

Classroom Speakers

What is it?

For many employers and schools, the simplest way to build career awareness among students is to have a working adult visit a school to make a career-focused presentation to students. This presentation can range from speaking to a large assembly to addressing a career education classroom, or participating as a subject matter expert in a specific discipline.

Checklist for Success

- _____ Employers identify which schools, programs or opportunities with which they wish to be involved.
- _____ Schools should work with speakers to ensure that they understand the interests of their student audiences and ensure that presentations fit with curriculum and standards.
- _____ Employers should identify employees who can speak to young people in an engaging and entertaining way, while also providing a meaningful overview of their own career and employer.

Additional Resources:

- **CA Engineering & Technology Alliance**
 - www.engineering-ed.org/common/guidelines_for_career_guest_spea.htm
- **Boston Private Industry Council**
 - <http://www.bostonpic.org/employers/career-speakers>

Classroom Speakers, cont.

Sample letter for Career Guest Speakers²

Dear Guest,

Thank you for accepting an invitation to talk to our engineering students about your career field. You're invited to present your career field because one or more of our students expressed interest in and have done some research on the field. All the students are learning about career choices and students know something about the qualifications for the job, the working conditions, where the jobs are, wages and salaries, and employment prospects. Please talk to the entire class about how and why you chose to enter your field and what it is like. We want the good news with the bad so that you leave students with a pretty good understanding of the profession.

Note our classes are 50 minutes long. You will usually have an audience of 24 Juniors at 7:30 to 8:30 AM, and about 25 Freshmen from 8:30 to 9:30AM. Our classes are in Building/Room # at the northeast corner of the campus. You may park in the east side teachers' parking lot. One of my students or I will meet you and lead you to the classes.

We've enclosed a suggested outline for your presentation. These topics are intended to give you some ideas on what you could talk about. Please design a presentation you are most comfortable giving-- adding, omitting, or reorganizing, as you like. Announce if you will take questions during the presentation. Please lead the students through your presentation. You cannot depend on their questions to keep the discussion moving along. Please let us know of your audio visual requirements. Our students particularly like visuals, moving pictures, and show-and-tell items like examples of your products.

All the instructors and students thank you for investing time to excite our students about your field and their futures! Please call us anytime with your suggestions and questions.

Sincerely,

² Resource developed by the CA Technology and Engineering Alliance
www.engineering-ed.org/common/guidelines_for_career_guest_spea.htm

Classroom Speakers, cont.

Suggested Outline for Career Presentations

Purpose

- Inform high school students about your career and how and why you got into it.
- Suggest ways for students to find careers that best suit their interests, aptitudes, and skills

Your biography

- Tell us about yourself (and don't be bashful!)
- How did you get into this line of work?
- When did you know it's what you wanted to do?
- Did anyone help you decide what profession(s) you should go into?
- What other jobs have you held?
- What interests do you have outside the work place?

Preparing yourself

- How did you prepare for the job you have?
- What training would you recommend for someone interested in this field?
- How many years of education are required for this particular job?
- What kinds of jobs can you consider with training in this field?

What's the job like?

- What is a typical day like? What do you spend most of your time doing at work?
- What is your work environment like?
- What are typical salaries or wages for the field?
- What kind of work hours do you keep?
- What abilities help you to do your work?
- What do you like most about what you do?
- What do you like least about what you do?

The job prospects

- What advice would you give others preparing for this type of work?
- What do you see in the future for this line of work?
- How can someone get more information about the field and how to enter?

Next steps

- Are you interested in counseling students if they are interested in the career?
- Can you suggest other professionals who may want to help students make choices?