

Quality Work-Based Learning Toolkit

Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools



*Workplace Partner Guide to the
Work-Based Learning Plan*

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WORKPLACE PARTNER GUIDE TO THE WORK-BASED LEARNING PLAN

Introduction

The *Work-Based Learning Plan and Evaluation* tool is the document used in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools to plan and measure student learning in the workplace. Students enrolled in internships or participating in service learning projects use this as a guide in connecting their learning at work to their learning at school.



This *Workplace Partner Guide to the Work-Based Learning Plan* provides instructions for workplace partners on how to help students involved in internships or service learning projects write learning objectives. It also provides guidance on how to evaluate student performance based on those objectives.

The *Work-Based Learning (WBL) Plan* documents what the student will learn and do while engaged in his or her internship. It serves as a guide for you and the student and as an evaluation tool to measure what students have accomplished at the workplace during the experience.

There are two parts to the plan: the learning objectives section and the workplace skills (called SCANS¹) evaluation. These elements are planned and evaluated by you and the student. The teacher's role is to assist students with learning how to write good objectives and to support both the student and you during the term of the internship or service learning project through visits and calls. The teacher will also develop and deliver supplemental curriculum that will further enhance student learning at the workplace and support academic learning.

The objectives that students set will help them grow in four areas: workplace skill development, academic enrichment, career awareness and personal improvement. You and the student will be involved in reviewing the learning objectives developed by the student and, throughout the internship, evaluating the students' accomplishments against those objectives. The teacher will be on hand to guide you throughout the process.

Student Preparation for Writing Learning Objectives

Students will have participated in several activities in the classroom to prepare them for learning at the workplace. These include a self-assessment on the SCANS skills and some reflection activities that help them determine what they would like to learn during their internship or service learning experience. Now they are ready to begin to craft their learning objectives.

The teacher's role in this process is to guide the students in classroom activities to support their understanding and construction of learning objectives. The classroom teacher can also support students with completing the *Work-Based Learning Plan*. Students will then draft learning objectives on the *Learning Objectives Worksheet* according to the instructions in the *Student Guide to the Work-Based Learning Plan*.

¹ SCANS is an acronym for the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, which created The SCANS Report for America 2000, issued by the U.S. Department of Labor, April 1992. The report defines a set of skills and competencies necessary for success in the workplace.

At this point, the student will bring you their learning objectives and ask you to review them and assist him/her in their refinement. Within the first few weeks of the experience, you will be asked to meet with both the student and their teacher to finalize the *Work-Based Learning Plan*.

Measurable Learning Objectives

A measurable learning objective is a statement that clearly and precisely describes what it is that the student intends to accomplish during his or her internship or service learning project. Each learning objective involves new learning, expanded growth or improvement on the job and benefits both the student and the workplace.

Internships and service learning projects are designed to enhance students' education. Learning objectives carefully crafted and evaluated ensure that students get the most out of their experience and understand the value of classroom learning when applied to a workplace situation.

BENEFITS OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES

For Business and Community Partners

- Reduces training and recruitment costs.
- Increases productivity by students in the workplace.
- Increases employee morale and leadership skills.
- Increases opportunities for focused involvement in young people's learning.

For Students

- Creates a climate for motivation.
- Helps students understand the importance of planning.
- Enables students to plan and gain greater control over their future.
- Adds challenge and a sense of achievement to students' lives.
- Provides a means of self-evaluation.
- Makes students results-oriented so they work smarter.
- Enables students to manage time more effectively.
- Reduces the stress related to the feeling of "not getting anywhere."
- Increases students' chances of success.
- Allows students to determine if their job is compatible with their career aspirations.

For Teachers

- Ensures that student time at the workplace is learning-rich.
- Reinforces academic concepts taught at school.
- Reduces the adult-to-student ratio.
- Provides material for rich classroom discussion.
- Provides students an opportunity to direct their own learning and thus gain confidence in their ability to challenge themselves.

The Work-Based Learning Plan and Evaluation Tool

The learning objectives section of the *Work-Based Learning Plan* is divided into two categories: one focused on skill development and one focused on academic enhancement, career exploration and personal improvement. Each internship program requires a set number of learning objectives required in each of these categories. The teacher will inform the student and you of how many are required in each category. The student should add new learning objectives as he/she masters his or her initial objectives.

Skill Development Objectives

These objectives are task and skill-based and are designed to help students advance their abilities to perform workplace functions. They are aimed at practicing or improving a technical or interpersonal skill. Critical workplace functions, which the student needs to learn to be more effective in an internship, are appropriate objectives in this section.

You already have activities in mind that the student will be engaged in at the workplace. These activities provide a logical base from which the student can build learning opportunities.

Academic Enrichment, Career Exploration and Personal Improvement Objectives

These objectives are related to the connections between academic and workplace learning, and can provide students with opportunities to explore careers and their own personal improvement.

Setting Learning Objectives

A learning objective states an observable, measurable activity to be learned, a level of performance of that activity and a given set of conditions under which that activity takes place.

Writing Learning Objectives

When coaching students in writing learning objectives, you may want to use the following examples which illustrate how situations that exist at the workplace and for the student personally can contribute to learning objectives:

Skill Development Objectives

Situation

You would like the student to be able to develop public speaking skills. The student does not feel comfortable speaking in public yet.

Final Learning Objective:

I will make verbal reports about community service opportunities to the production staff at monthly meetings. I will field questions with correct answers and without showing nervousness by May 13.

Each learning objective statement should contain four components.

- The activity should have a desired outcome related to the student's objective. It may be a result, skill, knowledge or behavior.
- The level of performance needs to be specified to ensure that it is challenging but attainable. The performance should be observable and measurable.
- The means of evaluation should be indicated.
- The deadline for accomplishing the objective should be stated.

Academic Enrichment

Situation

You have told the student that he/she will be stocking shelves and changing displays in the bookstore. In marketing class, the student will be studying how small business owners decide to display inventory. During the internship, the student's goal might be to identify how shelf space is allocated based on the balance of local consumer demand with the desire to bring in distributors' promotional fees.

Final Learning Objective:

I will create a two-page report to accurately describe how shelf space is allotted to distributors and present it to the class by June 12. My supervisor will verify its accuracy.

Career Awareness and Exploration

Situation

You have told the student that he/she will be delivering inter-office mail to all departments. The student has indicated that computer programming is a career interest.

Final Learning Objective:

I will meet and interview three programmers about their jobs using the informational interview tool, write a five paragraph reflective paper on whether a programming career is right for me and discuss it with the head programmer by March 30.

Personal Interest and Improvement

Situation

The student's personal goal is to develop better listening skills.

Final Learning Objective:

I will improve my listening skills at work by taking notes, paraphrasing or summarizing key points during Wednesday staff meetings and using those notes to write meeting summaries for the staff update binder each week.

Using the Work-Based Learning Plan to Record Learning Objectives

Through the *Pre-Internship Worksite Supervisor Interview*, the students have collected information about what their worksite supervisors expect them to do and think the students can learn. The students have considered what they want to learn and have evaluated their own SCANS skills using the *SCANS Skills Assessment* and the *Student Pre-Internship Worksheet*. All of this preparation will help them in developing learning objectives for their internships. Sample sections from the *Work-Based Learning Plan* are included below. The teacher can provide you with a sample of the full *Work-Based Learning Plan* upon your request.

Have students draft learning objectives based on what they know about their internship. Students can use the *Learning Objectives Worksheet* for the drafts. Have students read one another's learning objectives to check that they all have the necessary components.

Work-Based Learning Plan with Sample Text

KCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
WORK-BASED LEARNING PLAN AND EVALUATION

STUDENT Sylvia Smith **DATE ESTABLISHED** 1/18/03 **DATE EVALUATED** 5/23/03

When identifying learning objectives remember to indicate the answers to the following questions: What do I want to learn? How will I learn this? How will the result be measured? By when will the learning have taken place? See the *Guides to the Work-Based Learning Plan* for more information on how to write learning objectives.

Evaluation Instructions: Indicate level of student performance by checking the appropriate box. Refer to legend on page three for definitions of each level. Turn in or fax to teacher at each evaluation date.

Skill Development Learning Objectives	Not Exposed	Training Level	Improving Toward Entry Level	Entry Level	Exceeds Entry Level	COMMENTS <i>Sylvia demonstrated remarkable eloquence in the delivery of reports at our monthly staff meetings. Her research was excellent; we learned a lot from what she shared with our team.</i>
<i>I will make verbal reports about community service opportunities to the production staff at monthly meetings. I will field questions with correct answers and without showing nervousness by May 13.</i>				X		

Instructions: Indicate date each objective is established and met in the appropriate box.

Academic Enrichment, Career Exploration, and Personal Improvement Learning Objectives	Date Established	Date Received	COMMENTS <i>Sylvia was eager to master new skills and to contribute more to the work environment. In demonstrating her skills, she was well organized and thorough.</i>
<i>I will create a two-page report to accurately describe how shelf space is allotted to distributors and present it to the class.</i>	January 27	March 26	
<i>I will interview three programmers about their jobs using the informational interview tool and write a five-paragraph reflective paper on the suitability of a programming career for me and discuss it with the head programmer by March 30.</i>	January 27	February 19	
<i>I will improve my listening skills at work by taking notes, paraphrasing or summarizing key points during Wednesday staff meetings and using those notes to write meeting summaries for the staff update binder each week.</i>	February 19	April 14	

Workplace (SCANS) Skills Evaluation

The *Work-Based Learning Plan* also includes a page on which the student and his or her worksite supervisor will evaluate the student's SCANS skills. For each of the skills, the student will be evaluated on a four-point scale indicated at the bottom of the page. Students should talk to the worksite supervisor about these skills. They should find out what "entry level" means to their supervisor in each skill area so that they can plan how to improve their own performance.

WORKPLACE (SCANS) SKILLS FOR KCK STUDENTS

These skills have been determined by KCK employers as critical skills for students to master. A legend for how to evaluate the level of student progress is included at the bottom of this page. This four-point scale allows you to assess performance against a standard for entry-level employees in your organization.

	Not Exposed	Training Level	Improving Toward Entry Level	Entry Level	Exceeds Entry Level
Writes information in clear, logical, legible and complete manner.				X	
Receives and responds appropriately to verbal and non-verbal messages.			X		
Chooses words/manner of expression appropriate for the workplace. Reports emergencies.			X		
Learns, reasons, makes decisions and solves problems.			X		
Is punctual. Attends regularly. Informs supervisor of absences in a timely manner.					X
Demonstrates understanding of personal workplace appearance.				X	
Initiates and completes tasks independently.		X			
Can be trusted. Demonstrates integrity.				X	
Works cooperatively with others.			X		
Exhibits appropriate behavior when dealing with clients.	X				
Works well with a variety of people.			X		
Interacts appropriately in social settings.			X		

COMMENTS:

LEGEND

NOT EXPOSED: Student was not provided the opportunity to achieve this objective or demonstrate the skill.

TRAINING LEVEL: Preparing to become work-ready, but has difficulty completing tasks without prompting and repeated help. Does not readily request help. Does not attempt task before asking for or receiving assistance.

IMPROVING TOWARD ENTRY LEVEL: More work ready. Has difficulty completing some tasks. May attempt task before asking for help, needs prompting or assistance.

ENTRY LEVEL: Meets and demonstrates the skills at a level equal to what is expected of any employee in a similar position. Completes tasks and work projects with and without help. Improves work using team or supervisor feedback. Meets quality standards.

EXCEEDS ENTRY: Demonstrates mastery of skills at a level above what is expected of any employee in a similar position. Uses information generated personally and by others to improve work quality. Identifies problems before they arise and makes adjustments accordingly. Exceeds work expectations for quality and attends to detail in the development of projects and assignments.

Summary

Students will receive help in the classroom with drafting their learning objectives. Student learning at the workplace ideally supports both workplace skill development and academic goals. Learning objectives help students stay focused and remember the connection between their work-based learning and their school experience. Your contribution to the process of development and evaluation of students' learning objectives is critical to making sure the objectives are attainable and appropriate to the opportunities the experience provides. In addition, your evaluation validates the skills students are learning both at school and at the workplace. The classroom teacher is on hand to help you and the student with the development of these objectives and can support you in other ways as well.

