



# Workplace Tour Guide

## Workplace Tour Fact Sheet

*A fact sheet that provides a definition and learning objectives for the activity.*

## WBL Connector Checklist

*A checklist of steps to guide WBL Connectors in creating successful workplace tours for all parties.*

## Student/Learner Checklist

*A checklist for students or learners participating in the activity that facilitates deeper learning from the work-based learning experience.*

## Teacher/Faculty Tip Sheet

*Tips for teachers and faculty that encourages ways to connect the experience to the larger curriculum.*

## Employer Tip Sheet

*Tips for employee volunteers participating in the workplace tour to support their engagement.*

## Employer Fact Sheet

*Facts about workplace tours to help employers decide whether their company or organization can participate.*

## Implementation Tools

### Workplace Tour Student/Learner Research Activity

*A worksheet to support student/learner research in preparation for career day.*

### Workplace Tour Student/Learner Reflection

*A worksheet and discussion guide that supports student/learner reflection after the activity.*



## Workplace Tour Fact Sheet

### Workplace Tour

A Workplace Tour is a highly structured Career Awareness activity in which students/learners visit a workplace, learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions and observe work in progress.

More than a simple field trip or site visit, a Workplace Tour is designed and structured to meet specific learning outcomes, be educationally rich, and build awareness of the business, its industry sector, its role in the economy and the career options it provides.

A Workplace Tour involves preparation and follow-up in the classroom, including research and reflection by students. Tours generally last between an hour-and-a-half to two hours.

Workplace Tours are one activity in the continuum of authentic work-based experiences provided to all students/learners engaged in career-related programs or course of study in the Earn & Learn community.

### Workplace Tours are designed to:

- Provide exposure to the industry sector, potential career opportunities and jobs.
- Build occupational knowledge.
- Build an understanding of the education and training needed for entry into careers in the industry.
- Foster an understanding of the business's workforce and its contributions to the community.

### Workplace Tours are structured to:

- Enhance workplace knowledge and build career awareness.
- Illustrate how key academic concepts are applied in the real world.
- Offer students/learners a chance to ask questions and observe work in progress.
- Promote student/learner interaction with professional adults.

### Workplace Tours are supported by:

- Student/Learner preparation and follow-up in the classroom.
- Research on the industry, the careers it offers and the hosting company.
- Support for employer partners in delivering an engaging and interactive tour.
- Opportunities to reflect upon the experience verbally and in writing.

### Workplace Tours are connected to:

- Classroom learning and preparation.
- Individual career development/training plans.
- A sequence of educational, training and workplace activities.
- The student's next step, by intentionally sequencing with future work-based or career-related classroom experiences.

## Workplace Tour Support Materials

### Checklists, Tip Sheets and Fact Sheets

- WBL Connector Workplace Tour Checklist
- Student/Learner Workplace Tour Checklist
- Teacher/Faculty Workplace Tour Tip Sheet
- Employer Workplace Tour Tip Sheet
- Employer Workplace Tour Fact Sheet

### Implementation Tools

- Workplace Tour Research Activity
- Workplace Tour Student/Learner Reflection

#### **Tips for Success** **Work-Based Learning Essential Elements**

Effective Workplace Tours include structured activity before, during and after the experience. Pay attention to these tips to ensure meaningful experiences that result in enriched learning.

- ✓ Conduct Effective Planning
- ✓ Prepare for Success
- ✓ Identify Learning Objectives
- ✓ Create Authentic and Engaging Experiences
- ✓ Connect to Careers
- ✓ Support Student/Learner Growth
- ✓ Ensure Activities are Safe and Legal
- ✓ Provide Ongoing Support
- ✓ Provide for Reflection, Presentation and Feedback
- ✓ Connect to the Student/Learner Next Step
- ✓ Assess and Document the Experience

Sustaining and growing Workplace Tours and all other work-based learning activities depend on maintaining positive relationships with the participating employers. These employers should be treated as valued customers and partners with frequent check-ins to address their needs and support their participation.

### Virtual Option

- Consider working with an industry partner to provide an on-line tour of their facilities using Zoom or Facetime.
- Allow for students/learners to interact with employees and ask questions during the tour.

## WBL Connector Workplace Tour Checklist

Quick tips for Work-Based Learning Coordinators<sup>1</sup> to ensure a successful Workplace Tour.

### Before the Workplace Tour

- Identify the appropriate employer contact and work with them to plan the tour, providing them with materials and support.
- Suggest that the employer bring in someone from the HR team to talk about entry-level recruitment.
- Arrange for transportation, permission slips, food and address all logistics.
- Find out if safety gear is required and, if so, arrange for it to be provided.
- Talk with teachers/faculty about how a workplace tour can help them meet curriculum goals and make the classroom connection.
- Prepare students/learners by having them research the company and practice their personal introduction.
- Identify and document desired student/learner learning objectives.

### During the Workplace Tour

- Work with the tour host. Make sure to provide time for introductions, an overview of the business and its operations and what to expect during the tour.
- Ensure students/learners and teachers/faculty receive instruction in workplace safety and an orientation to workplace norms.
- Structure the tour so students/learners see the full spectrum of activities and occupations within the company.
- Help ensure that students/learners can observe and interact with employees at different levels of responsibility in the organization.
- If possible, have students/learners experience some hands-on activity during the tour.
- Have students/learners experience the tour in small groups and ask questions.

### After the Workplace Tour

- Help students/learners connect what they're learning in class to what they experienced on the tour.
- Provide individual and group reflection activities for students.
- Suggest that students/learners share their experiences via social media.
- Support students/learners in determining their next steps in learning about careers.
- Debrief with the tour host.
- Have the students/learners write thank-you letters.
- Assess the impact and value of this tour and utilize employer, teacher/faculty and student/learner feedback to improve future tours. Document and archive information in ELENA.
- Help students/learners update their career development plan and think about any next steps they would like to take to further their career goals.

### Sample Workplace Tour Timeline

**Beginning of the school year:**

Identify and communicate with potential sites. Determine dates.

**Three months in advance:** Confirm sites and dates. Share format options.

**Two months in advance:** Confirm format and travel logistics. Recruit students.

**One month in advance:** Collect forms. Prepare students.

**One week in advance:** Review orientation and logistics.

**During the workplace tour:** Facilitate agenda, student/learner management and social media.

**After the workplace tour:** Thank-you notes, reflection and update career development plan.

<sup>1</sup> This includes Earn & Learn work-based learning connectors and others who facilitate, arrange and support work-based learning activities for students/learners.



### Go Deeper

- Make the tour part of a project and have students/learners prepare and deliver a presentation about the company after the tour.
- Have students/learners create a presentation about their career pathway and deliver it to the employer partner during the tour.
- Take pictures from the tour and provide them to the company for their website or newsletter.
- Publicize the tour and the business by placing a story in the local newspaper or posting on your webpage. (Make sure you clear this with the employer partner first.)
- Consider other potential public relations benefits and opportunities.

## Student/Learner Workplace Tour Checklist

When you get the chance to go on a workplace tour, you'll look behind the scenes of a business or company and ask yourself if this is somewhere you can see yourself in the future. Keep the following things in mind as you get ready for the tour.

### Have you done all you can to prepare for the workplace tour?

- Turn in all required forms.
- Learn what the dress code is for the place you're visiting.
- Research the company—how they got started, the kinds of jobs they have and how they contribute to your community.
- Think about what you want to learn and come up with at least three questions about the company or the careers it offers.
- Practice your elevator pitch. Include your name, grade, why you are in this program and what you'd like to do with your future. Summarize your knowledge, skills, accomplishments and anything else that would make an employer see you positively.

#### Are You Ready for the Big Day?

##### Have you...

- Turned in your forms?
- Decided what to wear?
- Researched the company?
- Crafted your questions?
- Polished your resume?
- Practiced your pitch?
- Thought about how you'll share your day on social media?

### Do you know what you need to do during the workplace tour?

- Pay attention to what's going on at the worksite. Can you see yourself working in a place like this? What kinds of jobs are you interested in?
- Actively participate. Ask the questions you came up with and any others that will help you determine if a career in this industry is for you.
- See if you can connect what's going on in the workplace with what you're learning in school.
- If you have a chance, ask the people you meet for their business cards or see if they'll connect with you on LinkedIn.

#### Some Social Media Do's and Don'ts

##### Do...

- Choose your profile picture carefully.
- Keep a professional profile.
- Create a LinkedIn profile and build your personal brand.
- Maintain privacy. If you don't want something to be seen by all, don't post it on the internet.

##### Don't...

- Post illegal activities.
- Threaten violence.
- Lie about professional and

### When the workplace tour is over, how will you keep moving your career forward?

- Talk to your classmates and teachers/faculty about the workplace tour and your feelings about pursuing a career in that industry. What kind of jobs do you want to know more about? Would you be interested in going on another tour in the future? What kind of education will it take to get there?
- Write a thank-you note to the people who hosted the tour.
- Fill out the tour evaluation. Be honest. What worked for you? That will help improve future tours.
- Update your career development plan and think about any next steps you'd like to take to further your career goals.
- Share your experience with your peers on social media. Perhaps a blog post about the event?

## Teacher/Faculty Workplace Tour Tip Sheet

Note: If you're coordinating the tour, have a look at the Connector Workplace Tour Checklist.

### Workplace Tours are designed to:

- Provide exposure to the industry sector, potential career opportunities and jobs.
- Build occupational knowledge.
- Build an understanding of the education and training needed for entry into careers in the industry.
- Foster an understanding of the business's workforce and its contributions to the community.

### The Classroom Connection: Preparation and Reflection

- Support students/learners in recognizing the curriculum connection.
- Structure a reflection activity based on a "What? So what? Now what?" format.

### Before the Workplace Tour

- Review the Workplace Tour Fact Sheet. Assess how a tour can support classroom activities and help meet curriculum goals.
- Review the plan for the tour with the Connector and decide where you can be helpful.
- Identify and document desired student/learner learning objectives.
- Discuss expectations for the tour with students/learners and point out what they might learn from it.
- Have students/learners research the employer and prepare at least three meaningful questions to ask during the tour. What do they want to know about the company and the industry?
- Collect signed permission forms.

### During the Workplace Tour

- Attend the tour and work with the WBL Connector to support aspects of the tour.
- Support the employer by making sure students/learners are attentive, polite and engaged.
- Help connect what you see at the workplace with classroom topics.

### After the Workplace Tour

- Provide individual and group reflection activities for students. Help them make the connection between the classroom and the workplace.
- Support students/learners in updating their career development plan and determining their next steps in learning about careers.
- Provide feedback to help assess the impact and value of the tour.
- Document and archive information about the tour.
- Have students/learners write thank-you notes to the employer partner.
- Suggest students/learners share a post about the day via social media, tagging the company in posts.

### Go Deeper

- Guide students/learners through a comparison of the culture and style of the workplace with others they have observed, including behavioral and communication expectations.
- Make the tour part of a project and have students/learners prepare and deliver a presentation to others at your school about the company.
- Take pictures from the tour and provide them to the company for their website or newsletter. Ensure you have signed releases for all photos.
- Publicize the tour and business by placing a story in the local newspaper or posting on school website.

## Employer Workplace Tour Tip Sheet

Thanks for agreeing to be a host for a workplace tour! In preparing for the visit, keep the following tips in mind.

### Before the Workplace Tour

- Review the information packet about the school and the objectives of the tour.
- Let the work-based learning Connector know who the main contact is and provide email/phone, etc.
- Work with your Connector to design an engaging tour of your workplace.
- Let the Connector know where the visiting group should park and enter the building. Include information about security procedures and appropriate dress.
- If safety gear is required at the worksite, arrange for it to be available.
- Brief the employees who will be involved in the tour. Provide an overview of your partnership with the sponsoring school or program, what to expect during the tour, their role and why their involvement is important.

### During the Workplace Tour

- Provide an overview of the business, its operations and what to expect during the tour.
- Provide instruction in workplace safety, if needed, and an orientation to workplace norms.
- Bring in someone from HR to talk about entry-level recruitment and careers at the company.
- If possible, arrange for students/learners to participate in small groups.
- Have students/learners observe, hear from and speak to employees with different levels of responsibility and roles in your company. See if any of your employees are connected to the school in some way and make sure those individuals get to talk with the students.
- Make sure students/learners are exposed to a range of career options in your industry and let them know what it will take for them to be hired when they complete their education and training.

### After the Workplace Tour

- Debrief with your team.
- Provide feedback to the work-based learning connector to improve future tours.
- Consider how you might use the tour to promote your company's visibility in the community.

### Go Deeper

- Explore ways that you might further interest students/learners and grow the pool of potential future employees.
- Talk to the work-based learning connector about being a classroom speaker or guest trainer, helping with curriculum, or hosting students/learners for Job Shadows, Jobs or Internships.





## Employer Workplace Tour Fact Sheet

On a workplace tour, students/learners visit a workplace, learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions and observe work in progress.

More than a simple field trip or site visit, a workplace tour is designed and structured to meet specific learning outcomes, be educationally rich, and build awareness of the business, its industry sector, its role in the economy and the career options it provides.

**Program Level:** Starts 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Ongoing.  
**Employer/Student/Learner Ratio:** Varies. 1 or 2 employees to 20+ students.  
**Duration:** Usually 1.5 to 2 hours  
**Frequency:** One time  
**Location:** Workplace  
**Costs:** Staff time  
**Special Considerations:** Safety, company policies on visitors.

### Why are Workplace Tours important for students?

- Provides exposure to potential careers and jobs and helps identify potential interests as well as those occupations *not* of interest.
- Helps build occupational knowledge and familiarity with the education and training needed for success in the industry.
- Helps make the connection between academic theory and practical application.
- Creates awareness of the business's role in the community, as well as its functions, processes, products and employees.

### What are the benefits to my company?

- Exposes potential future workers to job opportunities and careers with your company.
- Introduces your employees to students, which helps them understand how to communicate with the next generation of workers.
- Helps current employees feel good about the company's commitment to education and the community.
- Promotes an understanding of the role and contributions of your business.

### What do I need to do next?

- Contact your work-based learning coordinator.
- Arrange for a presentation to those of your employees who will be hosting the tour.
- Consider any impacts on company policy.

### Resources

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

## Workplace Tour Research Activity

Complete the following research assignment as part of your preparation for the upcoming workplace tour. This research will be the basis for in-class discussion and presentations prior to the tour.

Student/Learner name:
Company you'll visit on your workplace tour:
Company's web address:
Company's physical address:
Company's mission statement:
What is the company's primary business?
What departments exist within the company?
What companies do you think are in competition with your workplace tour company?
After researching your company, what are some questions that you will ask your workplace tour host?
Based on your research, what do you think you will like most about your workplace tour experience?
Based on your research, what is your biggest concern about your workplace tour experience?
If you could leave the workplace tour having learned one thing, what would that be?
Anything else you learned while doing your research that you'd like to share with your teacher/faculty or the class?

Adapted from original material created by NAF. Used with permission.

## Workplace Tour Student/Learner Reflection

Now that you have completed your workplace tour, take some time reflect on what you experienced and how the workplace tour might inform your college and career plans in the future.

Student/Learner Name:

School:

Tour Host Company:

Date of Tour:

What aspects of the workplace tour were interesting? Which were not? Why?

What did you like about the workplace you visited? What would you change?

Would you consider a career in this field? Why or why not?

What was the most memorable aspect of your workplace tour experience? Why?

What did you learn about the company and its employees? Please explain.

How did the people at the workplace treat one another? Please explain.

Describe ways that technology is used at the workplace you visited.

If you wanted to work in the department/ workplace that you visited, what might you do to prepare in the next five years, both in high school and afterwards?

What knowledge and skills are you learning in school that are used in the workplace you toured? Please explain.

What knowledge or skills do you need to strengthen to be successful at this workplace? Please explain.

Would you recommend that other students/learners tour this workplace in the future? Circle one and explain.

Anything else you'd like to say about your workplace tour?

Adapted from original material created by NAF. Used with permission.