

# Employer Talk Hints and Tips

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# What are Employer Talks?

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All secondary schools want to engage with employers who will come into the school and share their career experiences with their students.

Employer talks are usually during a year group assembly or to a particular class.

It's about giving young people an insight into your role, your organisation and the sector as a whole to help them make better informed choices.



**Why would you give up  
your time to give an  
employer talk?**



# Why would you give up your time to give an employer talk?

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- ✓ You are the one that knows about your industry and can inspire young people.
- ✓ Young people quite often don't make up their mind about what they want to do as a career until year 10/11 and you can help them decide.
- ✓ If you make a lasting impression, you start your recruitment pipeline early.



## In advance of the day

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- ✓ Decide what do you want the students to learn from your session
- ✓ Decide if you'll need any equipment (white boards, microphone, podium, computer – some of these will depend on the size of the student group, of course) or technology set-up (LCD projector, wireless internet connection).
- ✓ Alert the teacher well in advance. At many schools, these items aren't always easy to come by. Most schools recommend that you bring your own computer equipment.
- ✓ Prepare visual aids! Your audience will be more engaged.
- ✓ Prepare handouts or take-aways. Consider passing around example tools of your trade or leaving students with take-home materials that will stimulate conversation with their families.



## Know your audience

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- ✓ Try and find out as much as possible about the students you will be talking to
- ✓ Is it the whole class/year or a segment of students who chose to hear about your particular career/industry?
- ✓ How are their confidence and communication skills – are they likely to answer or ask questions or take part in discussion?
- ✓ The teacher will be staying in the classroom with you so no need to worry about any potential issues.



## On the day

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- ✓ Arrive early to test any equipment you might be using. Something always needs tweaking.
- ✓ However; be prepared that you may also be kept waiting if the teacher you are supporting has just finished teaching and may be coming to meet you straight after that lesson. If you are kept waiting they aren't being rude, it's school life.
- ✓ Take a bottle of water – they may not have time to get you a drink.



# What to talk about (1)

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- ✓ This all depends on how long you have to talk.
- ✓ Key points to cover:
  - ✓ What do you do? Who do you work for and some information about your organisation. It would be great if you could also add in something about the size of your industry i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> largest in County or worth £xmn/bn to the Cumbrian economy.
  - ✓ What kinds of things do you do at your job and what does a typical day/week look like.
  - ✓ What kinds of subjects were important for you to know in order to be able to do your job? Please try and stress the importance of Maths and English and how you use both subjects in your role.
  - ✓ Did you always know you wanted to do what you do? If not, how did you start out?
  - ✓ Education/training required. How did you get to where you are? Was your path typical/not typical? And what are the options now i.e. T-level/Apprenticeship/Degree. (please emphasise the importance of life-long learning)





## What to talk about (2)

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- ✓ Skills needed, i.e. good communication skills, hand-eye coordination, problem solving
- ✓ Focus on 2 or 3 skills that you use in your job then give examples of how you use them on a daily basis and mention how transferrable these skills are
- ✓ What might you do differently if you started over or were “in their shoes?”
- ✓ Any extracurricular activities in school and how they may have helped you
- ✓ What do you enjoy most/least about your work?
- ✓ Do you travel for work? Where have you been that is would be appealing, interesting or exciting to students’?
- ✓ Describe your work environment.
- ✓ You could also mention the supply chain and associated careers for your sector .
- ✓ What motivates you – what satisfaction do you get from your job?



# Questions you might get from students

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- ✓ What are the major duties/responsibilities of your job?
- ✓ What character traits/work habit do you or your employer expect an employee to have?
- ✓ What training/education is required for this job?
- ✓ What other jobs/people depend on your job getting done?
- ✓ What are the “normal” hours of your job? If there is overtime, how much/often?
- ✓ What types of demand (physical, mental, emotional) or hazards, if any, are involved in your job?
- ✓ What specific types of tools, equipment, and/or technology do you use on a regular basis?



# Questions you might get from students

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- ✓ What do you like most about your job? The least?
- ✓ What extra-curricular activities, volunteer work, and/or part-time job might help someone prepare for your job?
- ✓ What changes, positive and/or negative, have taken place in your job/career recently or since you started?
- ✓ How much have these changes affected you and/or your career?
- ✓ What do you think your job/career will be like in ten years?
- ✓ What is the employment outlook for this field of work and/or how difficult is it to find your type of job?
- ✓ What advice would you give a student who is considering your type of job/career?



# Ways of engaging the students

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- ✓ Leave time for questions at the end of your talk
- ✓ Let's have a show of hands. How many of you think/agree...?
- ✓ Can anyone give me an example of...?
- ✓ How many of you have/think/agree with...?
- ✓ Who knows/has ever experienced/appreciates...?
- ✓ Can anyone tell me what (blah blah blah) means?
- ✓ What do you think is the most interesting....?
- ✓ Can you think of a reason/possibility when...?
- ✓ Does ...(blah blah blah) ... sound familiar to any of you?
- ✓ How many of you own a ...?



## Ways of engaging the students

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- ✓ Depending how long you have are there any short activities they could have a go at?
- ✓ Do you have equipment/examples/produce they can look at/touch/taste/take home?
- ✓ Do you have any videos they can watch about the organisation or can you signpost them to a careers page on your website?
- ✓ Can you create a leaflet of top tips to consider if they want to work in your industry that you can leave with them?



## Advice for you to give students

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- ✓ Try new things - you may find that you like it and are even good at it!
- ✓ Don't let anyone tell you that you can't do something just because of who you are (a girl, for example!). Stubbornness can be a good thing! If someone tells you that you "can't" do something well, it should just make you want to prove them wrong!
- ✓ Find something that you are passionate about, and go for it. If people can tell you really care about what you are doing and are excited about it, they will want to help you. And if you are working for something you love, you won't mind working hard to reach your goal.
- ✓ Don't be scared to ask for help - it doesn't make you look bad. It just shows that you want to learn



How do you  
know you have  
made an  
impact?





# How do you know if you have made an impact?

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- ✓ Consider asking the following questions at the start of the session
  1. What do you know about my company ?
  2. How many people are employed there?
  3. Which 3 skills do you think I use most in my job ?
  4. Have you considered working in my industry/sector/organisation?
- ✓ At the end of your session ask the same questions





## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

If you would like to give an employer talk in your local school, please get in touch

<https://www.cumbriacareershub.co.uk>