



Understanding Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning is practical, hands-on activities or experiences through which a learner interacts with industry professionals in a workplace, which may be an in-person, virtual, or simulated setting. Learners prepare for employment or advancement along a career pathway by completing purposeful tasks that develop academic, technical, and employability skills.



Learning About Work

Learning Through Work

Learning At Work

Career Exploration

Career Exploration activities in this stage of the continuum are introductory and usually short-term. They provide participants with an opportunity to learn about industries and employers that may be unfamiliar.

Career Preparation

Career Preparation activities in this stage of the continuum provide participants with extended opportunities to increase their knowledge of a field and gain employability skills and some entry-level technical knowledge or skills.

Career Training

Career Training activities in this stage of the continuum engage participants as paid employees to gain specific skills, in conjunction with classroom or lab instruction, in a specific industry or occupation.

Keys to Successful Work-Based Learning Opportunities



Provide Meaningful Job Tasks

Create opportunities for students to perform appropriately complex and industry-relevant tasks.



Agree On What Skills Will be Gained

Make sure everyone clearly understands the skills that students are expected to master.



Reward Accomplishments

Recognize accomplishments by offering opportunities for greater responsibility, school credit, permanent employment, and promotions. Participants should earn compensation appropriate for the work they complete.



Create Networking Opportunities

Provide opportunities for students to build professional networks to set them up for future success.










Measure Progress

Use agreed-upon metrics to ensure participants, employers, and schools are held accountable for success.










Benefits to employers:

-  Build positive relationships with school staff and students.
-  Help create a pool of better-prepared and motivated potential employees.
-  Learn about the knowledge and skills of today's students and tomorrow's employees.
-  Generate favorable visibility in the community.
-  Make contacts with potential candidates for part-time, summer, or eventual full-time jobs.
-  Increase community good will and customer connections.
-  Build workforce pipeline and business relations with education community.










Benefits to schools:

-  Build relationships with the community.
-  Make classroom learning more relevant.
-  Increase staff understanding of the workplaces for which they are preparing students.
-  Learn about Labor Market Information (LMI) connections. Partner with business to learn how skills based on the labor market information can connect and align to relevant, rigorous career curriculum.
-  Improved access to resources, such as career speakers, business tours, financial support, advisory volunteers, goods, and services.
-  Improved educator morale due to support from community connections.
-  Improved educator support and development such as, teacher externships, training, and executive mentoring.






Benefits to students:

-  Build relationships with adult role models other than families, friends, and teachers.
-  Acquire experience and workplace skills.
-  Get a "foot in the door" for possible future part-time, summer, or eventual full-time jobs.
-  Become aware of career opportunities, explore those of interest, and start preparing for them.
-  Build understanding of skills required to succeed in the workplace.
-  Recognize the relevance of education to career success and increase motivation for academic success.
-  Become more employable and get access to better opportunities.

If you have any questions about the East Texas Tri-Agency Initiative or want to get involved, contact:

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