



Advice for Providing the Best Business Tour for Students!

- ***Evaluating workplace safety standards and developing checklist:***
 - PPE *personal protective equipment*.
 - Prepare and notify tour attendees ahead of time. Typically... close toed shoes, safety vests, safety glasses, hearing protection and hard hats. If meeting with manufacturers be mindful of large equipment
 - Communicate safety protocol and send to groups before they arrive.
 - Have protective equipment available upon arrival.
 - Encourage a safety manager do a specific walk-through of company's buildings before each tour making sure that aisle ways are clear, there are no tripping hazards and workstations are cleaned and organized.
 - Consider a facility-wide cleanup for larger tours.
 - Consider where you should stop to talk to large groups during the tour so they can hear the tour guide and are out of the way of moving product, equipment, people, etc.
 - Highlight machine safety mechanisms built-in to keep operators safe (guards, ex: Saw Stop - table saw that features a patented automatic braking system that stops the blade upon contact with skin or flesh)
 - Point out demonstrated safety practices as you observe them along the tour.

- ***Student learning and best practices on engaging students with the company:***
 - Conduct a brief overview/presentation before the tour to set the stage for what they are going to see out in the plant. This is typically no longer than 15/20 minutes.
 - Each department is a station stop on the tour and an expert in that area talks about their career and what they do specifically.
 - The station is ready with examples or a current project they are working on. When applicable, samples are passed around to the groups to see and feel firsthand.
 - Questions are encouraged at each station stop.
 - Take into consideration the audience- the age, class subject, and interests of the groups. Example: if a tour group is from CTC Welding class, focus more time in that area.
 - Engage students in thinking about how to transfer their classroom learning to their future, help them see what opportunities are available in the business (example: at a large production facility, individuals fill a certain function within the process vs. a smaller shop where they may complete each step of the process from start to finish.)

- ***Logistical component: how to organize the tour (what is important to see, who should students meet, providing a Q&A session and a hands-on activity)***
 - Find the most engaging employees who can talk to their time at the company and growth throughout the company.
 - What degrees and certifications are required?
 - Talk to expectations.
 - Truly teach and learn a skill the students can walk away with and develop (Ex: create a small object out of materials your company uses, allow them to package up a product)
 - With larger groups, a panel set up is ideal. Use a representative for each department to speak to slides.
 - Take into consideration size of the group and split everyone up evenly...Intimate groups to work best.
 - Time the process to make sure to be thorough.
 - Give an overview of all the different career paths at the company.
 - Develop organized pre-tour materials that has the tour details, scope and purpose of the tours, agenda, safety information, directions, tour contact information.
 - Have a bag of “goodies” for the participants to take home (company materials, marketing items, educational materials, logo swag etc.)
 - Start with “What is our objective” and build event from there...create an agenda so everyone involved knows who is doing what and when to keep things on schedule; consider the following:
 - Who is the audience going to be?
 - The number of guests
 - Arrival and departure times so you can determine length of time for the tour, Q&A session, etc.
 - Where guests should park, where to enter and exit the building.
 - Who will greet guests as they arrive (select individuals who are personable and sociable)
 - Who will serve as tour guides (select individuals who are comfortable speaking in front of a group and are knowledgeable of the processes and equipment)
 - What tour guides should wear (company logo attire, etc.)
 - Include overview of business (what does business do, market niche, differences between the product, what sets business apart from competitors.)
 - Include overview of typical customer (why they choose this business)
 - Include how business approaches on-the-job training.

- ***Ideas for reflection questions for students:***
 - How to engage students: deliver the experience of working at the company that they cannot simply read about so you can spark their interest to come work for your industry.
 - For actual tours, break up for small groups throughout and allow for questions along the way as they may forget by the end, but also bring everyone together for questions at end... this information is most likely new to them!
 - How can someone learn and grow in that company?
 - Share about a stable opportunity and positive work experience and ask if they could envision themselves there?
 - What types of opportunities are the students interested in... hands on or warehouse?
 - When are you looking for the internship/job shadow?
 - Scholarship opportunities for education/training at your company?
 - What have they learned that they didn't know before about your company/industry?
 - What was most interesting or surprising, and which career/job they found most interesting and why?
 - Follow-up with groups for feedback and what to do to improve.
 - Provide contact information like a brochure... what is the next step and who should I contact?