

Role Model Visits and Field Trip Tips (A-15)



Role model visits and field trips: Tips for Success

1. Help role models find a hands-on activity that involves skills associated with their career. Discuss the activity to make certain it is age appropriate and suited for your students. Help support the role model when she leads this hands-on activity.
2. Find out if presenters have experience working with students similar to yours. If not, they will need more help planning the visit.
3. Request a diverse group of role models (especially individuals that reflect the diversity of your students).
4. Plan the details well in advance. Check back shortly before the visit to confirm arrangements. Provide directions to your school, offer information on parking, and have a student at the office to meet the role model. Exchange cell phone numbers for any last minute coordination on the day of the visit or field trip.
5. Provide role models with sufficient information about your students to help them relate to and work with your group. Do any of your students have special needs? Are there language differences to keep in mind? Dietary restrictions? Physical constraints?
6. Prepare your students for the role model's visit or field trip. Find out if there is a website that your students can preview or printed materials that they can study to give them an introduction to the role models and their work.
7. If possible, exchange biographies and photographs of role models and students before the visit. This helps the groups connect right from the start.
8. Consider the dynamics of your group and decide if it would be beneficial to organize students into teams or partners. You will want to plan these arrangements ahead of time.
9. Hands-on activities and round-robin discussions help keep students engaged. It's best to limit lecture time to no more than 10 minutes, especially with younger students.
10. Suggest to role models that they begin with an icebreaker (and find out if they need help coming up with one).
11. A personal story or humorous anecdote helps a role model connect with students. A story from childhood makes a role model more approachable.

Role Model Visits and Field Trip Tips (Cont'd.)

12. Role models have the chance to break down stereotypes. By talking about hobbies and interests outside of work, role models let students know that they lead interesting and balanced lives.
13. While leading students in a hands-on activity, remind role models to reinforce the importance of perseverance and effort.
14. Invite role models to counsel students about what they can do in the *here and now*. Advanced math and science classes and extracurricular activities can help students explore their talents in technology or engineering.
15. Leave time at the end for students to meet one on one with role models. This gives more reserved students a chance to ask questions.
16. Invite students to give feedback on what worked well and how to improve future field trips and role model visits.
17. Follow-up with a call to debrief and find out how you can build upon your success and improve upon the visit or field trip next time.
18. Field trips and classroom visits require considerable time to plan and host. Encourage students to send thank-you notes to the role models and sponsors of visits.

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