

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES!

Students love to learn about careers in their chosen industry through Hands-On Learning. See examples below!

TIPS

- Make it interactive.
- Keep your comments short—no more than 10 to 15 minutes—and get the kids involved as quickly as possible: Ask questions and encourage them to do the same.
- Asking questions about their exposure to your major or profession breaks the ice and gives you a better feel for your audience. Make it personal. As you talk about your work, use anecdotes from your own experience.
- Describe how you became interested in your career field and how you got started in the profession. Use this as a springboard to mention the talents and character traits required for your work. Make it concrete. Give specific, hands-on examples and use props whenever you can.
- Take advantage of the opportunity to discuss various aspects of the technologies you use.
- Put photographs, postcards, crafts, or other objects in an album or case with a protective cover and pass it around the room. Items that children can touch are an excellent idea: One sixth-grade class enjoyed seeing and touching a hand-woven poncho from Peru.
- Avoid any jargon from your major or industry. Make it fun. Use kid-friendly language, appropriate humor, audio visual presentations, and/or a game format to keep your talk lively and interesting.



8 AM - 3 PM

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OCTOBER

**LAKE COUNTY
FAIRGROUNDS**

GRAYSLAKE, IL

HANDS-ON CONT.

- Bring age-appropriate materials and impress the students with a brief demonstration.
- Encourage participation by giving prizes for correct answers—i.e, stickers, buttons, pencils, pens, or candy. Make it count. Leaving something tangible behind will magnify the effect of your presentation and ultimately produce a better return on the time and energy you invested in putting it together.
- Give the kids souvenirs or promotional items that promote your college or organization.
- Give the teacher a resource handout with more information on college and careers. Even a flyer or brochure about your college or company that the students can keep will help them remember you and your talk.

Safety is the primary consideration as well as length of time it takes for a student to complete the hands-on experience. There will be over 4,000 students in attendance, so we would like to try to have as many interested students engaged as possible.

Interactive Demonstrations

- Virtual Reality (VR) Simulations: Companies in fields like construction, healthcare, or aviation bring VR equipment to simulate real-world job experiences such as operating machinery, performing medical procedures, or flying a plane or drone.
- Engineering/Robotics Stations: Students can interact with robots or mechanical systems, getting hands-on experience with robotics programming, assembly, or troubleshooting mechanical devices.

Workplace Toolkits

- Healthcare Skill Stations: Booths from hospitals or clinics may have medical tools such as stethoscopes, blood pressure monitors, or CPR mannequins, allowing students to practice basic healthcare skills.
- Trade Skills Booths: Booths for careers in plumbing, electrical work, or carpentry might provide tools for students to handle, allowing them to try simple tasks like wiring a circuit or assembling a pipe.

Creative Activities

- Graphic Design or Multimedia Workshop: Media companies or marketing firms might set up laptops with graphic design software, allowing students to design logos, posters, or digital ads using professional tools like Adobe Photoshop.
- Photography Stations: Students can experiment with photography equipment, lighting setups, and even editing software to explore a career in photography or videography.



HANDS-ON CONT.

***I would note, expensive equipment needs to be carefully monitored as the majority of the students are in middle school.**

Problem-Solving Challenges or Games

Coding Challenges: Tech companies might provide short coding activities where students solve programming problems or develop small apps using languages like Python, Java, or Scratch.

Financial Literacy Games: Finance companies and institutions might offer interactive activities where students manage a budget, invest in stocks, or balance a checkbook as part of a career in finance. These can be structured as short games.

Service Industry Role-Playing

Hospitality Simulation: Hotels or restaurants might set up a mock front desk, where students can practice checking in guests, answering phones, or setting tables as a way to explore hospitality careers. Customer Service Stations: Retail companies might offer role-playing exercises where students deal with simulated customer inquiries or complaints, helping them understand careers in sales or customer experiences.

STEM Experiments

Science Lab Stations: Pharmaceutical companies or research institutions may set up safe and contained lab experiments where students can conduct basic testing, such as pH levels or examining microorganisms under a microscope.

Tech Companies Hands-On Coding: Tech firms could offer cybersecurity exercises or coding tasks to introduce students to the world of IT and programming.

Fashion Design Stations: Fashion companies may allow students to experiment with fabric swatches, design tools, or sewing machines, offering a hands-on look at careers in fashion design.

On-the-Spot Interviews or Résumé Critique

Mock Interviews: HR professionals or recruiters could offer mock interview experiences, where students practice answering common job interview questions and receive feedback on their verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

Apprenticeship Info Booths

Trades Apprenticeships: Apprenticeship programs in fields like construction, automotive repair, or welding may offer hands-on demonstrations where students safely (and with supervision) try equipment, automotive diagnostics, or blueprint reading.

Please let us know your ideas and further questions! We are so excited to have you as an important industry partner!

