

SPEAKER HANDBOOK

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Event date _____

Teacher/classroom _____

School _____

Work-based Learning Specialist/Coordinator _____

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PREP SHEET

As a member of your local business community you have a lot to offer young people. By being a classroom speaker you can help students of all ages understand the importance of learning in school and broaden their awareness of possible careers. The following activities are designed to help you prepare for your presentation.

□ Contact the teacher and/or the coordinator

It is important to contact the teacher and/or the coordinator prior to your presentation. If possible meet the person at the school. Sometimes it is very difficult to contact teachers during the day. Ask the coordinator for the teacher's e-mail address. E-mail is a much more effective way to communicate with a teacher, especially if you cannot visit the school.

□ Learn about the students

The basic rule of any good presentation is to know something about your audience. The teacher is your best source of information about the students in the class. When you contact the teacher be sure to ask questions that will help you better understand the students' skills and interests. For example:

- What are the academic subjects being covered in the class? Are these advanced or beginning classes in the subject? How can the presentation augment the coursework? Are the students focusing on a specific unit or theme relevant to my presentation?
- What types of activities are most effective with this class? Do they learn best when involved in activities or discussions? Do they respond best to visuals, open-ended questions, and/or lectures?
- Do you have any suggestions on how to design the presentation to ensure that it is age appropriate?

□ Review logistical issues

When you contact the teacher, be sure to inquire about logistical issues related to your presentation. For example:

- What is the best way to get a message to the teacher in the event you need to change your plans? Be sure to keep the coordinator informed about your presentation. He/she may be able to negotiate logistical issues for you and the teacher.

- What is the best way to get to the school? Is there a specific place and/or lot to park in?
- How much time will you have for your presentation, including a question and answer period?
- What equipment will you need?
- Should you bring duplicate materials for each student?
- Are there any special school rules or procedures you should know?

□ Clarify role and responsibilities

Before you meet with the class, work with the Work-based Learning Specialist/Coordinator. They can act as a liaison between you, the teacher, and the school. With the teacher and/or the coordinator, establish roles and responsibilities regarding the presentation. Some questions to ask include:

- Will the teacher be present for the entire presentation?
- Will he/she handle any disciplinary problems that might arise?
- Are there any classroom rules or procedures you should know?
- Will the teacher provide the students with information about your business or occupation prior to the presentation?
- Is there a prepared evaluation process?
- On the day of your presentation, will you go directly to the classroom, or will you meet the teacher/coordinator at the main office and be escorted to the class?

Most schools have an admittance procedure. In Seattle Public Schools, all visitors must register in the school office. It is important for you to support and reinforce the behavioral procedures established by the teacher.

FACT SHEET

A good classroom presentation can open a window to the world of work. Presentations (typically lasting 30 to 60 minutes) are a chance for employees to share their enthusiasm and expertise, and to help young people learn about different industries, careers, work environments, and skills needed to succeed in the workplace. Classroom speakers are welcome at all grade levels, however, comments and activities should be geared to the age of the students.

❑ What's the purpose?

Classroom speakers help students:

- Broaden their awareness of different jobs and careers,
- Relate to adult role models outside of teachers and parents/guardians,
- Learn from experienced workers about the academic and technical skills required for a variety of jobs, and
- Better understand the connection between what they are learning in school and what they will need to know as successful adults.

❑ What's my role?

As a classroom speaker, your role is to present information about your job, company and skills in an engaging way. It is advisable that you not lecture the entire time, but include demonstrations, hands-on activities, or a discussion related to your presentation.

❑ What do I do?

Classroom speaking is not time consuming, but it does require some planning. Some points to help you design a successful presentation include:

- Give a sense of the bigger picture. Avoid talking exclusively about your job for the entire time; instead put your work in the context of the company. For example, how is your work dependent on the work done by other people in the company? Do you work as a part of a team? What does your company produce or what services does it provide? What are working conditions like at your company (e.g., hours, dress code, and safety gear)?
- Personalize your presentation. Young people will be interested to know not only what you do, but also, how you got where you are. Tell students why you selected your career or occupation. What previous experiences, education or jobs directed you to and prepared you for your current position? How would you advise someone to prepare for a job like yours?

- Use stories. Sometimes the best way to get a point across is through a story. For example, an anecdote about a zany day on the job or a problem you had to solve recently can be an effective vehicle for talking about your work and the skills it requires.
- Demonstrate what you are saying. Your classroom presentation should include a demonstration or activity that gives students a feeling for your work and/or the work of your company. Bring a product, tool, or materials from the workplace that students can try, examine or keep. Speaking for 30 to 60 minutes can be burdensome on you and your audience; a demonstration or activity can help things "come alive." Keep in mind, however, the purpose of the demonstration or activity is not to entertain the students, but to find a creative way to help students understand what your work is about.
- Tailor your comments. It is important that your presentation be appropriate to the age of the students. Younger children need a lively variety, while older students benefit from greater depth, detail, and skill-specific information.

TIP SHEET

You have likely given a presentation to adults before, but standing in front of a group of young people can feel like a completely different experience. The following are some tips for making your presentation engaging and fun for you and the students.

❑ **Setting the tone**

Before you begin, set the tone for your presentation. Young people will pick up on cues from you on how to behave and respond.

- Be ready to start "when the bell rings" and be enthusiastic. Your actions should communicate that you take the presentation seriously and expect students' cooperation.
- Let students know up front what they can expect during your presentation. For example, give them a sense of your agenda, whether there will be an activity or demonstration, and when they should ask questions.

❑ **Talking about yourself and your work**

The purpose of a classroom presentation is to share with students information about your job and where you work. The following are some topics to include in your remarks:

- Your title and the name of your company
- Explanation of what your company does
- Description of the role your work plays in the company
- Description of a typical day at work and the many skills you use on a daily basis
- Discussion of how your work relates to the work of other people in the company; explanation of the way in which people and/or departments operate like a team
- Account of the path you have followed to get to your current position, including the education, skills, and other jobs that have shaped your career
- Relevant personal experiences (e.g., sports or community service) that have helped prepare you for your job

❑ **Making your presentation come alive**

Your classroom presentation should include a demonstration or activity that gives students a feeling for your work and/or the work of your company. Bring a product, tool, or materials from the workplace students can try during the presentation or keep as souvenirs.

❑ **Leading discussions**

Discussions are rich opportunities for students to express their ideas and opinions. To open and lead discussions:

- Ask open-ended questions that call for opinions or explanations rather than "yes" or "no" answers
- Allow students time to think through their answers-a little creative silence is fine
- Provide hints or rephrase your question to give students more of a chance to answer
- Invite questions; all questions deserve an honest response-if you don't know an answer or if a question is inappropriate, say so
- Be flexible and let discussions follow students' interest, even if it means altering your agenda
- Avoid ethnic and gender stereotypes

❑ **Classroom speaking final checklist:**

- Speak with the teacher and/or the Work-based Learning Specialist/Coordinator about your talk
- Make sure the length of your talk corresponds with the available class time; leave time for questions

SAMPLE SPEAKING AGENDA

Presentation by Patricia Cedar, Phlebotomist

Class: Peter Impara's 10th grade science class

Date: February 8th

Time: 1:20 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.

Introduction: 10 minutes

Introduce myself. Tell how I got interested in phlebotomy. Talk about the other jobs I've had that led me to where I am now. Explain the education necessary to do my job. Tell what a typical day is like for me on the job.

Demonstration: 15 minutes

Demonstrate one of the typical tests we run in the lab to determine medication dosages using a portable finger prick blood-sampling machine. Do the test on myself. Re-create all the steps we go through to get test results, from blood collection, to testing, to the reporting of results.

Talk about work environment/culture: 10 minutes

Talk about the major areas of the hospital and how we work together as a team.

Q & A: 10 minutes

Answer questions from students. If they don't have questions, ask them some: How many of them know their blood type? Why is blood type important? What do they know about donating blood? Etc.

Give students e-mail address for future questions they may have.

Say goodbye and thanks.

Employer/Speaker Evaluation

Your name _____

Title(s) _____

Company _____

Date of your speaking engagement _____

Teacher/class/school _____

1. Were you contacted and given appropriate materials/information in a timely fashion? Yes__ No__ Comments _____

2. Were the students attentive and polite? Yes__ No__ Comments _____

3. Were the facilities appropriate and adequate for your needs? Yes__ No__

4. Was this event fruitful to you/your company? _____

5. Would you or your company be interested in doing this type of event again? __

6. What would make this a more pleasant experience for you? _____

7. Any other comments or suggestions? _____

Thank you for sharing your expertise with Seattle Public Schools students!

Portions taken from The Bigger Picture: Facilitator's Guide