

# Career Exploration Event Toolkit

## Purpose

This toolkit is designed to support schools and organizations interested in hosting a career exploration event modeled after the World of Work (WOW) Youth Expo. The WOW Youth Expo was created to address a growing concern: many students lack exposure to the wide range of industries and career paths available in their own communities.

By organizing a local version of this event, schools can create meaningful opportunities for students to engage with employers, explore career options, and begin envisioning their future beyond the classroom. This guide provides practical steps, planning resources, and insights to help bring this impactful experience to life.

## Event Framework

### Sample Schedule

Here's a sample outline for a one-day event. You can adjust the timing based on your school's needs and logistics:

Time	Activity
8:00 AM	Exhibitor Registration & Booth Setup
9:00 AM	Student Check-In
9:30 AM	Guest Speaker
10:00 AM	Career Exploration Exhibits Open
12:00 PM	Lunch / Dismissal

### Tips:

- Allow exhibitors to set up the day before, especially if they're bringing large or interactive displays.
- Consider providing food and beverages for exhibitors, especially if they'll be present all day. Partnering with local restaurants or food trucks is a great way to support the community.
- Be mindful of school bus schedules and other school activities when finalizing your timeline.

## Venue Selection

### Using Community Facilities

Event centers, libraries, municipal/community centers, etc. may have large spaces for hosting career exploration events.

### Using School Facilities

Gyms, cafeterias, auditoriums, or outdoor spaces can be excellent areas for schools to host a career exploration event for students.

Consider the following:

- **Indoor/Outdoor Space** : Some industries may bring vehicles or heavy equipment. Check regulations for indoor display of such items, including floor load capacity and necessary permits.
- **Capacity** : Ensure the venue can accommodate students, staff, exhibitors, and equipment. Include space for movement and emergency access.
- **Fire Permits** : Required for open flames or equipment like welding stations. Coordinate with local fire officials.
- **Safety Protocols** : Review emergency exits, evacuation plans, and first aid availability.
- **Accessibility** : Ensure ADA compliance for entrances, restrooms, and pathways.
- **Audio/Visual Needs** : If hosting a speaker or presentations, plan for microphones, speakers, and projection equipment.

## Career Exploration Exhibits

Invite a diverse mix of participants to provide a broad view of career opportunities:

- **Employers** from various industries highlighting careers available throughout the community or region
- **Training Providers** and technical schools with programs for students to acquire the skills and certifications to pursue a career path
- **Community Organizations** offering opportunities and resources to support students

- **Military Representatives** providing information on the benefits of service and careers in various branches of the armed forces
- **Student Organizations** (e.g., FFA, DECA, SkillsUSA) showcasing opportunities to participate in activities that prepare students to enter the workforce

Encourage hands-on activities and interactive displays to engage students.

## Guest Speaker

A keynote/guest speaker can inspire students and set the tone for the day. Consider:

- A professional speaker with youth engagement experience
- A respected local leader or entrepreneur
- Alumni who have pursued unique career paths

## Workforce Readiness Stations

These stations help students develop practical skills and awareness. Ideas include:

- Mock Interviews
- Resume & Cover Letter Writing
- Social Media & Online Presence
- Body Language & Professional Communication
- “What Would You Do?” Scenarios
- Praise, Criticism & Feedback
- Time Management & Prioritization
- Professional Dress & “How to Tie a Tie” Station
- Budgeting Basics & Taxes
- Dress for Success
- Elevator Pitch Practice
- Virtual Reality Career Simulations

# Logistics & Support

## Sponsorship

Seek support from local businesses, chambers of commerce, and workforce development boards. Sponsorships can cover:

- Food and beverages
- Materials and supplies
- Speaker fees
- Promotional items

## Staffing & Volunteers

Assign roles to ensure smooth operations:

- Registration & Check-In
- Workforce Readiness Booths
- Student Navigators
- Exhibitor Coordination
- Hospitality & Break Areas
- Setup & Cleanup Teams