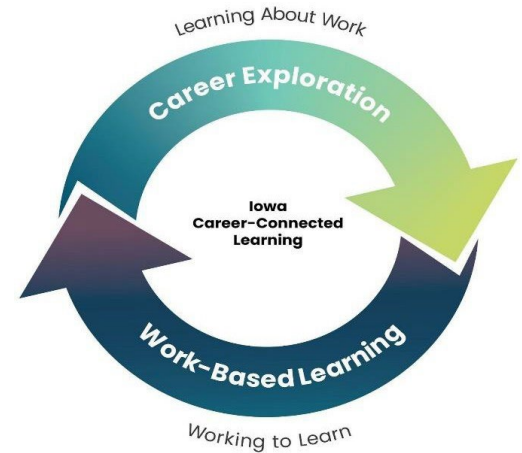


Professional Skills Workshop Toolkit

Professional skills workshop definition:

Professional skills workshops are **career exploration** experiences that introduce students to the essential skills needed to be successful in the modern workplace. Examples of professional skills workshops include: resume and cover letter writing, job shadow preparation, professional image, workplace ethics and workplace skills. A professional skills workshop must include an industry partner during the experience to ensure students are provided the most up-to-date and valuable guidance to fit current workplace policies and practices to be successful. Professional skills workshops will only be considered a work-based learning preparation component if an industry professional is included in the experience.



Diverse Professional Skills Workshop Opportunities

Resume/Cover Letter Workshop

Prior to the professional visiting the classroom:

- Spend time preparing students to gather and organize important components for building a professional resume and/or cover letter
- Request a suggested template from the industry professional and have students begin inputting the information by the recommended categories or sections
- Ensure all documents have been proofread by the student and a peer
 - If desired by the professional, consider sharing the resumes and cover letters electronically with the professional prior to the classroom visit

While the industry professional is present:

- Request a short presentation on important components of a successful resume and cover letter
- Utilize the remaining time as workshop time for feedback and support on next steps
- Request a follow-up conversation/visit
 - If the industry professional is interested in returning, evaluate what elements need to be completed prior to the next visit to maximize their time

Workplace Ethics Workshop

Prior to the professional visiting the classroom:

- Spend time learning about ethics and ethical situations
 - Consider referencing the [free ethics curriculum](#) from MBA Research for modules to guide classroom learning and discussion
 - Provide classroom support activities to ensure some depth into understanding ethics prior to the professional's visit

While the professional is present:

- Request the professional share how industry approaches the topic with employees
- Request the professional provide sample situations/activities to engage student learning

Professionalism in the Workplace Workshop

- This category of workshop provides a generalized overview and approach to professional topics
- Invite industry professionals to share tips and considerations for how to dress for an interview and work
 - Especially discerning appropriate wear for different careers
- Invite industry professionals to share the value of networking and valuable networking opportunities
 - This could lead to a workshop on creating a LinkedIn profile and other social media do's and don'ts

Interview Prep Workshop

- Invite industry professionals to go over key interview topics or considerations, such as:
 - How to make a great first impression
 - Proper handshakes and how to introduce yourself
 - Successful tips for a positive and successful interview
 - » Consider including behavior before, during and after the interview
- Prepare students with prior learning appropriate to the topic(s) of the related interview workshop

Preparation for Professional Skills Workshop

Make key decisions in planning for the professional skills workshop

- Identify the type of professional skills workshop you will provide for your students
- Identify prior learning or skills the students will need before the workshop
 - The industry professional should not be introducing a new concept
 - » The professional can reinforce the learning already provided to connect the value of what students are learning
 - Craft classroom learning to be interactive and engaging with an opportunity for students to practice, prepare and/or potentially fine tune the concept/product
- Identify needs or considerations for the professional skills workshop:
 - Where will the workshop take place?
 - » If a different space is needed, make the steps to reserve/coordinate usage of that space
 - » Follow district/college policies for holding the workshop within the building
 - Will you need additional educators/instructors/coordinators/staff to support the workshop?
 - » Reach out to find the right volunteers, including any necessary training or orientation
- How many industry professionals will be needed for a successful workshop?
 - Identify professional(s) that are willing to provide the desired support or skill set
 - Coordinate the date, time and location for each workshop/visit
 - If multiple interactions are desired (resume/cover letter), communicate this with industry professionals
 - » Brainstorm virtual collaboration opportunities to support goals
- If the experience will be at an industry site:
 - Identify and coordinate transportation and parking logistics
 - Identify and coordinate supporting staff needed, based on student participation
 - Follow district/college policies and protocol for offsite events/experiences
 - Confirm the day and time for the professional skills workshop
 - Relay expectations for the student's professional behavior and attire

Prepare student learners to maximize career learning during the event

- Provide classroom learning prior to the professional skills workshop to ensure time with the professional can be maximized

- If the industry professional has a preferred website or materials, coordinate student preparation with those materials
- Prepare students with expectations before and during the professional skills workshop
 - Communication expectations in content development and preparation
 - During the workshop
 - » Professionalism in behavior, communication and attire during the experience
 - » Participation expectations with asking questions and participating in hands-on activities on-site
 - Expected outcome to ensure students understand the value of the workshop

Prepare supporting staff with information to support a successful experience

- Identify staff who will be supporting students during the workshop
 - Communicate the location, date and other important details to the staff member
 - Identify the role of supporting staff and communicate expectations
 - » Supporting the event and multiple students or a select student/students
 - » Additional training or orientation might be necessary, depending on roles/responsibilities

Coordinate with the industry professionals for a positive educational experience

- Communicate logistics
 - Parking and Building Entry
 - Expectations and things to consider during the workshop
- Plan an engaging educational experience in coordination with the industry professional(s)
 - Outline clear expectations to support learning goals
 - » What students have done to prepare prior to the workshop
 - » Expected student outcomes by the end of the workshop
 - » Technology available to support an engaging workshop

During the Professional Workshop

Manage roles for a successful workshop

Relay educational expectations for the professional

- Provide valuable content/expertise to support student learning goals
- Engage with student participants to provide valuable feedback
- Bridge the experience to how it correlates with different careers in the field
- Be prepared to answer student questions during the experience

Relay expectations for the student

- Arrive prepared to participate and ask questions during the experience
- Be mindful of other participants and the industry professional's time
- Use professionalism in behavior, communication and attire during the experience

Relay expectations for the educator/instructor

- Ensure the logistics of the event are communicated and adhered to
 - Be mindful of schedules and responsive if more time is needed once the event has completed
- Be present and willing to support the professional to ensure students are respectful and actively participating

After the Professional Skills Workshop

Make note of the experience and collect feedback

- Collect and document feedback from the professionals, students and your own observations
- Identify recommendations to improve future experiences

Send a thank you note to the professional(s)

- Encourage students to write a thank you note or email as well
 - This helps connect the value of the professional's time and provide an opportunity for students to gain support in developing professional skills or documents

Connect the professional skills workshop with student ICAP

Note for college instructors: Although the acronym ICAP is used in K-12, the following examples provide valuable reflection activities applicable in supporting work-based learning for college students.

Sample reflection activities:

- Parking Lot with Follow-Up
 - Have students write up questions or concerns they have prior to the work-based learning experience on a sticky note and place in the parking lot/board area. Upon conclusion, revisit this area to reflect upon their initial concerns or questions.
- Survey
 - Create a short survey and provide a QR code for students to complete their responses
- More examples are available on the [Department's Career and Academic Planning webpage](#)

Consider extension activities to deepen connections of content to career

- Research the career path and how it will impact what was learned in the workshop
 - In relation to organization and content of the resume
 - In relation to attire and potential/related personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - In relation to potential ethical situations
- Use the student's career interest to tailor the professional skills outcomes (resume, cover letter, etc.)
- Use the professional skills workshop as an experience prior to a mock interview event
- Align a professional skills workshop and mock interviews as required course experiences prior to the student interviewing for an internship or other experience

Photos/video from the event

- If you have pictures from the professional skills workshop or experience, share the pictures with the professional and your district or college
 - Make sure you have photo releases prior to sharing
- Publicizing the presentation and activities demonstrates the value of the experience and the partnership with local industry.

Provide an extension to the experience

- Ask the professional to be a part of a classroom project or presentation
- Connect with the professional to develop an authentic project for students to see the content connection in solving a local organizational challenge
- Follow-up with the industry partners to see if they would be interested in hosting a worksite exploratory event, job shadow or other experience