare employees to work with students in small and large-group settings. It provides tips and suggestions for employees to engage, explain, discuss, and effectively facilitate career sharing and STEM activities to help students in grades K–12 embrace their potential to make an impact and innovate for the future.

Please read this employee guide in its entirety in advance of contacting an educator, after-school program leader, or youth group adult facilitator.

The Employee Guide is organized in three parts:

• Planning & Preparing
• Day of Visit
• Post Visit Follow-Up

There are three (3) different types of employee-led activities found at the stemcareerscoalition.org site.

Share My Career Session
This session is industry or job specific, however there is a general session for any employee to use to conduct a meaningful career sharing session. This type of employee activity is best suited for students in grades 5–12.

STEM Focused Hands-On Activity
This is a STEM focused learning session and tied to academic standards, any type of employee could use these activities with a group of students. This type of employee activity includes learning experiences for students in grades K–12.

Career Profile Exploration
This type of activity is for an employee whose job is explicitly connected to the Career Profile Videos at the STEM Careers Coalition™ website and can be used in conjunction with a Share My Career or independently. This type of employee activity is best suited for students in grades 5–12.
STEP 1
PLANNING & PREPARING
Once you are ready to connect with an educator or adult leading an after school or youth group, you will want to work with that person to ensure a seamless visit. Set up some time together to discuss key details that will make your visit both smooth and successful. A few items you may want to cover:

PRE-VISIT CHECKLIST

☐ Thank the school/youth organization for their interest in the STEM Careers Coalition™ program and provide an overview of the program and activity ideas. An overview of the STEM Careers Coalition™ program can be found at STEMCareersCoalition.org.

☐ Ask if there are any advance requirements or paperwork needed by the school office or youth organization in order for you to visit. Schools may require identification or adherence with safety and security policies.

☐ Learn about the setting of your visit, how many students you will be working with, and ask if there is anything that would be helpful to know in advance.

☐ Ask about the age/grade level of the students and tips on how to best interact with the age/grade level you will be presenting to.

☐ Discuss how much time is available for your visit and how much time you will need to set up once you arrive at the school.

☐ Decide together which one of the activities will be used.

☐ Determine what your role should be in facilitating the activity that day, and what role the educator/adult leader will play.

☐ Ask if the educator/adult leader will be printing out student worksheets or any printed materials you may have or if they would prefer you to bring them with you that day.

☐ Learn what technology will be available and use that to determine together how the activity will be facilitated.

☐ Ask for any tips! Educators have a honed expertise for connecting with students. Consider your educator a valuable resource!
PRESENTING TO STUDENTS

The employee activities have been designed to follow the agendas associated with each activity. However, every group is unique and different factors, like available timeframe or last-minute school schedule changes, will affect the exact nature of how your session unfolds so be prepared to be flexible with your session. Read the general characteristics of students in various grade/age groupings and be sure to ask the educator/adult facilitator what characteristics may be helpful for you to know about their students.

**Grades K–5 - Student ages 5–11**
- Learn through play
- Use stories to construct meaning
- Want to belong to a community that is safe and good
- Participative, spontaneous, and curious—they will actively answer questions if asked
- Aware of a small amount of occupations, usually only what they are directly exposed to

**Grades 6–9 - Student ages 12 to 15**
- Very curious
- Enjoy interacting with peers
- Like to work in small groups and are active learners
- Prefer conferring with classmates prior to being called upon
- Tend to be very self-conscious, easily embarrassed, and yet appreciate humor
- Might not be thinking of planning ahead yet for their future

**Grades 10–12 - Student ages 15 and older**
- Mature learners, especially by 12th grade
- Have more experience to help formulate questions and can visualize cause and effect presentations
- Beginning to plan for career choices and training beyond high school
- Higher degree of self-confidence
- Enjoy engaging in discussion
- Can make connections between various subjects and content area and life experiences
- Are able to understand abstract concepts, but still like hands-on activities
- Appreciate being treated as adults and spoken to with respect and adult level interactions
KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

The students you are working with are welcoming you as a guest to their learning space.

A student classroom environment may include a handful of students or up to 40. Sometimes educators will have students seated in small groups and others will have students in rows. It can be challenging to effectively assess if students are engaged or understanding the information presented when in large groups. It may not be possible to build relationships and visit with students individually in a short amount of time. Walking around the space and making eye contact with different students can help personalize the experience. As students enter the room, or as you enter, say hello and introduce yourself.

Be sure to ask the teacher or adult leader about the audience you will meet. They can share helpful insights, such as experience levels, readiness for the information, or general abilities that will help you plan effectively for your audience. Be prepared to have fun! This is a great opportunity for you to reach and inspire students in your community and beyond.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION

When a visit is requested by a group in an area not easily accessible to an employee, there may be an opportunity to participate virtually instead of going to the site. There are several free platforms, such as Google Hangout or Skype, that would allow you to share materials, visuals, and chat with students as they are working.

Work with your assigned educator/adult leader to determine the applicable items from the checklist above, along with which platform will be used to connect online. Download all software in advance and test your connection to the computer in advance of your presentation. You may want to ask the educator, based on the set up in their learning space, how you can help by sharing your screen and walking students through the directions.

Regardless of whether your visit is virtual or in-person, practice several times in advance. Walk through the information you will be presenting, and time yourself to help work within the time you have available for your visit that day.
STEP 2
DAY OF YOUR VISIT

Many community centers and schools will require visitors to sign in and out at the main office and wear a visitor pass. To ensure an efficient sign-in, have your ID ready, and have a printout of the activity you will be facilitating on hand for reference when you need it. Plan to arrive 30-minutes before your scheduled session.

What do you need to do when you get there?

- Ensure that all materials are available.
- Confirm how devices will be distributed or if students have their own, if devices are needed. Determine how the classroom is setup and how to use the space.
- Introduce yourself to the office staff in the school or the youth organization staff.
- Follow the procedures in the activity and as you have planned with the teacher or adult leader.

What can you do while students are working in a group or on an activity?

- Walk around the space and say hello. Ask them what excites them about STEM and what questions they may have about your career.
- You can also observe and assist as students may need your help. Try not to solve for the students but guide them to solve for themselves.
- Share a story. Students enjoy hearing stories about what you do for fun and what kinds of things you do at work.
- Be available for questions. Keep an eye on students’ ability to process the information you are sharing and look for signs that students have questions or need assistance.

SELF-INTRODUCTION

For any of the employee activities you choose, be sure to take a few minutes to introduce yourself. Start off by telling students your name and why you are visiting their class. Tell them about your experience with STEM, what your interests were at their age, and how that translated into the career you have today. Explain to them what you will be learning together and be sure to keep things brief, friendly, and relatable.

Students are going to be very interested and curious with having a special guest and will likely have a lot of questions! Work with the educator to determine the best method for inviting students to ask questions before, during, and throughout the activity.
EMPLOYEE-LED ACTIVITIES

When previewing the employee activity materials, note opportunities to share real-life stories that make connections to the topics. Some of the resources may exceed the amount of time allocated for your visit. You may need to select relevant information for the specific situations in which you will be interacting with students. Practice pacing sections of the activity and make note of areas to pause for questions, engage with a personal story, or point out parts of a visual.

Employee Activity

Share My Career Session

These sessions are industry or job specific, however there is a general session for any employee to use to conduct a meaningful career sharing session. These sessions can be tailored for students in grades K-12.

Employee Activity

STEM Focused Hands-On Activity

These are STEM focused learning sessions and tied to academic standards. Any type of employee could use these activities with a group of students. These activities are designed for specific grade levels and subject matter – science, math, health, computer science, social studies, or engineering classes. Each activity has an expected duration of 30-minutes and includes an overview, materials, procedure, and capture sheets. You will want to review these activities with the educator or leader to determine which activity to facilitate that best aligns with the curriculum at that grade level or age.

Employee Activity

Career Profile Exploration

This type of activity is for an employee whose job is explicitly connected to the Career Profile Videos at the STEM Careers Coalition™ website. These resources are best used with students in grades 5-12.
STEP 3
POST VISIT FOLLOW-UP

Students and educators/adult leaders will certainly appreciate a follow-up note via email or a hand-written note or letter. If there were specific questions that arose or any follow-up items you noted during your session that you would address later, a follow-up note is the perfect place to provide that information.

Be sure to include the following in your follow-up note:

• Thanks again to the educator/adult leader, school or youth organization, and the students
• Remind them to use the resources at the STEM Careers Coalition™ website at stemcareerscoalition.org and reiterate all the resources there are free for anyone to use
• Share any resources your company offers that may be helpful to the students
• Offer to come and visit again if you are open to doing that

THANK YOU!

Thank you for taking the time to read this employee guide and engaging in the STEM Careers Coalition™. We hope you find this experience rewarding. We at Discovery Education and on behalf of all of our Coalition Partners thank you for your time and interest in being an ambassador of the STEM Careers Coalition™ and for taking the time to engage youth in planning or thinking about their future!