Workplace Mentoring Guide
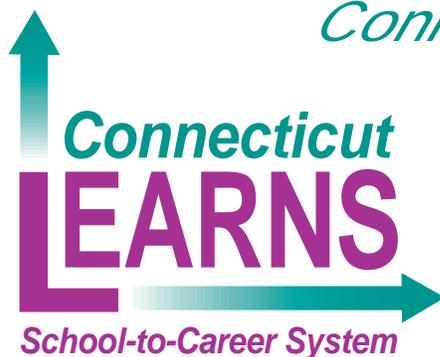
For Education, Business and Industry Partners of Connecticut's School-to-Career Initiative:

Connecticut LEARNS 2000

Connecticut
LEARNS
School-to-Career System

WORKPLACE MENTORING GUIDE

*For Education, Business and Industry Partners of
Connecticut's School-to-Career Initiative, CONNECTICUT LEARNS*

Foreword and Acknowledgments

This *Workplace Mentoring Guide* has been prepared for any individual or organization interested and/or involved in placing students in work-based learning experiences such as internships in businesses and industry or community service learning projects. The purpose of this *Guide* is to help establish effective, structured workplace learning experiences to better inform and prepare students as they develop education and career plans. This *Guide* addresses the roles and responsibilities of the student learner, employer-provided mentor and the supervisor engaged in workplace learning experiences. It is offered as a tool to be customized to your needs; to compliment your efforts; and, ultimately, to help students as they explore career possibilities now and in the future.

The *Connecticut Learns (CT LEARNS)* Workplace Mentoring Committee (WPMC) emerged early in 1999 to clarify the role of employer-provided workplace mentors assigned to students placed in school-to-career (STC) internships. This committee is a collaborative effort among the State Department of Education (SDE), its two state-level STC partner labor and business organizations [the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA)] and the Governor's Career Internship Program (GCIP), as well as several local school-to-career partners experienced in the design and implementation of workplace mentoring. As the fiscal agent and a lead partner in Connecticut's School-to-Career Initiative, the SDE works in partnership with other statewide education, labor and youth organizations and agencies to identify and define opportunities for students to connect school with work. The object of the STC initiative is to help students explore postsecondary education and career options, and to acquire the relevant experiences, education and skills necessary to make more informed, education and career decisions after graduation.

In 1998, *CT LEARNS,* with the Governor's support, helped to launch America's Promise, General Colin Powell's national youth mentoring project, along with the CT Mentoring Partnership (CMP) of Drugs Don't Work. In planning America's Promise, it became clear that there was a need to emphasize the importance of employer-provided workplace mentors for students in internships. It is important to differentiate the unique coaching role of workplace mentors from that of caring adults who volunteer to mentor youth through a variety of school-based, community-based and even work-based social mentoring programs across the state.

As more Connecticut school districts and employers become partners in their local school-to-career initiatives, STC student internships are increasing. The purpose of these internships is twofold:

1. They add relevancy to academic learning by providing hands-on learning that connects classroom lessons with employer-identified workplace skills; and

2. They expose students to careers that they may choose to pursue after graduation, and the requisite education and skill requirements for those careers.

Federal school-to-work legislation requires that student internships be structured to include an employer-approved mentor to introduce the student intern to all aspects of the industry, and to coach the student in the workplace skills necessary to be successful in the workplace.

The *CT LEARNS* Workplace Mentoring Committee (WPMC) has met frequently over the last seven months to develop a guide to workplace mentoring based upon existing, primarily in-state working models of mentoring for STC internships. This *Workplace Mentoring Guide* is the result of that effort.

I would like to acknowledge the Greater New Haven School-to-Work Partnership for their important contributions to this *Guide*. In 1994, as a recipient of one of the first 15 national School-to-Work Opportunities local partnership grants, they focused early attention on the critical role of the workplace mentor.

I would like to thank committee members for their persistent, patient and painstaking approach to reviewing each and every document on mentoring that we collectively and individually discovered and shared.

Committee members include:

* Arlyne Alexander of CBIA;
* Donna Custer of the Norwalk Public Schools;
* Barbara Green of the Omni Hotels (formerly of the Regional Workforce Development Board of Greater New Haven);
* Debra Hinck of the CT DOL;
* Cynthia Lowman of the New Haven Public Schools;
* Ken Nelson of the Department of Biology, Yale University;
* Mary Ann O'Brien of the New Haven Public Schools;
* Lisa Rivieccio of the Norwalk Public Schools; and
* Pat Worthy of Yale New Haven Hospital.

I am especially grateful to my co-chair of the WPMC, Marianne Rosa Guay, coordinator of the Governor's Career Internship Program, whose persistence in her search for guidelines to mentors in the workplace was the catalyst for the formation of this committee.

In closing, it is important to note that although the committee attempted to review and incorporate information from working models, many colleagues in the state are currently developing promising practices and resources to better define workplace mentoring. Those resources, along with other materials the committee has reviewed, have been included in the *Resources Section* at the end of the Guide.

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Contents

WORKPLACE MENTORING GUIDE

A. What is Workplace Mentoring?

> *The School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 defines a workplace mentor as "an employee or other individual, approved by the employer at a workplace, who possesses the skills and knowledge to be mastered by a student, and who instructs the student, critiques the performance of a student, challenges the student to perform well, and works in consultation with classroom teachers and the employer of the student."*

The workplace mentor establishes a relationship with the student and exemplifies the ideal model expected of the student relating to workplace behaviors, attitudes and skills.

Many students do not have the opportunity for exposure to adults in a workplace. In school and social settings, their peers influence them most. When students transition from school to employment, they may fail to realize that their school behavior may be unacceptable in the workplace. Unless corrected, such behavior can have permanent negative consequences. The workplace mentor, as a respected adult who is neither parent nor teacher, can help students learn appropriate workplace lessons and behavior.

A workplace mentor serves as a coach, role model and advocate to the student, as the student learns and practices expected work behaviors (such as timely attendance, meeting deadlines and quality performance standards). The mentor acts as an "information broker," providing occupational and industry information to students to help them make appropriate career choices and be successful in the workplace. Helping students understand the unique "culture" of an organization is a key factor in successful workplace experiences. Workplace mentors also help students understand the value of each task, how their work contributes to or influences the goals of the organization, and how workplace requirements relate to what they are learning in school.

There are other types of general mentoring programs that match adults with young people who are in need of coaching, role models and emotional support. These mentoring programs include community-based, school-based, court-based, career or hobby-based, campus-based, and faith-based mentoring.

This guide focuses solely on workplace mentoring as it relates to structured internships and community service learning projects — two of Connecticut's school-to-career work-based learning components.

B. Workplace Mentoring as Part of Connecticut's School-to-Career System

It should be emphasized that workplace mentoring relationships and activities are intended to occur within the context of a student's individual structured work-based learning plan — not as an isolated activity.

The following sections (one through five) will help the reader understand how workplace mentoring fits into Connecticut's school-to-career system and the continuum of work-based learning options.

1. *How is the school-to-career system organized in Connecticut?*

To develop a workforce able to meet the demands of an information-based economy, both federal and state laws were passed to create a "school-to-career" system. The goal was to build bridges between school and work so that after postsecondary training, students could make a successful transition from one environment to the other.

In August 1996, the State Department of Education received a five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education, totaling 19.8 million dollars, to implement a comprehensive school-to-career system in Connecticut, known as *CT LEARNS*.

The key statewide organizations that collaborated to develop this initiative include:

- ✫ The State Departments of Education, Labor, Higher Education, and Economic and Community Development;
- ✫ The Connecticut Business and Industry Association; and
- ✫ The AFL-CIO.

These key stakeholders in the *CT LEARNS* initiative joined together to promote school-to-career in response to the educational needs of the students and the economic needs of the state.

Eight regional partnerships have been established by linking existing organizations of educators and employers. These partnerships are facilitated by lead staff of the state's regional educational service centers, regional workforce development boards, and the community-technical colleges. Each partnership includes representatives from schools, businesses and communities in that region and is open to new members. Regional partnerships play a key role in the statewide rollout of the *CT LEARNS* initiatives; they foster new school-to-career partnerships at the local level and support existing models.

2. What are the components of the school-to-career system?

Connecticut has a three-part school-to-career system that prepares students for postsecondary education and the demands of the workplace.

School-Based Learning: School-based learning is classroom instruction with high academic standards that incorporates career cluster skill requirements (See section five: What are the career clusters?) Examples are:

- ★ Teachers and employers working together to develop broad-based curricula that help students learn skills that will be needed in the workplace;
- ★ Students developing projects and working in teams, much like in the workplace;
- ★ Teachers working in teams to coordinate separate disciplines and create projects that are relevant to work and life; and
- ★ Counselors providing comprehensive career education and guidance for all students.

Work-Based Learning: Work-based learning may include project-based activities in either the classroom or community, exploratory activities such as field trips and job shadowing in local companies, and structured workplace learning activities at a work site known as internships.

Workplace learning at an actual work site provides students with opportunities to study complex subject matter in the "real world" and develop vital workplace skills. Employers want and need workers to have a baseline of skills upon which they can develop a variety of occupation-related skills.

They are requiring that employees:

- ★ be able to read, write, and compute;
- ★ communicate clearly and effectively;
- ★ have a solid work ethic;
- ★ be technologically literate; and
- ★ be able to work in teams, make decisions, solve problems and manage their work.

Structured work-based learning experiences at a workplace include:

- ★ internships;
- ★ community service learning projects;
- ★ pre-apprenticeship; and
- ★ externships for educators.

Adult employee-mentors and supervisors collaborate with school staff to guide and challenge students to perform well at work sites. Through their experiences, students learn the knowledge and skills appropriate to a specific career and the general work expectations of promptness, commitment and persistence.

Work-based experiences are further described on the **Work-Based Learning Continuum Chart** (see next page).

Connecting Activities: Connecting activities are those activities that help connect classroom experience and work experience, such as matching students with jobs, training supervisors and mentors at the work site to oversee students, and integrating work-based learning into the school curriculum. Examples are:

★ integrating classroom and on-the-job instruction;
★ matching students with participating employers;
★ training work site mentors;
★ conducting school and business staff exchanges; and
★ assisting students with the development of career portfolios and placement in postsecondary education.

3.   What is meant by "all aspects of the industry?"

An important way that the school-to-career initiative gives students a broader workplace experience is to introduce them to "all aspects of an industry." This introduction helps students to gain a comprehensive perspective and range of skills across an industry. There are eight *key aspects* that the federal School-to-Work Opportunities Act has identified as important aspects of industry:

★ planning;
★ management;
★ finance;
★ underlying principles of technology;
★ technical and production skills;
★ labor and community issues;
★ health and safety issues; and
★ environmental issues.

To ensure that students learn "all aspects of an industry," companies:

★ rotate students through departments;
★ offer job shadowing experiences to complement department-based training;
★ pair students with work site mentors who have broad organizational responsibilities; and
★ include social competencies (such as teamwork, communication and other social skills) in training plans or work site experiences.

In small- and medium-sized enterprises where there may not be multiple departments and staff, students will be exposed to the many facets of running a small business.

4. *What is the Connecticut Work-Based Learning Continuum?*

Work-Based Learning Continuum
The Connecticut School-to-Career Initiative: *CT Learns*

Career Exploration	Field Trip/ Company Tour	Job Shadowing	Internship	Pre-Apprentice-ship	Externships for Educators
★1-3 hours*	★1-3 hours*	★4-8 hours*	★3-18 weeks*	★3-12 months*	★Work site experience during which educators observe and participate in a work-place for periods of time
★Provide speakers to schools	★Students/ educators	★Students/ educators observe individual employees	★Students develop broad skills through hands-on learning and instruction, closely integrated with school-based activities	★Students gain specific technical skills in the trades, college credits, and/ or certifica-tion.	
★Participate in career/job fairs	★Students visit company sites to see all aspects of the industry		★Typically, paid em-ployment	★Hands-on learning closely integrated with school-based activities	

← **Career Exploration** →

★Employers can assist students in career exploration in all of the above components of work-based learning

← **Mentoring** →

★A mentorship is a formal relationship between a student and a work site role model; providing support and encouragement to the student

* All hours are approximate

Adapted by CBIA from the Northwest Regional Educational Lab

5. What are Connecticut's career clusters and their required skills?

As the national economy has felt the effects of recession and industry downsizing, public policy efforts have been mounting to respond to challenges to the country's economic prosperity. Much attention has been focused on ways to educate and train our workforce so that workers can perform to world-class standards. More specifically, the identification of skills needed by American workers and the level of competency these workers must attain to become competitive, has become a major concern to government, industry, and education leaders across the country.

In Connecticut, the state Departments of Education, Labor, Higher Education and Economic and Community Development, along with state business and labor organizations, have spent considerable time and energy discussing the need for establishing skill standards. These standards would direct the development and revision of curriculum and applied work-based learning at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

The Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA), the state's largest business association, was asked to take the lead in developing industry standards and determining their relationship to work-based learning opportunities for students. In 1994, CBIA's education foundation received a contract from the state Department of Education to develop skill standards for entry-level jobs in eight industry and career clusters:

- ★ **Arts and Media;**
- ★ **Business and Finance;**
- ★ **Construction, Technologies and Design;**
- ★ **Environmental, Natural Resources and Agriculture;**
- ★ **Government, Education and Human Services;**
- ★ **Health and Biosciences;**
- ★ **Retail, Tourism, Recreation and Entrepreneurial; and**
- ★ **Technologies: Manufacturing, Communications and Repair.**

From October '94 to March '95, CBIA convened skill committees in the eight industry cluster areas. Committee members included industry and community representatives and educators. They determined job categories within each cluster that require a high school diploma, an associate's degree or other postsecondary degrees; and outlined the academic, employability, and technical skills necessary to perform competently in those job categories. In 1999, CBIA created a skills matrix that crosswalks these industry skill standards with skills identified under Goals 2000 (such as SCANS skills), and with the Connecticut SDE's CAPT test (an academic performance assessment required of tenth grade students).

Upon successful completion of school-to-career activities at the high school level, students can acquire the *Connecticut Career Certificate.* Each certificate is designed to be a portable credential indicating attainment of academic, employability and technical skills in one of the eight clusters.

C. Benefits of Workplace Mentoring

A successful workplace mentoring relationship assists in the development and future employability of youth; and, as a result, helps to create a highly skilled and educated workforce. The following individuals have been identified as key members in the workplace mentoring relationship:

- ✰ the workplace mentor;
- ✰ the workplace manager/supervisor;
- ✰ school staff; and
- ✰ the student intern.

Benefits to Students include:

- ✰ increased self-confidence, self-esteem and self-knowledge;
- ✰ increased personal and social competencies;
- ✰ increased knowledge of specific occupations and industries;
- ✰ education connected to the world of work;
- ✰ increased motivation to succeed in school and at work;
- ✰ increased ability to communicate effectively with others;
- ✰ increased demonstration of responsible behaviors;
- ✰ stronger workplace skills and competencies; and
- ✰ support from successful and caring adults.

Benefits to Employers include:

- ✰ an expanded pool of qualified applicants;
- ✰ an opportunity to screen potential employees;
- ✰ an opportunity to positively influence future employees, regardless of where they may eventually work;
- ✰ a reliable source for highly skilled workers;
- ✰ reduced turnover of entry-level employees; and
- ✰ an opportunity to influence curriculum development to meet industry needs.

Benefits to Mentors include:

- ✰ an opportunity to improve the quality of life for young people;
- ✰ better communication and coaching skills of adults in relationship to young people;
- ✰ satisfaction from helping others;
- ✰ an opportunity to improve the quality of education in the community; and
- ✰ an increased understanding of the challenges facing young people today.

Community Benefits include:

☆ an opportunity to support individual student growth;
☆ an opportunity to contribute to the development of productive citizens;
☆ reduced dependence on public support;
☆ an opportunity to develop broad-based partnerships; and
☆ a chance to enhance economic growth and development.

Benefits to Schools include:

☆ a reduction in the dropout rate;
☆ increased student motivation to learn;
☆ increased learning experiences for students; and
☆ an opportunity to connect learning and work.

Since each mentor-student relationship is unique, school-to-career employers and educators need to identify their own goals for workplace mentoring and articulate their expectations to each other. The communication of desired outcomes helps to ensure successful work-based learning.

D. Strategies for Recruiting Workplace Mentors

How do managers recruit mentors from within the company? Various methods are described below.

☆ Managers solicit individual recommendations from department supervisors and existing workplace mentors;
☆ E-mail explaining mentoring is sent to all employees;
☆ Announcements appear in company newsletters and on bulletin boards; and
☆ Information on company mentoring program is part of all new employees' orientation.

E. Characteristics of an Effective Workplace Mentor

An effective workplace mentor is:

☆ willing and able to commit the necessary time to a student;
☆ interested in helping and teaching youth;
☆ able to communicate effectively with youth;
☆ able to see mentoring as an opportunity rather than an "assignment;"
☆ sensitive to culturally diverse backgrounds;
☆ capable of encouraging, supporting, motivating and leading others; and
☆ willing to share constructive criticism and feedback in a supportive, sensitive and patient manner.

F. Roles and Responsibilities

As educators and employers collaborate and define their own goals for workplace mentoring, they will reach consensus concerning the roles and responsibilities of each individual in the mentoring relationship. This helps to alleviate confusion and reduce obstacles to creating successful mentoring relationships.

The following roles and responsibilities of workplace mentors, workplace managers and student interns have been identified as a guide for employers and educators. They are not meant to be prescriptive and should be customized for each mentoring opportunity. Keep in mind that the needs of the student and the employer should drive the decision-making process.

It might be helpful to think about workplace mentoring roles and responsibilities as falling into three categories:

- ★ orientation,
- ★ support, and
- ★ development of career exploration opportunities and skills for students.

Roles and responsibilities will often overlap. The amount of time a mentor spends with a student can vary depending upon the needs of the student, the schedule of the mentor, the demands of the particular industry, and the class load of the student.

Workplace Mentors:

- ★ contribute to the design, development and objectives of the student's individual internship or work-based learning plan;

- ★ provide the student with an overview of the business, division functions and workplace rules, policies and procedures (including work-ethic issues, the organizational culture, unwritten rules and the social aspects of work);

- ★ explain the organization's goals to the student and discuss how each division contributes to the achievement of goals;

- ★ help the student understand his or her job responsibilities;

- ★ help the student learn about other career opportunities within the organization and the student's chosen career cluster(s);

- ★ assist the student in identifying and developing specific occupational, technical skills and the core academic and employability skills (see appendix A);

- ★ help the student see connections between classroom learning and the workplace;

★ point out the differences between school and work environments, including acceptable behavior and performance expectations;

★ help build the student's self-esteem and confidence by providing opportunities for success in the workplace and positively reinforcing accomplishments;

★ guide the student in work-related decision making, goal setting, prioritizing and scheduling;

★ provide feedback necessary for the student to perform effectively, highlighting strengths and opportunities for growth and correcting inappropriate behavior;

★ seek out the student's opinions and suggestions;

★ formally or informally evaluate the student's work performance;

★ coach the student to continuously improve work performance and encourage ongoing self-assessment;

★ help the student to resolve conflicts, clarify issues and cope with stressful situations;

★ make suggestions concerning appropriate work assignments, internship specifications, training and supervisory staff;

★ act as a liaison between workplace and school staff, mediating when necessary and maintaining communication with school staff concerning student's progress (may share this responsibility with workplace managers);

★ encourage the student to continue educational, personal and professional development;

★ increase the student's awareness of career resources, networking opportunities and professional associations;

★ model behaviors that lead to workplace success, including respectful communication and cooperation with colleagues; and

★ evaluate self and student.

Workplace Managers:

- ★ solicit approval for involvement in school-to-career activities from their organization's top management;

- ★ initiate actions to increase company-wide awareness and participation in school-to-career activities;

- ★ help to recruit, select and train appropriate mentor volunteers from within the organization;

- ★ define and clarify the roles and responsibilities of workplace mentors and students;

- ★ include the mentor in individual internship or work plan design, objectives, and student selection criteria;

- ★ help students evaluate their own performance and the attainment of goals;

- ★ help students and mentors address concerns, propose solutions to problems (when necessary) and take action to resolve serious issues (as appropriate);

- ★ act as a liaison between workplace and school staff, mediating when necessary and maintaining communication with school staff concerning student's progress (may share this responsibility with workplace mentors);

- ★ offer support and suggestions for continuous improvement of the mentor-student relationship;

- ★ are sensitive to need for workplace mentors to spend time with students;

- ★ identify ongoing needs of workplace mentors and students; and

- ★ evaluate students and employee-mentors.

School Staff *(the school-to-career coordinator if available)*

★ clearly communicate the objectives of workplace mentoring to business partners and students;

★ involve employers in determining the selection criteria, training and orientation for participating students and workplace personnel;

★ collaborate with other school-to-career partners to establish criteria for and assist in the selection, training and orientation of workplace mentors;

★ orient workplace mentors to each student, addressing specific issues that might affect the success of their working relationship, such as special needs, transportation problems and family issues;

★ provide students with career interest and assessment tools to help them identify career options; prepare an individual career plan for each student;

★ prepare students for participation in work-based activities through training and instruction in basic skills and workplace readiness skills (e.g. behavior expectations, work-ethic issues, dress codes, filling out application forms, preparation for interviews and punctuality);

★ involve parents in supporting work-based learning activities;

★ coordinate ongoing communication between students, workplace mentors, school staff and parents;

★ provide staff development and training opportunities for school and business partners on issues related to mentoring youth in a workplace environment;

★ maintain frequent communication with employers concerning student's progress and attainment of goals; visit employer sites;

★ participate in work-based activities to learn about employer expectations and current workplace issues; and

★ compile evaluations from students and mentors.

Student Interns

★ demonstrate commitment and time to a workplace experience;

★ show an interest in helping, working with and learning from adults;

★ are willing and able to follow employer rules, regulations, policies (examples include on-time attendance, notification of absences, safe and responsible handling of equipment and company property);

★ plan transportation to and from the workplace;

★ demonstrate willingness to learn how to communicate effectively with adults in the workplace;

★ act in a manner that is sensitive to the culturally-diverse backgrounds of others;

★ ask questions and agree to participate in problem-solving activities;

★ demonstrate a willingness to accept constructive criticism and feedback;

★ agree to act as a role model to other student interns; and

★ evaluate mentors and work-based learning experiences.

Student Interns also:

★ gain an understanding of the business (its functions, rules, policies and procedures, norms and customs, unwritten rules and social aspects);

★ develop an understanding of the goals of the organization and how each division, and the student, helps to achieve those goals;

★ understand their job responsibilities, internship and/or work objectives and career exploration opportunities within the organization;

★ work to develop the core academic and employability skills, as well as the technical skills in the cluster(s) of their choice;

★ work to understand the connection between classroom learning and applications in the workplace;

★ recognize the differences between school and work environments as well as behavior and performance expectations;

★ strive to meet or exceed expectations;

★ work to increase self-esteem and confidence through successful workplace experiences;

★ develop decision-making, goal-setting and time-management skills;

★ take initiative to ask necessary questions to perform effectively; offer opinions and solutions to problems when appropriate;

★ seek to resolve own conflicts, clarify issues, cope with stressful situations, and solicit support as necessary; and

★ demonstrate behaviors that lead to workplace success, including respectful communication and cooperation with supervisors and team members.

G. Evaluation

To ensure that the workplace learning experience is meeting the expectations of all collaborating parties and for continuous improvement, regular evaluation on the part of all the partners is necessary. The frequency of evaluation and the method of assessment should be addressed at the time the workplace learning opportunity is first structured. Ideally, mentoring should be part of the mentor's job description, and valued as an investment in the future. It should not create conflict with the mentor's role as an employee in the company.

Evaluation results should be shared by all partners. Once the evaluation method and schedule has been identified, a plan to review the evaluations should be discussed in order to continue and strengthen what works, and to address and revise what doesn't work. Regular evaluation and continuous improvement can only create a more meaningful and useful workplace learning experience for all involved. Below is a suggested format for evaluation:

★ The Manager evaluates: a. student(s)
             b. employee-mentor

★ The Mentor evaluates: a. self (self-evaluation)
             b. student

★ The Student evaluates: a. mentor
             b. experience

H. Working with Youth

Working with a young person offers many rewards and challenges. It is important to remember to take nothing for granted. Many aspects of the workplace will be new to a student. Also, expect that personality traits will differ depending on the student's age. For example, students in late adolescence (ages 16–18) test their ideas and interests in the context of the adult world. This is the period of emerging independence.

The following traits are characteristic of youth in late adolescence:

★ Eager for opportunities to make decisions;
★ Challenges authority;
★ Interested in physical appearance according to peer standards;
★ Wants independence and privileges, but has difficulty with responsibility and personal discipline;
★ Uneasy about their preparation for the future;
★ Tries out different values and begins to build personal philosophies;
★ Sensitive to the reactions of adults, desires respect but pretends to be indifferent; and
★ Insecure in new settings with adults but acts confident.

Remember that a workplace experience takes students out of the comfort zone of school. Students may be shy or quiet until they are accustomed to the work environment. Do not interpret this behavior as lack of interest. Even if the student remains quiet for the duration of the internship, he/she will still gain a great deal by spending time at the workplace. You may not see the impact of your mentoring, but do not be discouraged. Your support and encouragement will have positive results for the intern down the road.

1. Student/Adolescent Characteristics:

Although each is an individual, adolescents have some characteristics in common:

★ They can be moody. (Remember: They are experiencing rapid emotional, social, physical, and intellectual changes);
★ They can be extremely self-critical and self-conscious;
★ They seek independence and autonomy, but need limits;
★ Peer groups provide the strongest source of identification;
★ They identify closely with their race and gender;
★ They are idealistic about social and religious issues;
★ They need meaningful participation in their communities; and
★ They need acceptance, respect and trust from an adult.

2. Some Caveats for the Workplace Mentor:

Remember that your role as a workplace mentor is to support and orient the student in the world of work. This means not crossing the line into the other types of general mentoring referenced in Chapter A. Steer clear of:
★ asking personal questions;
★ acting as a counselor or therapist;
★ giving personal advice; and/or
★ being judgmental.

Focus on being friendly and supportive, a good listener and a positive role model.

Conclusion

This concludes the guidelines for workplace mentors who work with students involved in structured workplace learning experiences such as internships or community service learning projects. While workplace mentors are critical to the success of quality work-based experiences, there are other elements of these important learning opportunities offered by partners in business and industry that will be addressed in future chapters of this *Guide.* Consider this document on workplace mentoring as one of several chapters on creating valuable, quality work-based learning experiences for student interns. Future chapters will be announced and made available to you as they are created.

In closing, you are encouraged to keep the student at the center of all you do. Above all, enjoy the opportunity to mentor a young person. They are our best, natural resource — the promise of our future.

Appendices

Appendix A

Connecticut's School-to-Career Core Academic and Employability Skill Requirements for All Eight Clusters

Academic Skills

Language Skills-Reading
★ Locate and use reference materials
★ Sequence information
★ Compare and contrast information
★ Interpret technical documents, manuals and tables
★ Identify main and subordinate ideas
★ Cross-reference information
★ Follow directions to achieve an objective
★ Identify cause and effect relationships
★ Draw conclusions from facts
★ Predict consequences
★ Interpret abbreviations, symbols and graphs

Language Skills-Writing
★ Organize and relate ideas
★ Develop preliminary outline
★ Use standard grammar and punctuation
★ Create clear memos and letters
★ Proofread and edit
★ Complete forms and applications
★ Take notes
★ Create and interpret graphs and charts

Communications Skills
★ Exchange ideas
★ Ask and answer questions
★ Organize and express directions in logical sequence
★ Convey thoughts upward, downward and laterally
★ Comprehend ideas and instructions
★ Follow directions to achieve an objective
★ Use appropriate body language
★ Distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information
★ Identify cause and effect information
★ Infer meaning
★ Draw conclusions
★ Predict consequences
★ Apply data analysis to job tasks
★ Demonstrate interviewing skills
★ Demonstrate telephone skills

Mathematics
★ Add, subtract, multiply and divide whole
★ numbers, decimals, fractions & mixed numbers
★ Convert decimals, fractions, ratios & percentages
★ Conduct linear, area, volume capacity & weight
★ measurements
★ Calculate ratios and proportions
★ Estimate to nearest whole numbers
★ Apply statistical principles
★ Apply algebraic principles
★ Apply geometric principles
★ Identify trends from data
★ Create and interpret tables and graphs
★ Use calculator

Sciences
★ Demonstrate basic understanding of biology
★ Demonstrate basic understanding of chemistry and
★ physics

Thinking-Problem-solving Skills
★ Conceive ideas
★ Formulate problems
★ Identify key information pertinent to problems
★ Draw conclusions from information
★ Predict outcomes
★ Develop an action plan
★ Evaluate impact of solution

Computer Knowledge
★ Operate a personal computer
★ Have keyboarding skills
★ Use word-processing software
★ Use specialized software
★ Use database software
★ Use CD-ROMS
★ Establish document storage
★ Use computer communication
★ Use computers to format
★ Use computer bookkeeping
★ Enter simple data
★ Apply computers to job tasks

Employability Skills

Personal Attributes
★ Takes initiative
★ Assumes responsibility
★ Displays a good self-concept
★ Persists until job is done
★ Works well without supervision
★ Takes responsibility for production/quality
★ Conflicts do not impede performance
★ Seeks new challenges
★ Applies ethics to behavior
★ Responds well to criticism
★ Maintains a professional image
★ Works well under stress
★ Displays positive behaviors
★ Follows instructions
Adheres to code of conduct

Customer Service Skills
★ Adopt a customer service orientation
★ Gather information from various sources to identify prospective customers/markets
★ Communicate with customer in a professional manner
★ Maintain accurate and complete information about
★ Customers
★ Document and process customer information/orders
★ Interpret customer information to identify needs
★ Offer options to problems and negotiate solutions
★ Show customers how to implement plan and take action
★ Whenever necessary
★ Monitor implementation plan and take action whenever
★ necessary
★ Identify new customer needs
★ Inform customer when needs cannot be met
★ Make alternate recommendations
★ Analyze customer feedback to improve internal customer
★ Support process

Team Work
★ Works effectively in a team
★ Follows instruction
★ Takes initiative
★ Provides support to others
★ Fosters innovation
★ Manages relationships

Adaptability
★ Accepts changes
★ Performs multiple assignments
★ Shows flexibility
★ Adjusts style to the situation
★ Handles multiple tasks simultaneously

Appendix B

Legal Requirements for Wages, Working Papers, and Job Restrictions
This section is excerpted from "Students in the Workplace: Connecticut Employers' Guide to School-to-Career," written by the Connecticut Business and Industry Association, CBIA

Must I pay my student wages in a school-to-career program?

Under Connecticut law, school-to-career students age 16 and over, in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades, do actual work as part of the program. Students must be paid for all work that is typically paid work. However, students do not have to be paid for work that is not normally paid work, such as community service, career awareness and exploration activities, field trips, job shadowing, and other non-employment activities. If you want certain work to be unpaid, the student's school principal may write to the state Labor Commissioner for a waiver. It should be noted that waivers are time restricted. Request should include documentation detailing the student's activities before approval is granted.

How do I determine what the student should be paid for actual work?

In general, a student must be paid at least minimum wage. It currently is $5.65 per hour and on January 1, 2000 it will be $6.15 per hour. The wage must be negotiated by the employer and the school principal or designee, and be acceptable to the student. It also must be appropriate for the actual work performed and the student's status. Minors employed in government or agriculture may be paid 85 percent of the minimum wage. In other industries, minors may be paid 85 percent of the minimum wage for the first 200 hours. Apprentices may also be employed at a rate less than minimum wage if approved by the state Department of Labor.

Am I required to pay the student overtime?

Students must be paid 1.5 times their regular rate of pay for each hour worked beyond the 40-hour workweek, just as any other employee would be. However, given the nature of the program, it is unlikely a student would work this many hours in any week.

Do school-to-career students need working papers or other proof of age?

Yes. Anyone under the age of 18 who is employed must provide their employer with a certificate of age. Employers simply need to outline the student's position, hours and salary on their business stationery, sign and date the document, and forward it to the school. The school must then obtain proof of age from the student through such documents as a birth certificate, passport or driver's license, and then issue a certificate of age to the student. The employer must maintain the certificate on file and make it available for inspection by the state Department of Labor during business hours.

May I displace a current employee with a student employee?

No. The law forbids displacing a regular employee with a school-to-career student. This means you may not lay off a regular employee to hire the student, nor may you employ the student in a job from which an employee has been laid off and retains recall rights. Finally, you may not reduce the hours, wages or benefits of any employees in order to employ school-to-career participants.

Are there any obligations if my workforce is unionized?

If your workforce is unionized, you must receive written approval from the labor organizations covering the work to be performed by school-to-career students before the students begin work.

Are there laws prohibiting school-to-career students from performing certain jobs?

Students who are 16 or 17 years old in certified school-to-career programs may perform a variety of "hazardous jobs" that other minors their age are prohibited from doing because of child labor laws. These jobs are listed by their career cluster. If you are not sure which cluster applies, check each of the tables that might be applicable. If you do not find the job for which you are considering hiring a minor, most likely there are no restrictions on it. If you are unsure, call one of the offices listed below. Their staff will be able to tell you if these laws have been updated.

1) Wage and Workplace Standards Division of the Connecticut Department of Labor: 860/263-6790
2) Apprenticeship Division at the Connecticut Department of Labor: 860/263-6085
3) Department of Consumer Protection – Occupational Licenses: 860/566-3290
4) The Federal Office of Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA): 860/240-3152

The safety of employees, especially minors, is of paramount importance in all jobs. Even if there are no legal restrictions on a minor performing a particular job, it is recommended that employers proceed with great care and common sense. Employers employing minors in certain "prohibited" occupations must keep on file an approved copy of Form LED 75-1, revised July 1997, and signed off by the student, parent, school and Labor Commissioner. The school-based coordinator is responsible for filing this form with the Department of Labor. Filing must be in compliance with Connecticut General Statutes 31-23, "Employment of minors prohibited in certain occupations while enrolled in a state-approved school-to-career program."

Under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), child labor laws only apply if an employment relationship exists. However, it is recommended that school-to-career participants adhere to child labor laws covering hazardous working conditions even when an employment relationship does not exist. For ages 18 and above, there are no restrictions on what a student may do.

How many hours per week can school-to-career students work?

Employers and school-to-career students have some flexibility in determining weekly work schedules. State and federal laws impose restrictions on the hours minors can work, and these laws also apply to school-to-career students, except where noted. These restrictions are not cumbersome, however, and should not interfere with developing a program that provides the student with a meaningful work experience and that meets the needs of the employer. The restrictions are as follows:

Students under age 18 may not be employed between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. (except students may be employed until 11 p.m., or in a supermarket if the store is larger than 3,500 square feet until midnight on any night not prior to a school day) in any:
  ⋆ manufacturing, mechanical or mercantile establishments.
  ⋆ public restaurants, cafes or dining rooms;
  ⋆ amusement or recreational establishments.

(**Exception:** Students may be employed until midnight on any night not prior to a school day):

In addition, students under age 18 may NOT be employed for more than 6 hours on any regularly scheduled school day (unless the school day immediately proceeds a non-school day). On any other day, students may work 8 hours. Students may not work more than 32 hours in any calendar week during which school is in session, or 48 hours in any calendar week during which school is not in session, in any:

  ⋆ public restaurants, cafes or dining rooms;
  ⋆ barber shops, hairdressing or manicuring establishments;
  ⋆ amusement or recreational establishments, including bowling alleys, billiards rooms and pool rooms;
  ⋆ shoe-shining establishments;
  ⋆ photography galleries; or
  ⋆ manufacturing, mechanical or mercantile establishments.

Note: Effective October 1, 1998, the number of hours that a student participates in a school-to-career program or other approved educational program does not count towards the daily and weekly time limits.

Students who are 16 or 17 years old may work in amusement or recreation establishments, restaurants, cafes or dining rooms, or in theaters only until 12 midnight during any regular school vacation period and on other days that do not precede a regularly scheduled school day. On nights proceeding regularly scheduled school days, students may work in these establishments only until 11 p.m.

Students age 16 years and older may work in any farm job without restrictions on their hours. However, the Connecticut Farm Bureau recommends that agricultural employers do not allow minors to work between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. Also, while minors of any age may perform work at any time on a farm owned or operated by their parents or guardians, it is recommended that these same guidelines be followed.

Connecticut law forbids employers to allow minors to work more than 6 days in any calendar week (Sunday through Saturday).

These are guidelines for employers regarding students under age 18. Remember, students involved in a certified approved school-to-career initiative have more flexibility in determining their weekly work schedule.

Appendix C

DIVERSITY

One of the goals of the school-to-career system is to connect students from diverse backgrounds to the workplace. These connections are valuable to the student and to the employer. Employers that have worked with students previously have commented that the diversity among the students has provided them with one of their most valuable experiences.

Students benefit from working in organizations that reflect the diversity of the community. They also benefit from working in a diverse business organization, and in understanding the respect and consideration necessary in that environment.

What are some ways employers can ensure equity for students in the workplace?

★ *Recognize cultural differences.* It is important to be aware of and knowledgeable about the cultural differences of students who participate in work-based learning. School staff (program coordinators, teachers and guidance counselors) can help employers understand these differences.

★ *Help students overcome biases that affect self-perceptions and career assumptions.* There are a variety of sources of biases – television, peers, relatives, and popular opinion – that influence students' self-perceptions. One of the goals of work-based learning is for students to test how they see themselves and their potential, and to challenge their assumptions about what they think they would enjoy doing as a career. Employers, whenever possible, should make students aware of occupations not traditional for the students' gender, and provide students with mentors, supervisors, or hosts who represent adults working in nontraditional roles.

★ *Support opportunities for* all *students.* Employers should make it clear to school staff that they support work-based learning opportunities that encourage all students – regardless of race, ethnicity, disabilities, or educational goals – to participate in these experiences.

★ *Consider the individual needs of students.* Employers should be sensitive to the individual needs of students, including students of color, those with disabilities, those who speak English as a second language, and teen parents.

★ *Encourage equity training for employees who will be working with students.* Employees may need training to recognize and eliminate any biases or stereotypes they may hold about careers or specific groups of students. Employers can provide such training or work with school staff to include such training as part of orientation sessions and ongoing support. Stereotypes held by students, teachers, counselors, and parents and guardians often influence whether female students and students of color feel a particu-

lar occupation is appropriate for them. Employees need to be aware of such issues in order to help create an equitable learning experience at the workplace. Training may also be necessary to help employees work effectively with students who have disabilities. Employees working with students with disabilities need to be vigilant in ensuring that students are exposed to a wide range of occupational choices.

★ *Uphold policies and procedures for addressing sexual and racial harassment.* All policies and procedures regarding sexual and racial harassment that apply to regular employees should also apply to students at the workplace. Employers must make clear that harassment is a serious matter that will not be tolerated. It is important to protect the rights of students at the workplace and create a safe and supportive environment for learning.

Appendix D

CONFIDENTIALITY

How does the need for confidentiality affect school-to-career work-based learning experiences?

Confidentiality should not be a barrier to work-based learning. Across the country, agencies and individuals dealing with confidential or client-privileged information – physicians, lawyers, psychiatrists, counselors, ministers, banks, and credit unions – have identified meaningful learning activities for students while at the same time protecting client confidentiality.

What are some ways that concerned employers can protect confidentiality?

* *By training students in protecting confidentiality* - If students are going to be exposed to confidential information, employers should provide them the same confidentiality training that regular employees receive. Because confidentiality can be a complicated matter, it may be necessary to spend more time with students than with adult workers to review training tapes, presentations, or written material on the subject. To ensure that students have a true grasp of the issues related to confidentiality, employers can design tasks in which the student, under close supervision, is required to demonstrate an understanding of how to handle confidential matters.

* *By gauging maturity level* - No matter how clearly confidentiality is explained, not all students will have the maturity to grasp it. After observing and talking to the student, employers should use their best judgment to gauge if he or she is mature enough to understand.

* *By educating customers* - Customers may not be comfortable with the idea that a student is exposed to confidential information unless they understand that the student has received the necessary training. Employers should explain to customers that the student is in a learning situation and has been properly trained.

* *By respecting the student's confidentiality* - Just as the student has a responsibility to the employer, the employer has a responsibility to the student. Through conversations with school staff or the student, an employer may learn personal information about the student. It is important that this information be kept in confidence and not shared with others at the school or the workplace.

Resources

Workplace Mentoring Resources

The following resources were used in the development of this *Guide:*

Employer as Mentor
Instructional Materials Laboratory
2316 Industrial Drive
Columbia, Missouri 65202
1-800-669-2465
http://www.iml.coe.missouri.edu

Students in the Workplace: Connecticut Employers' Guide to School to Career
The Connecticut Business and Industry
Association (CBIA)
Arlyne Alexander
350 Church Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06105
1-860-244-1934
alexanda@cbia.com

Norwalk Mentoring Program
Norwalk Mentoring Partnership
Donna Custer, Coordinator
Norwalk Public Schools
Office of Communications & Partnerships
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06852-6001
1-203- 854- 4011
depcuster@aol.com

School-to-Career Mentoring Guide
The Governor's Career Internship Program
Marianne Rosa Guay, Coordinator
P.O. Box 290945
Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109
1-860-529-9652, mrguay@AOL.com

Workplace Mentoring: Helping Students Connect School and Work
Capitol Region Workforce Development Board
Dr. Jody Brandon
Capitol Region Education Center
Anne Raymond
111 Charter Oak Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
1-860-524-4018

Workplace Mentoring Guide for the Greater New Haven School-to-Work Partnership
Regional Workforce Development Board
Frank Milone, Program Manager
560 Ella T. Grasso Boulevard
New Haven, Connecticut 06519
1-203-624-1493

Workplace Mentoring Guide for the New Haven Public Schools
Mary Ann O'Brien
School-to-Career Coordinator
Gateway Center Career Service Office
54 Meadow Street
New Haven, Connecticut
1-203-946-7052

Workplace Mentors in School-to-Work Systems
National School-to-Work Learning and
Information Center
400 Virginia Avenue, Room 150
Washington, D.C. 20024
1-800-251-7236
http://www.stw.ed.gov/factsht/mentor.htm

Workplace Mentor Training
Massachusetts Community Colleges and the
Division of Apprenticeship Training
Ann Dunphy, Director of School-to-Work
294 Washington Street, Mezzanine #18
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
1-617-542-2911
adunphy@doe.mass.edu

Additional mentoring resources include:

A Handbook for Workplace Mentors
The New England Spring and Metalstamping
Association (NESMA)
F. Fred Soliani
School-to-Career Coordinator
Greater Bristol Chamber of Commerce
Bristol, Connecticut 06010

Guide to Mentoring
The Connecticut Mentoring Partnership
30 Arbor Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
1-860-231-8831

***The Road to School-to-Work: A Map for
Implementation***
Agency for Instructional Technology (AIT)
Box A, 1800 North Stonelake Drive
Bloomington, IN 47402-0120
1-800-457-4509
http://www.ait.net/catalog/catpages/
c373a.shtml

***Training the Trainer: Developing a
Mentor Training Program***
Laura J. Sitterly
Mentor Program Coordinator
National Academies of Boston
1-617-423-3755 x 228

***Workplace Mentoring for Youth: Context,
Issues, Strategies***
Marc Freedman and Rachel Baker
Academy for Educational Development
National Institute for Work and Learning
1825 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20009-5721
http://www.niwl.org

***Work Site Mentors: Connecting Students
to the Workplace***
Instructional Materials Laboratory
2316 Industrial Drive
Columbia, Missouri 65202
1-800-669-2465
http://www.iml.coe.missouri.edu

Connecticut State
Department of Education

Division of Educational Programs and Services
George A. Coleman, Associate Commissioner

Deborah Koval
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