

Career Connections

Student Career Exploration Programs



About PCD



The Partnership for Career Development (PCD) has provided student and educator Career Awareness programs for over two decades in South Central PA. PCD's Career Connections Student Events offer time, talent, and funding efficiencies for participating businesses, and schools by gathering all partners at a single time & space, focusing on a particular industry or Career Awareness & Preparation (**CAP**) topic.

In its early years, PCD offered 4 student events, yearly. That number has more than quadrupled, stemming from school and industry demand. PCD now offers 18-20 student career exploration events yearly and the demand grows continuously.

PCD serves twenty-two schools, districts, and CTCs in Dauphin, Cumberland, and Perry County – which include some of the very largest districts in PA, and some of the most underserved and rural with CAP programs, events, and initiatives. PCD is proud of the strong school relationships it has developed and sustained, and works tirelessly to find and develop new CAP opportunities for students and staff.

PCD also features, promotes, and supports the efforts of innumerable businesses, training & post-secondary education providers, community groups and more through weekly newsletters, and monthly meetings with school personnel.

The work of Career Awareness & Preparation is an "all hands-on-deck" effort, and PCD's doors are always open to collaborate, convene, and help partners to go further.



3

Primary Service Counties:
Dauphin, Cumberland & Perry

25+

Years of operations



22+

Schools, Districts, and CTCs participating, served by PCD (virtually all public schools in those counties).

300+

Program & School Partners



Career Connections

Informative. Interactive. Inclusive.

Preparing students for whatever's next, after high school has never been more important. Workforce demands and shortages are becoming critical in many industries. You know the challenges and PCD is working hard to find viable and impactful solutions.

PCD recognizes the need for efficiencies.

Our partners are very busy and quite often have limited time available to dedicate to the work of Career Awareness & Preparation, while balancing a full workload schedule.

At the Partnership for Career Development, Career Awareness & Preparation is not just a part of what we do, it's the only thing we do. All of our time is dedicated to this important work.

Career Connections Student Career Exploration Programs have been developed with PCD's long standing experience, and the ongoing feedback we receive from partners, school personnel, and participating students.

In our experience, we have found three popular formats that have worked well:

- 1) Session Rotations
- 2) Informational Interviews
- 3) Panel Presentations



Student comments from Career Connections Events:

"Besides football I now have a better understanding for what I want to study in college."

"Attending this career exploration has given me an idea of what I would like to do with my life after school. "

"This has opened my eyes to the different opportunities that I could seize after high school, I think this may actually be something I could be interested in."

"This opened my eyes. "



Program Design

Partner Tips



PCD finds that the most energy and interest comes from programs that include:



Hands-on, interactive experiences

Trying equipment, technology, and tools, playing games and even fun quizzes are great ways to foster interest and interactivity.

Take home projects/items are favorites!



A follow up program/offering

Offering students an opportunity to learn more is key. They've had a taste, now give them a meal.

Pre-apprenticeship, clubs & mentoring programs, and Work Based Learning offerings have all been popular. In a recent example, one program doubled their enrollment after a Career Connections Event.



Industry personnel

Students especially relate to young, energetic, & contemporary industry personnel who can share their career journey's ups and downs.



Food

Snacks are a really great motivator!

Students can be slow or hesitant to warm up to new people. Food is a great leveler. We all eat!

Providing students with a pizza lunch afterwards, if you can, is a great way to keep the conversation going.



Program Development

Three options to get started:

A) An industry/organization/group takes the lead*:

- Secures a location (PCD will provide suggested/best dates/times).
- Locates presenters (PCD has a sign up form we suggest/encourage all presenters to complete).
- Develops sessions, session materials.
- Develops agenda, session rotations, provides opening and closing presentations.

*PCD suggests a strong level of leadership / guidance from program partners to assure relevant sessions are provided and assure session presenters have "buy-in" and investment in the event. PCD can consult for appropriate content, but partner-led session development is strongly encouraged.

B) PCD fully takes the lead:

- PCD reserves a date/time at the centrally located Capital Area Intermediate Unit in Enola. PCD typically holds multiple rooms and arranges for technical support, if requested, for those rooms.
- PCD locates presenters from our networks, volunteers, Directors, and partners.
- PCD reserves tables or rooms for presenters – presenters are responsible for session content, PCD provides guidance.
- PCD develops the session agenda, session rotation schedule, provides opening and closing presentations.

C) A hybrid of both

PCD respects your time and talent, and can provide just about everything. However, please consider that the program will be more authentic and meaningful with industry partners involved in the development, and on the day.

Your ownership and presence demonstrates your commitment.

However you wish to begin, PCD provides outreach, promotion, registration, and school coordination, engaging with its' comprehensive list of serviced schools in Dauphin, Cumberland, and Perry Counties.



Pro Tip: Does your organization host a "bring your child to work" day? There are likely activities that can be repurposed for Career Connections Events. Treasure hunts, quizzes (with small prizes), make it fun!



Program Formats

The many Career Connections Programs PCD has organized fit one of the following three formats. The session format (#1) is preferred and offers the most interactivity and flexibility for modifications.

PCD has shifted format types,
up to the last minute,
to accommodate unforeseen changes.

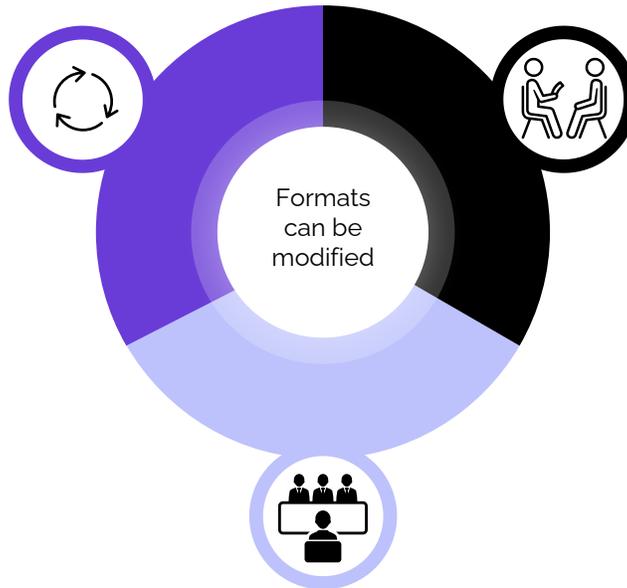
Three "Tried & True" Models

01

Station Rotations

This format works well with either an "Expo-Like" approach, where all activities/presenters are in one room and presenters have tables, or in multiple rooms for a more spacious option.

Students have a fixed amount of time (20 minutes or so) per station for activities, games, discussions, VR, and other presenter activities, then they move to the next station.



02

Informational Interviews

This format is particularly effective/popular with industries that do not have many "hands-on" tools or age-appropriate activities for students to explore.

Questions are provided beforehand to presenters, school personnel and students.

Students adopt "roles" to question presenters, and "share out" their findings at the conclusion.

03

Panel Discussion

There are times when a panel discussion is the best/only option. This requires the least amount of pre-work, and PCD provides engaging panel questions for presenters.

Pro Tip: Prep attending adults with questions to ask during Q&A opportunities.. Students don't like to "be first." Preparing an adult beforehand with a leading question will open the floor for others to follow.



Sponsorship & Investment

<p>→ PCD's costs \$ 15,000</p> <p>✓ PCD's cost, per Career Connection Event is \$15,000. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any/all pre-event planning • CAIU room reservations, technology, and tech support • Multiple forms of event promotion to PCD's active networks. • Registration. • Communications. • Additional program and personnel costs. 	<p>→ School Investment \$4,000</p> <p>✓ PCD's service fees for participating schools cover roughly 1/3 of session costs.</p>
<p>→ Grant support \$ 5,000</p> <p>✓ PCD works diligently to locate grant funding to help offset a portion of program costs.</p> <p>Unfortunately, grant funding varies from year to year, and does not provide a consistent, dedicated, reliable form of support.</p>	<p>→ Partner support TBD</p> <p>Career Connections Student Programs are currently financially unsupported by business and community partners.</p> <p>✓ PCD does not require/demand funding support from program partners, but investment is needed to grow and sustain programming.</p> <p>✓ Please contact Lynda Morris: Lynda@crpcd.org to discuss how your organization can help support PCD and help us to continue to bring Career Awareness & Preparation programs, events, and initiatives to students throughout South Central PA.</p>

Invest in the Partnership for Career Development and Career Awareness & Preparation



01

Workforce development starts here. Job recruiting and placement grow with career awareness.



02

CAP also helps to develop a strong economy. When people are in good jobs, our economy thrives.



03

A stronger workforce and economy mean a stronger community, and potentially less reliance on social services.



04

Personally, effective career development through mentoring models, like work-based learning has been shown to strengthen mental health.



Students Can't Dream About Careers
They Don't Know About

 pcd.caiu.org

 717-732-8480

 info@crpcd.org
