



Careers Café

What are they?

These are small events where we invite in a few local business people to have an informal chat with students over a cup of tea. They are short events, say 30 minutes. Before school is a good time as many employers will be more willing to attend at the start of their normal working day but find out what works in your area. The conversation could be about their own career and the pathway they took, or they might want to share what it is they and their business do.

Objectives

- To provide 'meaningful encounters' Gatsby benchmark 5
- As part of your regular careers programme Gatsby benchmark 1
- To help students learn more about the modern world of work and the options and opportunities available to them.
- To build confidence in your students when networking in the working world
- To allow them to access information about careers and local labour market information Gatsby benchmark 2.

Planning



Step 1: Planning

Step 1 outline basic plan and discuss with SLT lead on CEIAG to get agreement to put in the school calendar. This planning should include the following:-

Dates



Regular times are good, say monthly or half termly, you may wish to trial say 3 Career Café's with a view to doing more when they go well.

Venue



Somewhere relaxed such as a quiet corner of the dining hall (if that even exists) or the library.

Attendees



Try and build a pool of attendees and don't expect the same people to come more than once or twice a year. Ideally, different types of employers and ages. This takes time and effort but will pay off in the long run.

Plan for publicity



Don't just put it in the school calendar, put it on the website so parents know as well as students. Use the school parent text system as well as the newsletter. Get heads of year to announce in assembly as well as announcements on the school plasma screens.

How you will prepare pupils



Regular times are good, say monthly or half termly, you may wish to trial say 3 Career Café's with a view to doing more when they go well.

Ensure staff attendance



To supervise contact from a discrete distance. Will that always be the CEIAG lead or could you use the time to arrange some extra CPD for staff. For example D&T teachers or science staff might want to supervise cafes where engineering firms are in attendance.

Provide refreshments



At least for the employers, but if possible, also for the students. A budget will be needed for this.

Organisation



Step 2: Organisation

Once you have the plan approved it's time for the second step, organisation. This organisation should include the following:-

Attendees



- If you don't already have a database of employers you work with, it will need some work to make contacts, why not use our introduction email template as a starting point. Start with companies that already work with your school, you can always move on to new prospects later.
- Once somebody has agreed to take part, ensure you keep their details handy. Use a spreadsheet, contacts list or your preferred method to keep them together and easily accessible.
- Ensure that attendees are briefed with expected behaviour such as safeguarding procedures as well as how to get to the school, parking or transport, times etc. You could use our confirmation email as a guideline.
- Confirm their attendance and send a reminder a week or so beforehand. Again we have a reminder template you may wish to use.

Student Prep



- Make sure students know what the Career Café events are and what they can find out.
- You may wish to suggest some questions that students might wish to ask.

Book Venue



Use your school room booking system to ensure venue is booked.

Refreshments



Order enough for the attendees

Publicity



- Make sure that the whole series of events are on the school website.
- Use our poster to publicise the time and place, it's on a PowerPoint slide so can also be used on display screens and interactive whiteboards. Don't forget to include who is attending each event. This can drive attendance by those who have an interest in relevant areas.
- Add to the staff bulletin & parent newsletter.
- Inform form tutors and ask that they let pupils know.
- Send out parent texts.

On the day



Step 3: On the day

On the day

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- Ensure you or members of staff/prefects to meet attendees and escort them to the venue.
- Ensure they are settled and ready to meet students.
- Ensure they know where toilets are and where to go if there is a fire drill.
- Provide a signing in sheet for students so that you can keep an eye on uptake and help provide data for meeting employer engagement targets.
- At the end of the event, make sure they are thanked and spend a little time with them if possible. You often find out useful information at this point such as the possibility of visits or work experience or vacancies coming up.
- Make sure that you send a thank you email after wish to use.

Afterwards



- Keep in touch with the employer, don't just email them when you want something. Let them know of things going on in the school, such as plays or fetes. Send them a Christmas card. It's the relationship building that brings results and helps you to build a bank of employers willing to support you.
- You may wish to evaluate the impact of the events by questionnaires or focus groups.=