



Greater Flagstaff
Chamber of Commerce

2017-2018



Skills For **Workplace** Success

PARTNERSHIP MANUAL FOR BUSINESSES AND EDUCATORS

*A program of the Greater Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce's
Education and Workforce Development Initiative*

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for participating in *Skills for Workplace Success (SWS)*, an exciting program that pairs businesses with Flagstaff middle and high school classrooms to inspire curiosity in students and to help grow tomorrow's workforce for local employers. This program is organized by the Greater Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce's Education and Workforce Development Division in collaboration with the Flagstaff Unified School District and area Charter Schools.

The objectives of this program is two-fold: to introduce students to the characteristics or *soft skills* of a desirable employee, and to increase awareness of the many job opportunities students have right after graduation, right here in Flagstaff with local businesses.

Soft Skills

Students will be introduced to the basic "soft skills" or "life skills" needed to be successful employees. Demonstrating how abstract concepts such as respect and responsibility are essential traits in the workplace, is key to ensure our students are ready for post-secondary education, trade school or immediate employment.

Our program encourages use of material from the *Character Counts National Ethics* initiative which includes the *Six Pillars of Character* and examples of presentations that can be shown to students. These presentations illustrate the importance of soft skills as they relate to becoming employable. Additionally, we have included another educational platform – the *40 Developmental Assets* and a diagram showing how this initiative overlaps with *Character Counts*.

Opportunity Awareness

The second objective of *SWS* is to increase awareness and to inspire curiosity about the many employment opportunities in Flagstaff that students can enjoy right out of high school. Students will be invited to tour local businesses and manufacturing plants where they can see firsthand the variety of jobs available, understand education requirements to qualify for careers, and hear about salary potential and benefits. Our hope is that local students will consider staying in Flagstaff to work in the many lucrative careers offered by area employers.

THE PROGRAM

The basic outline for *Skills for Workplace Success* are:

Step one: Inquiry

Teachers send a request to the Chamber's Skills Coordinator, requesting to participate in the program. Teachers will indicate an industry of interest, topics to address, or even specific businesses they'd like to work with.

Step two: Pairing

The Chamber acts as matchmaker and will contact business representatives to be paired with teachers. Once there is agreement, the teacher contacts the business representative directly to coordinate schedules.

Step three: Classroom Visit

The business representative visits the classroom for a presentation that includes a soft skill discussion, a description of their day-to-day work activities, as well as the job opportunities specific to their business or field including starting salary levels, skills requirements, and the business' hiring standards.

Step four: Site tour

The business will host the class for an onsite visit at minimum one time and up to three, demonstrating the various jobs conducted and highlighting skills being utilized.

Extras:

Some businesses and teachers hold resume writing sessions, mock interviews, and discussions regarding professional appearance and more with the students in addition to focusing on values and skills necessary for workplace success. Human resources staff, general managers, owners are all invited to impress the students.

THE “CHARACTER COUNTS” PLATFORM

Skills for Workplace Success uses the national Character Counts initiative to discuss soft skills with students. Character Counts was developed in 1992 by the Josephson Institute of Ethics. The movement promotes *Six Pillars of Character* as a method of understanding, evaluating and modeling ethical behavior. In 1999, Gov. Jane Dee Hull ordered the creation of the Arizona Character Education Blue Ribbon Task Force. Through this task force, the Arizona Department of Education offers Character Counts training to educators and non-profit organizations. The program has no specific religious or political affiliations.

A. The Six Pillars of Character

The center of the Character Counts initiative are the “six pillars of character” – six values that cover most ethical situations and are the framework for ethical living. The six pillars are listed below with various actions that demonstrate them.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

- ◆ Be honest.
- ◆ Don't deceive, cheat or steal.
- ◆ Be reliable – do what you say you'll do.
- ◆ Have the courage to do the right thing.
- ◆ Build a good reputation.
- ◆ Be loyal – stand by your family, friends and country.

RESPECT

- ◆ Treat others with respect; follow the Golden Rule.
- ◆ Be tolerant of differences.
- ◆ Use good manners, not bad language.
- ◆ Be considerate of the feelings for others.
- ◆ Don't threaten, hit or hurt anyone.
- ◆ Deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements.

RESPONSIBILITY

- ◆ Do what you are supposed to do.
- ◆ Persevere: keep on trying!
- ◆ Always do your best.
- ◆ Use self-control.
- ◆ Be self-disciplined.
- ◆ Think before you act – consider the consequences.
- ◆ Be accountable for your choices.

FAIRNESS

- ◆ Play by the rules.
- ◆ Take turns and share.
- ◆ Be open-minded; listen to others.
- ◆ Don't take advantage of others.
- ◆ Don't blame others carelessly.

CARING

- ◆ Be kind.
- ◆ Be compassionate and show you care.
- ◆ Express gratitude.
- ◆ Forgive others.
- ◆ Help people in need.

CITIZENSHIP

- ◆ Do your share to improve your school and community.
- ◆ Cooperate.
- ◆ Stay informed; vote.
- ◆ Be a good neighbor.
- ◆ Obey laws and rules.
- ◆ Respect authority.
- ◆ Protect the environment.

THE LOCAL BUSINESS COMPONENT

Business representatives have a unique opportunity to connect with students during the *Skills for Workplace Success* process. This is a chance to communicate to students and make sure they are aware of the employable skills you are looking for and that they know your business and the opportunities there. For many students, taking a tour of your business motivates them to consider employment there.

We ask that all business representatives let students know the following:

1. The type of business you are in.
2. The employment opportunities you have at your business. (If there are limited opportunities at your business, please discuss your field in general. If you are an entrepreneur, what skills are needed to start your own business).
3. What are the starting salaries for various positions at your business?
4. How much education is required for these jobs?
5. What “soft skills” are you seeking from candidates? What basic skills do you assume potential employees have? (For example, arriving at work on time; being courteous to others; calling in sick only if sick; not lying; respecting workplace rules.)
6. What issues are you facing, if any, from younger employees? (For example, do you experience issues with tardiness? Excessive absences? Basic customer service skills?)
7. How could students apply for a job at your company, either now – if you accept high school students for certain internship or summer positions – or in the future when they have graduated from high school or college? Give them your web address if applicable.

FEEDBACK

Skills for Workplace Success is an ever-evolving program that began 10 years ago at the Chamber of Commerce, through its Education and Workforce Development Committee.

Feedback is critical to the success of this program. While you are participating in your partnership, we ask that one member of your team be in charge of reporting back to the Chamber coordinator on a monthly basis to let us know what we can do to advance the planning and implementation of your program.

A member of Chamber staff would also like to visit during the classroom presentation and/or site tour. This allows us to hear firsthand the types of presentations that are being made and to promote your partnership in the Chamber's magazine and social media.

Lastly, we request all participants complete an online survey at the end of the year so we can measure how the program is working and determine what improvements can be made for the following year.

AND LASTLY, THANK YOU!

Skills for Workplace Success would not be possible without your volunteer leadership. These efforts will help create a more skilled and prepared workforce that will help strengthen Flagstaff's businesses and prepare our local youth to fill jobs and keep them

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