



Career Days 101: Prep and Practice

Lesson Plan



DESCRIPTION & GOALS

A Career Day provides students with exposure to a variety of professions and industries. By interacting with representatives from diverse fields, students can better understand the link between their current studies and potential future careers, motivating them to engage more actively in their education. Career days also offer industry partners the chance to engage with local students, fostering new networking opportunities and increasing overall community engagement. This plan includes steps for teacher preparation as well as a day-of plan that includes instructions for student participation.

OBJECTIVES

- Recognize and articulate the roles and requirements of various professions.
- Correlate classroom teachings with real-world professional scenarios.
- Develop foundational soft skills, including communication, networking, and effective interpersonal interaction.
- Reflect and assess students' potential career aspirations based on the day's insights.
- Engage in meaningful interactions with professionals, seeking advice and understanding industry expectations.

PREPARATION & MATERIALS

Essential Materials:

- Brochures or digital content from participating companies.
- Booths or tables for representatives.
- Audio-visual equipment (for presentations or discussions).
- Nametags for both company representatives and students.
- Materials for note-taking.
- Feedback forms for attendees and representatives.



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PROCEDURES: INVITING GUESTS

Step 1: identify potential guests (8 weeks out)

- Research individuals or organizations that align with your curriculum or the broad scope of careers you want to present.
- Prioritize guests based on relevance, availability, and the diverse range of careers they represent.

Step 2: draft an invitation (7 weeks before the event)

- Your invitation should include:
 - The purpose of Career Day.
 - Your objectives for their participation.
 - Date, time, and venue (or platform, if virtual).
 - Expected audience demographics (grade, age, etc.).
 - Any preparation or materials you'd like them to bring.
 - A request for any technical or logistical requirements they might have.
- Communicate using formal letters, emails, or even phone calls for invitations.

Step 4: follow-up (5 weeks before the event)

Step 3: send invitations (6 weeks before the event)

- Follow up with a phone call or email to confirm guests' availability and interest.

Step 5: confirmation (4 weeks before the event)

- Once a guest confirms, send them a formal acknowledgment, expressing gratitude and excitement for their participation.
- Share any additional information, like the event itinerary or logistical details.

Step 6: provide preparatory support (3 weeks before the event)

- Finalize any technical or logistical requirements.
- Offer support, like classroom aides or tech assistants, especially if they plan to conduct interactive sessions or need specific setups.

Step 7: finalize the schedule (2 weeks before the event)

- Once all guests are confirmed, curate a timetable for the day.
- Share this schedule with your guests, ensuring they are comfortable with their allotted time slots.

Step 8: pre-event check-in (1 week before the event)

- Send a reminder email or call to confirm their participation and answering any last-minute queries.
- If the event is virtual, ensure guests have the right software, access, and a plan for any technical issues.
- Before the event, send guests an info packet detailing the event's schedule, their designated space, available equipment, and student demographics.

Step 9: prepping your classroom (3-5 days before the event)

- Instruct students to research the companies or professionals who'll be attending. Knowing a bit about the professionals' background or the industries they represent can help students ask more insightful questions.
- Remind students about the importance of being respectful, listening actively, and exhibiting professional behavior.

Step 10: instruct students to complete the "CCL Career Day Preparation Activity" handout



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PROCEDURES: DAY-OF ITINERARY

Step 1: pre-event briefing with students

- Just before the event, give a short briefing to set the tone for the day. Reinforce the objectives of the event, remind students of their prepped questions, and encourage enthusiastic participation.
- Remind students about the importance of being respectful, listening actively, and exhibiting professional behavior. Discussing the value of a firm handshake, maintaining eye contact, and saying “thank you” can go a long way.

Step 2: setting up the space

- Use clear, readable signage for each company or professional booth. This helps students navigate the space efficiently.
- Not every presenter will have the same needs. While some might prefer booths, others might need presentation areas or more interactive setups.
- Ensure there’s enough space between booths to avoid overcrowding and to allow easy movement.
- Designate teachers or staff members to act as moderators. They can introduce speakers, manage Q&A sessions, and keep time.

Step 3: event day guests arrival

- Assign someone to greet guests upon arrival, guide them, and ensure they’re comfortable.
- Have technical support on standby, especially if they’re using audio-visual equipment or conducting demos.

Step 4: scheduling considerations

- If your school has a large student body, consider staggered timings or multiple sessions to avoid overcrowding.
- Build in buffer times between different sessions or activities to manage any unforeseen delays or technical issues.
- Allow students enough time to interact with each professional, ask questions, and gather materials

Step 5: additional event considerations

- Consider providing light refreshments or a designated break area for professionals, especially if the event spans several hours.
- Set up a desk or area where professionals can check in, receive their name tags, and any other relevant materials.

Step 6: instruct students to complete the “CCL Career Day Student Reflection”

Step 7: send a ‘thank you’ email to participating guests

ASSESSMENTS

For students, questions should focus on their understanding of different careers, any new interests they’ve developed, the clarity of presentations, and areas for improvement. For professionals, feedback on the organization of the event, interactions with students, and their overall experience can provide insights for refining future events. In addition to surveys, group discussions or debrief sessions with students can help educators understand the depth of students’ takeaways. Students’ reflective essays or journals about the Career Day can provide a more personal perspective on what they’ve learned and how it might influence their future educational and career decisions. Assessing the outcomes is not only about gathering feedback but also using it as a tool for continuous improvement in making Career Day more enriching and inspiring for students each time.



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RELATED ASCA STANDARDS

American School Counselor Association Standards

Mindset

- M 3. Positive attitude toward work and learning.
- M 4. Self-confidence in ability to succeed.
- M 6. Understanding that postsecondary education and lifelong learning are necessary for long-term success.

Learning Strategies

- B-LS3: Time-management, organizational and study skills.
- B-LS4: Self-motivation and self-direction for learning.
- B-LS7: Long- and short-term academic, career and social/emotional goals.

Self-Management Skills

- B-SMS3: Independent work.
- B-SMS5: Perseverance to achieve long- and short-term goals.

Social-Emotional Skills

- B-SS1: Effective oral and written communication skills and listening skills.
- B-SS3: Positive relationships with adults to support success.
- B-SS3: Social maturity and behaviors appropriate to the situation and environment.

RELATED OARS

Oregon Administrative Rules, Division 22*

- Students should develop an education plan that identifies personal and career interests, tentative educational and career goals, and post-high school next steps. (581-022-2000: 6a)
- Students should monitor and track progress toward standards, including content standards, essential skills, and extended application standards. (581-022-2000: 6b,A)
- School districts must provide a coordinated comprehensive school counseling program that includes career-related learning standards and career education as part of their K-12 instructional program to support the academic, career, social-emotional, and community involvement development of each and every student. (OAR 581-022-2030: 2d,e; 581-022-2055; 581-022-2060, 1a)

A resource page with all of the ASCA standards and this abridged version of OAR standards can be accessed at careerconnectoregon.org.