



South Dakota Week of Work | April 20-24, 2020

Tips for Businesses

Thank you for your interest in participating in the South Dakota Week of Work, a valuable time for 10th graders to explore career opportunities in their communities. Below are some things for you to consider as you plan to interact with students, whether through a job shadow, business tour, or as a guest speaker in a classroom.

What makes these activities valuable?

A **job shadow** is a short-term experience (around 2-4 hours) that gives a student(s) a chance to spend time with an employee in a career they're interested in, observing daily activities and asking questions about the job and industry. Job shadows can help students:

- Begin to identify career interests.
- Observe the daily routine of staff.
- Gain awareness of the academic, technical, and personal skills required for career/industry.
- Develop and apply communication skills by interacting with and interviewing staff.
- Understand different jobs have different work environments.
- Begin to understand the connection between school, career paths, life experiences, and achieving goals.
- Make contact with potential future employers.

Business tours and **classroom presentations** from employers can also help students achieve some of these objectives. Unlike a job shadow, these activities typically serve larger groups of students.

Here are some questions to ask yourself before offering work experience activities to students:

- Who, at my business, is the best person to coordinate and provide the experience? Will it be one or multiple people?
- When would be the best time of day for a student to job shadow?
- What information should I ensure a school shares with students prior to the shadow or other activities? (dress code, parking information, building security, etc.)
- What student information do I need to know from the school in advance? (accommodations for disabilities, allergies, etc.)
- Who within the business needs to be informed of the job shadow? (think about security, front office staff, etc.)
- What health and safety requirements do we need to consider prior to a student visiting?
- Is there any internal paperwork, specific to my business, the student will need to fill out, such as a confidentiality notice or waiver of liability? *NOTE: Students participating in the South Dakota*

Week of Work will be sophomores in high school, under 18 years of age, and will likely need a parent or legal guardian signature on any forms of this kind.

Responsibilities of the hosting business on the day of a job shadow or business tour:

- Make sure there is a designated location for the student(s) to meet you. While the location of the main door might be obvious to you, that may not be the case for visitors if it is not clearly marked.
- Treat students as you would adults visiting your company. This is an opportunity for them to learn professional behavior.
- Provide a tour of the worksite. If time allows, introduce the student(s) to employees when you encounter them, and have them tell the student(s) what they do.
- If possible, have students perform a hands-on activity or view a process that will help them better understand the organization's operations.
- If a student does not arrive at the scheduled time and location, please notify their high school, in order to ensure student safety and accountability.

Talking about your work

Employers often ask, "what could I possibly have to offer students?" The answer: THE WISDOM OF YOUR EXPERIENCE. If you've ever said, *If I had only known then, what I know now*, this is your opportunity to share those pieces of valuable knowledge. Tell students what you, personally, get out of your job and why you chose your line of work. Talk about the other people you work with, how your job relates to the community, who depends on your work and why.

Show students examples of what your job requires you to read, write, and compute. Students will be interested in seeing how what they're learning in school can apply to the world of work. The following items are talking points that you can use to share valuable information about your career with students who are job shadowing, touring your place of business, or hearing from you in their classroom.

What you do:

- Job description:
 - Major tasks
 - Equipment or tools you use
 - Description of your typical day
- What do you enjoy most about your job?
- What do you struggle with most at your job?

What your work is like:

- Working hours/overtime?
- Are there licensing/certification/education requirements?
- How do you advance in this career?
- Why did you choose this field?

Job entry:

- How did you get started in this job?
- What do you wish you would have done differently?
- What other jobs have you held?

- Application process:
 - What is the first step to apply? (i.e. online, speak with a manager, drop off your resume)
 - Duration of time from the point of applying to formal offer
 - Credentials, degrees, certifications, etc. that could improve your chances of hire
 - What else is used in the hiring process? (drug testing, background checks, criminal record, etc.)

Questions? Email sdweekofwork@state.sd.us