

Employer Workplace Challenge Fact Sheet

In a workplace challenge, small groups of learners⁸ (four to six per team) are engaged in solving a real-world problem or a challenge issued by an employer. The challenge is identified by the employer in consultation with the work-based learning connector and a classroom teacher. The structure of the challenge is based upon effective project-based learning approaches, enhanced by a focus on the targeted career pathway and an authentic problem or issue faced by an employer partner.

Program Level: All Grades.
Employer/Learner Ratio: 1-2 employees to 4-6 learners.
Duration: 6-8 weeks (periodic contact)
Frequency: One time
Location: School/Workplace
Costs: Staff time
Special Considerations: Employee selection. Company volunteer policies and practices.

Learners work as a team to identify possible solutions. They then create and deliver a presentation on their solutions to the employer. Designed to meet specific learning outcomes, workplace challenges are educationally rich, are tied to the curriculum, and help learners connect what they're learning in school with the workplace.

Why are workplace challenges important for learners?

- Provide exposure to potential careers and jobs.
- Help develop problem solving and research skills.
- Help develop teamwork and presentation skills.
- Provide a context for learning and foster an understanding of how academic concepts are applied in a real-world setting.
- Inform career planning.

What are the benefits to my company?

- Exposes potential future workers to your company and shows them some of the required skills and education needed for success in your industry.
- The solution uncovers fresh approaches and potential solutions to a problem or issue you are facing.
- Introduces learners to one or more of your employees.
- Helps your employees understand how to communicate with the next generation of workers.
- Provides an efficient way to introduce and engage multiple employees with your commitment to education and connect your company with the community.

What do I need to do next?

- Determine who will participate in the workplace challenge and have them connect with the work-based learning connector to address scheduling, planning and logistics.
- Distribute the Employer Workplace Challenge Tip Sheet to interested employees.
- Consider any impacts on company policy.

Resources

- Review the Employer Participation Options Fact Sheet to learn more about how to get the most out of your partnership with Earn & Learn.

⁸ Learners include K-12, community college and college students; youth and young adults engaged in workforce development programs; and adults participating in career development activities.