

Guideposts for Success: Lesson Plans and Activities

Developed by the Institute for Educational Leadership

LESSON 19: PLANNING A VISIT TO A COLLEGE CAREER CENTER

AT-A-GLANCE

Most college career centers offer a range of programs, events and activities all designed to help students succeed in the world of work (and help to make connections between education and careers). Similar to those who visit One Stop Career Centers, many expect for the Career Center to “find them a job.” Also similarly, many don’t visit these centers during the career decision-making process—but when they have run out of options. This lesson is to open students’ minds to the services and opportunities provided by the college career center.

LESSON/ACTIVITY

Call a career center at a local university, community or technical college to arrange for a visit to the center and a tour of the career. Depending on the number of students you will be bringing, find out if the center can offer a quick interest assessment to help students get a hands-on experience from the visit. If possible, eat lunch on campus so students can get a feel for the college experience.

Brainstorm ahead of time with students to find out what they believe to be offered by a post-secondary career center. [Realistically, a career center will help students find the answers to their career and employment—related questions—not offer them the answers, which of course, many expect].

Work with students to develop a basic list of “informational interview” questions to ask of the career center staff. For example,

- Does the career center offer any assessments to help me decide what major what might be best for me?
- Can the career center help me find an internship?
- Can all students use the career center—or just seniors?
- What do most students use the career center for?

After the tour, have students write a thank you note to the career center staff. This offers a great opportunity to discuss the “thank you note” as a way to stand out after an interview. Be sure students offer some detail in their note, such as something they learned.

*If public transportation will be necessary in order to get to the site, have students work together to determine the method, route, cost, and timing.

EXTENSION

If students have an identified area of interest for careers or education, find out if they can audit a class on the day of your visit. Additionally, if you are working with students with disabilities, contact the Disability Support Services office and arrange for some time with that staff, as well,

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so students can learn the process for requesting services and accommodations at the post-secondary level.