

Why Industry Tours Matter:

When a student walks into a business their thoughts could go in a million directions, but when they go on an industry tour, they are able to experience a company's culture. By having touch points in the tour where the students are able to use all their senses to evaluate if they could picture themselves in that career field.

1. **Real-World Exposure:** They provide a firsthand look at how various industries operate, helping students understand the practical applications of what they learn in the classroom. This can make abstract concepts more concrete and relevant.
2. **Career Exploration:** By observing professionals in their work environments, students can explore different career paths and industries. This exposure can help them make more informed decisions about their future careers and education.
3. **Inspiration and Motivation:** Seeing real-world applications of their studies can be inspiring. It can motivate students to excel academically by showing them the tangible outcomes of their efforts and how their education can lead to real-world success.
4. **Skill Development:** Industry tours can highlight the skills and qualities that are valued in various professions. This can help students understand what they need to develop and focus on, whether it's teamwork, problem-solving, or technical skills.
5. **Networking Opportunities:** These tours often provide students with opportunities to meet professionals and ask questions. This can be valuable for building connections and gaining insights into various fields.
6. **Contextual Learning:** Seeing how different sectors work can help students understand the broader context of their subjects. For instance, a tour of a manufacturing plant can illustrate the practical applications of engineering, mathematics, and technology.
7. **Encouraging Curiosity:** Exposure to different industries can spark curiosity and interest in subjects they might not have previously considered. It broadens their perspective and can lead to a more diverse set of interests and aspirations.

Overall, industry tours help bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, enriching the educational experience and preparing students for future careers.

Before the visit for Industry

Preparing for an industry tour with K-12 students involves several key steps to ensure the experience is educational, engaging, and smooth for everyone involved. Here's a comprehensive guide for industry preparation:

1. Understand the Audience:

- Age Appropriateness: Tailor the tour content and activities to the age and developmental level of the students. For younger students, focus on basic concepts and visual elements. For older students, delve into more complex topics and discussions.

2. Coordinate with Teachers:

- Pre-Tour Communication: Discuss with teachers to understand the students' current curriculum and interests. Ask about the makeup of the classroom, ie learning level, physical ability, and demographics. This helps in aligning the tour with what they're learning in school and seeing themselves in the career field.
- Objectives: Establish clear objectives for the tour that align with educational goals, whether it's to illustrate specific concepts, provide career insights, or showcase industry practices.
- Safety: Be clear about what the students should wear, permission slips that need to be signed, and cell phone expectations. Share with the teacher what your needed student to chaperone ratio is needed. Common chaperone ratios are 12 students to 1 chaperone for Elementary and 15 students to 1 chaperone for Middle and High Schools.

3. Plan the Tour Itinerary:

- Engaging Activities: Develop a structured yet flexible schedule that includes various activities such as presentations, interactive demonstrations, and Q&A sessions.
 - [Hands on activities](#), [Employee panel](#)
- Highlights: Identify key areas of the facility that are particularly relevant or interesting and ensure they are included in the tour. Share your company's mission and how it got started, "your story."
- Being Relatable: Consider your company's work uniform and work demographics and how it compares to the students touring. When students see others they can identify with, this supports in creating interest.
- Provide Lunch/Snack: Depending on the time and length of the tour/event you may consider providing lunch or a snack. If you choose this option please check with the teacher for dietary restrictions.

4. Prepare Presenters and Guides:

- Training: Train employees who will interact with the students to ensure they can communicate effectively and answer questions in a way that is understandable and engaging.
- Enthusiasm and Patience: Ensure that presenters are enthusiastic, patient, and prepared to handle questions from students of varying ages.

5. Safety and Logistics:

- Safety Measures: Implement safety protocols and ensure all areas of the facility are safe for students. Provide appropriate safety gear if needed and brief students on any safety rules before the tour begins.
- Accessibility: Ensure the facility is accessible to all students, including those with disabilities.
- Group Management: Organize the students into manageable groups if necessary and assign staff or volunteers to assist with supervision.

6. Educational Materials:

- Handouts: Prepare educational materials such as brochures, worksheets, activity guides, or swag that students can take with them.
- Multimedia: Use multimedia presentations, videos, or interactive elements to make the tour more engaging and informative.

7. Feedback Mechanism:

- Evaluation Forms: Consider providing feedback forms for teachers and students to gather insights on what worked well and areas for improvement.
- Debrief: Plan a brief debrief with teachers and guides post-tour to discuss any immediate feedback and address any issues.

8. Follow-Up:

- Additional Resources: Offer additional resources or follow-up materials for students and teachers to explore further.
- Continued Engagement: Consider ways to maintain a connection with the school, such as offering virtual tours, guest speaker sessions, or classroom visits.

By carefully preparing for a K-12 industry tour, companies can create a meaningful and memorable experience that enhances students' learning and fosters a greater understanding of the industry.

Day of Tour/Experiences

On the day of the tour event, having a detailed checklist ensures that everything runs smoothly and that students have a positive and educational experience. Here's a comprehensive checklist for industry professionals:

Pre-Tour Preparation:

1. Welcome and Registration

- ☐ Ensure the welcome area is set up with a check-in desk.
- ☐ Prepare name tags or badges for students, teachers, and any accompanying staff.
- ☐ Have a list of participants and verify their attendance.

2. Tour Materials

- ☐ Check that all handouts, brochures, and educational materials are ready and in sufficient quantities.
- ☐ Ensure multimedia equipment (projectors, screens, speakers) is set up and functioning.

3. Safety and Logistics

- ☐ Verify that all safety protocols and emergency procedures are in place.
- ☐ Confirm that safety gear (if required) is available and ready.
- ☐ Ensure that the facility is clean and that all areas to be visited are accessible and safe.

4. Staff and Guides

- ☐ Confirm that all staff members and guides are briefed on their roles and responsibilities.
- ☐ Ensure that staff are wearing any required identification or uniforms.

5. Itinerary and Timing

- ☐ Review the schedule and ensure all activities are timed appropriately.
- ☐ Coordinate with guides to make sure they are prepared for their segments.

During the Tour

1. Greeting the Group

- ☐ Welcome students and teachers upon arrival.
- ☐ Provide a brief introduction about the company and outline the day's schedule.

2. Managing the Group

- ☐ Ensure that the group is divided into manageable sections if needed.
- ☐ Assign staff or volunteers to help guide and supervise the groups.

3. Conducting the Tour

- ☐ Follow the planned itinerary and ensure all key areas are covered.
- ☐ Maintain engagement by being interactive and addressing questions.

4. Safety and Supervision

- ☐ Continuously monitor safety and ensure all students are adhering to safety protocols.
- ☐ Address any issues or concerns promptly.

5. Breaks and Refreshments

- ☐ Provide scheduled breaks as planned, and ensure there are refreshments if included in the tour.
- ☐ Monitor for any special needs or dietary restrictions.

Post-Tour Activities

1. Debrief and Feedback

- ☐ Conduct a brief debrief with teachers and guides to gather immediate feedback.
- ☐ Provide feedback forms to teachers and students to gather their thoughts on the tour.

2. Thank You and Follow-Up

- ☐ Thank the students, teachers, and any accompanying staff for their visit.
- ☐ Provide contact information for follow-up questions or additional resources.

3. Review and Cleanup

- ☐ Review the tour's success and any issues that arose.
- ☐ Clean up the tour areas and return any equipment or materials to their proper places.

4. Documentation

- ☐ Document any feedback or observations for future improvements.
- ☐ Take note of any follow-up actions required.

By adhering to this checklist, the industry can ensure a well-organized, safe, and impactful experience for students, enhancing their educational journey and fostering a positive connection with the industry.