

Introduction

What is a Teacher Externship?

A teacher externship is a professional development opportunity available to career and technical education (CTE) teachers in South Dakota, looking to enhance their knowledge and skills through a personalized experience. Like an internship or a job shadow for students, externships offer educators a hands-on, career connected learning experience with an industry or community partner, in a peer-to-peer learning environment. CTE teachers are constantly updating their own knowledge and skills about current workplace practices, requirements, and trends to better equip their students for college and career success. Educators use what they learn during their Externship experience to enhance their CTE classroom content with the most up-to-date information from the workforce.

Why Participate in a Teacher Externship?

There are many benefits to participating in a Teacher Externship experience. As a truly personalized form of professional development, a Teacher Externship experience can:

- Enrich career-connected classroom pedagogy
- Enhance industry and education relationships
- Increase opportunities for student work-based learning opportunities
- Build CTE programs that are adaptive and innovative
- Increase teacher efficacy

Getting Started

How to Implement a Teacher Externship Experience

Because the nature of the Teacher Externship experience is that of a personalized professional development opportunity, there is no singular “best way” to structure the experience. However, successful Teacher Externships tend to include the same components to ensure a high-quality experience.

- Application/Selection Process
- Planning Guide
- Experience Reflection
- Industry Partner Follow-up

The Teacher Externship Playbook includes details of each of these components with examples and templates. However, for a Teacher Externship to be truly meaningful, it must be personalized to meet the needs of both the teacher and the industry or community partner supporting the Experience. Additionally, a successful Teacher Externship Experience is going to result in improved student outcomes in the CTE classroom.

To help plan and implement a successful Teacher Externship, the following Planning Guides have been created.

Educator Planning Guide

Guidance for educators wanting to participate in a Teacher Externship Experience.

District Planning Guide

Guidance for districts or consortiums wanting to implement a Teacher Externship Experience.

Industry Partner Planning Guide

Guidance for business and industry partners wanting to implement or participate in a Teacher Externship Experience.

Industry Partner Planning Guide

The main role of an industry/community partner is to support the teacher and/or school district throughout the experience process and provide invaluable industry expertise, professional mentorship, and guidance to help the teacher bring what they learn from you and your organization back to their classroom and their students. However, there are many benefits to the employer as well.

Collaborating with local school districts and Career and Technical Education (CTE) classrooms has many benefits for business and industry partners and sponsoring a Teacher Extern is just one of many ways to engage and partner with local schools. Partnering with a local CTE teacher or a school district through the Teacher Externship Program has many benefits for business.

Benefits of Participating in a Teacher Externship Program

Help preparing South Dakota's future workforce by connecting directly with Career and Technical educators.

Advise CTE teachers on the most up-to-date industry standards so they can bring this back to their students and classroom.

Help teachers bring relevant, hands-on practice and skills development back to their students and classroom.

Provide critical industry specific expertise to teachers to incorporate into their lessons and curriculum.

Build, or continue building, mutually beneficial relationships with local schools.

Once a business partner has decided to partner on a Teacher Externship Experience, the following steps and guidance should be used to help ensure a high-quality experience for everyone involved.

Phase 1: Organization Assessment & Goal Setting

- Evaluate organization's capacity and resources for supporting an experience.
- Set goals for what you hope to gain from the experience.

Phase 2: Action Planning

- Connect with local school districts and CTE teachers to let them know you are eager to host Teacher Externs.
- Meet with the school or teacher to create a list of potential learning activities, employees, departments available to help support the experience.
- Establish policies/procedures to ensure company liability policy is being followed.

Phase 3: Externship Experience

- Ensure all district and company policies are met prior to the experience.
- Host the Teacher Extern during their experience.

Phase 4: Reflection & Follow-up

- Reflect upon and evaluate the experience.
- Follow-up with the district and/or teacher about future classroom connected events or experience the organization may be able to provide.

Organization Assessment & Goal Setting

Once a business has taken the first step of agreeing to host a Teacher Extern or support a Teacher Externship Program, it is important to conduct a quick organizational assessment to determine the business's capacity and potential needs to support the experience or program. Use the following questions to help guide this assessment and set goals:

- What is my organization's current capacity to support a Teacher Externship Experience or Program?
 - Who would run and/or support this program?
 - What time commitment is my organization willing to invest?
 - What other resources would be needed to support this program?
- What is my, or my organizations, current support, or relationship with _____ School District or _____ teacher.
- What is my, or my organizations, current understanding of K-12 Career and Technical Education and Work-based Learning for students?
- What additional needs or resources would be needed to implement and/or support a Teacher Externship Experience or Program?
- What additional information do I, or my organization, need to better understand the role of industry in high-quality K-12 Career and Technical Education and Work-based Learning in schools.
- What questions do I, or my organization, have regarding this program?
 - Who can answer these questions?
- What is the goal of supporting a Teacher Externship Experience or Program? What benefit is there to the organization?
- What potential barriers or challenges do I, or my organization, foresee?
- What potential liability issues may arise that my organization needs to plan for as a part of the Externship Experience?

Action Planning

Once an organization has decided on goals for hosting either a single Teacher Extern or helping support a districtwide Teacher Externship Experience, the next step in the implementation process is to create a plan for the experience or the program.

Teachers participating in a Teacher Externship Experience will also have conducted an assessment process to determine their current needs and wants for participating in the Externship. During the Action Planning stage, they will be asked to begin reaching out to local industry professionals to find a placement for their Externship Experience. If a teacher is participating through a district-approved program, a business may be contacted by a district representative - such as a supervisor or program coordinator - instead of the CTE teacher directly. If the teacher is participating in an Externship Experience on their own as a form of professional development, they will likely be reaching out directly.

Initial Planning Meeting

Set up an initial planning meeting, either in-person or online, with the teacher or district representative to create a plan of action for the Externship Experience. The following is an example template to help direct the action planning process.

Teacher Externship Planning Document

Use the following questions to help plan a successful Teacher Externship experience.

What are the Teacher Externship expected outcomes/objectives?

How many hours will the Experience be? When will the Teacher Externship hours be completed?

What are the planned activities ?

What continued collaboration is planned?

What additional support is needed (if any)?

Teacher Externship Experience Agreement

It is useful (and sometimes necessary) to have some type of agreement between the teacher and the industry partner supporting or hosting the Externship Experience to ensure that both parties have a clear understanding of expectations and outcomes and liability requirements. Use the following list of example expectations to help draft an Experience Agreement that can be used as a formal agreement between the teacher and the industry partner and any other entities supporting the Experience.

Basic Teacher Expectations

- Contact business/industry/community partners to set up Externship.
- Attend orientation meeting(s) with the organizing entity and/or Externship host.
- Complete informational interviews with the key people during the Externship.
- Adhere to all company policies and procedures while at the placement site.
- Complete reflections during and at the conclusion of the Externship.
- Develop at least one lesson plan based on the Externship Experience using the standards for your content area.
- Present your experience to other colleagues or business partners.
- Write follow-up thank you and include plans for continued industry partnerships to the externship host.
- Notify the organizing entity of any problems that arise out of the Externship.

Basic Industry Partner Expectations

- Conduct an orientation meeting that provides information on company policies and procedures expected of the teacher while at the placement.
- Provide a point of contact or experience “lead” for the teacher.
- Allow teacher access to a variety of experiences, including hands-on when possible.
- Provide reasonable accommodations for individual teacher needs when possible.

Externship Experience

Once a plan has been put in place and an employer successfully identified, use the following resources to help implement a high-quality Teacher Externship Experience.

Teacher Externship Suggested Activities

1. Visit a variety of departments and talk with multiple employees to obtain a full view of the opportunities available.
2. Tour facilities and departments:
 - Offices, meeting rooms, training facilities
 - Common areas, breakrooms
 - Specific rooms/spaces for various department functions
3. Meet with Human Resources to learn more about:
 - Recruitment Plan
 - Application and interviewing process
 - Benefits and work conditions (hours, PTO, other incentives)
 - Youth internship or youth hiring programs (14-21 year-olds)
 - In-demand credentials, certificates the company is looking for
 - Salary and compensation information
 - Performance and review process
4. Conduct informational interviews with specific employees; obtain information on:
 - Educational and skills requirements for their position (including future needs)
 - The career path they took
 - What “a day in the life...” looks like for them at work
 - Most challenging parts of their job
 - What qualities and skills they look for in a coworker
 - The components of their job/industry they like the most
 - Trends or changes in the industry someone interested in the field should know
5. Perform some job duties (if allowable) under the supervision of someone who can provide orientation and training in that job.
6. Observe all activities allowable.

Teacher Externship Experience Plan (Example Template)

This template/tool may be used to help organize and plan the activities of the Teacher Extern during their Experience.

Host Site		Host Supervisor	
Teacher Extern		Teacher Extern School/District	
Dates of Experience		Time(s) of Experience	
Date/Time	Activity	Date/Time	Activity

Teacher Externship 3-day Schedule (Example Plan)

DAY 1

Welcome & Overview

- Company Overview
- Organizational Structure
- HR Q&A
- Facility Tour

LUNCH

Department/Position/Project #1

- In-depth Activities
- Q&A

DAY 2

Department/Position/Project #2

- In-depth Activities
- Q&A

LUNCH

Department/Position/Project #3

- In-depth Activities
- Q&A

DAY 3

Department/Position/Project #4

- In-depth Activities
- Q&A

LUNCH

Wrap-up & Continued Partnership Planning

- Questions not previously answered
- Industry Needs Discussion
- Planning for future partnerships (classroom visits or demonstrations, facilities tours with students, job shadow or internship possibilities)

Teacher Externship Task-Based Schedule (Example Plan)

DAY 1		
Time	Department/Position	Task/Content
8:00-9:00	Human Resources	Recruiting and onboarding new employees
9:00-10:00	Customer Service	Addressing customer concerns and communicating with customers
10:00-11:30	Creative Director	Developing new projects / Managing teams
11:30-12:30	<i>LUNCH w/Team or Mentor</i>	
12:30-1:00	Web Developer	Designing content to publish online
1:00-2:00	Digital Media Specialist	Current trends in media design
2:00-4:00	Account Manager	Cost analysis of products/services
DAY 2		
8:00-10:00	Human Resources	Ongoing PD, company benefits, employee trends
10:00-11:00	Digital Designer	Industry standards for designing (tools, resources, etc.)
11:00-12:00	Print Media Designer	Designing print materials versus online publications
12:00-1:00	<i>LUNCH w/Team or Mentor</i>	
1:00-3:00	Media Coordinator	Marketing, advertising, and customer recruitment
3:00-4:00	CEO/President	Owning and running a business, leadership trends, final Q&A

Teacher Externship Experience Audit (Example Template)

This template may be used by a teacher to help them take notes during the Experience and help guide them as they bring what they learned during the Experience back to their students and classroom.

Skills and Knowledge at Work

Through interviews, observations, or hands-on experiences, identify examples of:

Technical Skills Training and Credentials Required for the Job
Soft Skills Required for the Job (Communication, Cooperation, Connection)
Standards in Action (evidence that what students are learning in school connects to the workplace)
Solving Problems or Overcoming Challenges

Teacher Externship Media Release (Example Template)

Taking photos or videos of the worksite and employees during a Teacher Externship can provide valuable evidence of the experience for teachers to share with their colleagues and students. We ask that you consider granting permission (or partial permission) to use these photographs and/or videos in teacher created curriculum, on the school website, in school newsletters or school sponsored social media, in brochures, in presentations, or in any other way the school uses to promote Industry Partnerships, and the Teacher Externship Experience. The photographs will never be sold and will be used exclusively for educational purposes.

YES. I grant you permission to use photos taken during the teacher externship.

NO. Please do NOT take or use any photos.

YES, with the following conditions:

Organization (Name, Address, Phone #)

Company Representative (Name & Job Title)

Company Representative Signature

Date

Teacher (Name & Contact)

Teacher Signature

Date

Teacher Externship Example Timesheet (Example Template)

Some Teacher Externship programs may require the teacher to maintain documentation of the time spent onsite at the host industry partner’s place of work. A simple time form, signed by the industry partner mentor or the Human Resource Specialist should be kept. The following example can be used as a template or as guidance for creating a timesheet for your program.

Date	Time In	Time Out	Industry Host Representative Name & Initials
Total Hours			

I certify that _____ was participating in
Name of Teacher
 the agreed upon Teacher Externship Experience, either directly under my supervision or
 under the supervision of the following employee(s) _____.

Company Representative Signature

Date

Teacher Signature

Date

Reflection & Follow-up

A critical component to the successful implementation of any program is the regular evaluation for quality and effectiveness. The following is a template that can be used to evaluate the Teacher Externship Experience. The organization may wish to share this evaluation with the teacher, the district coordinator, or maintain the evaluation as an internal document. Any employees who participated in the experience should be encouraged to participate in the evaluation of the program as well.

Teacher Extern	Teacher Extern School/District
Dates of Experience	Time(s) of Experience
Rating 4 - Strongly Agree, 3- Agree, 2 - Disagree, 1 - Strongly Disagree	
The Teacher Extern asked questions and was enthusiastic and engaged throughout the experience.	4 3 2 1
My role in the Teacher Externship was clear and I had everything I needed to help support the experience.	4 3 2 1
The amount of time provided during the experience was enough to meet the goals of the Teacher Extern and the industry partner.	4 3 2 1
Plans were made for future partnership opportunities between the Teacher Extern and the industry partner.	4 3 2 1
I would host another Teacher Extern in the future.	4 3 2 1
Additional Comments. Please provide any information that could make the experience better.	

Additional Resources

A Guide to Understanding CTE

https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CTE%20Guide_%20Final%20Version.pdf

Iowa STEM Teacher Externship Program

<https://iowastem.org/externships>

Maryland Chamber Teacher Externship Program

<https://mdchamber.org/maryland-chamber-foundations-teacher-externship-program-grows-by-766-in-2021/>

Why is Work-based Learning Important One-pager

<https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/WBL-EventFlyer-Advocacy.pdf>

Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas Teacher Externship Program

<https://detwork.org/employers/teacher-externship>

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