

# Worked-Based Learning Resources



**Institute for Community Inclusion**  
PROMOTING THE INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON • BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



# 7 PRINCIPLES

## for Effective Work-Based Learning

Support entry and advancement  
in a career track



Provide meaningful job  
tasks that build career skills  
and knowledge



Offer compensation



Identify target skills and  
how gains will be validated



Reward skill development



Support college entry,  
persistence, and completion



Provide comprehensive  
student supports



Jobs for the Future is a national nonprofit that works to ensure educational and economic opportunity for all. We develop innovative career and educational programs and public policies that increase college readiness and career success and build a more highly-skilled workforce. With over 30 years of experience, JFF is the national leader in bridging education and work to increase economic mobility and strengthen our economy.

Work-based learning at its best integrates academic learning with real-world application to provide paths to educational and career advancement and build the talent pipeline. This approach holds great promise for low-income and lower-skilled youth and adults, who all too often lack equitable access to high-quality work-based learning experiences that can serve as steppingstones to increased economic opportunities.

JFF has identified seven principles that support youth and adults seeking to enter and advance in careers. Together, these principles encourage the design of work-based learning models that increase access to work-based learning for all, provide participants with key training and work experience, and help employers meet their needs for a skilled workforce.

Learn more about expanding access to work-based learning in JFF's suite of recently-released and upcoming resources. **Making Work-Based Learning Work:** A paper that articulates the basis for JFF's seven principles for effective work-based learning. | **Work-Based Learning in Action:** A series of case studies that highlight the principles at work in six work-based learning models, such as registered apprenticeships and work-based courses. Available at [jff.org/publications](http://jff.org/publications)



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# Work-Based Learning Framework

Work-based learning looks beyond the classroom to expand academic and technical learning and accelerate advancement along career pathways. Work-based learning is defined as a student or worker completing **meaningful job tasks in a workplace** that develop readiness for work, knowledge, and skills that support entry or advancement in a particular career field. Work-based learning supports a continuum of lifelong learning and skill development for a range of workers and learners—K-12 students, young adults, college students, adult jobseekers, and incumbent workers.

**CENTER FOR  
APPRENTICESHIP &  
WORK-BASED  
LEARNING**

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## CAREER EXPERIENCE

**SPECIFIC SKILLS | PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT**

Engages individuals as paid workers to gain specific skills, in conjunction with related classroom or lab instruction, in a particular industry or occupation.

**Models include:**

- Registered Apprenticeships
- Youth Apprenticeship
- Other Forms of Apprenticeships
- Transitional Jobs
- On-the-Job Training
- Work-Based Courses

## CAREER EXPOSURE

**INDUSTRY INTRO | SHORT-TERM**

Brings participants to workplaces for short periods of time with the goal of gaining introductory information about an industry and associated occupations.

**Models include:**

- Job Shadows
- Simulations
- Company Tours
- Information Interviews
- Mentoring

## CAREER ENGAGEMENT

**BASIC TECHNICAL & EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS**

Provides extended opportunities for participants to increase their knowledge of an identified field of interest and gain employability skills and some entry-level technical knowledge or skills.

**Models include:**

- Internships
- Cooperative Education
- Pre-Apprenticeships
- Service Learning
- Apprenticeship Readiness

### WORK-BASED LEARNING

PREPARATION FOR  
WORK-BASED LEARNING

## CAREER EXPLORATION

**AWARENESS | FOUNDATION | PREPARATION**

Builds awareness of careers. Career exploration activities do not take place in workplaces and are not work-based learning, but provide a foundation for work-based learning and prepare participants to make the most of opportunities.

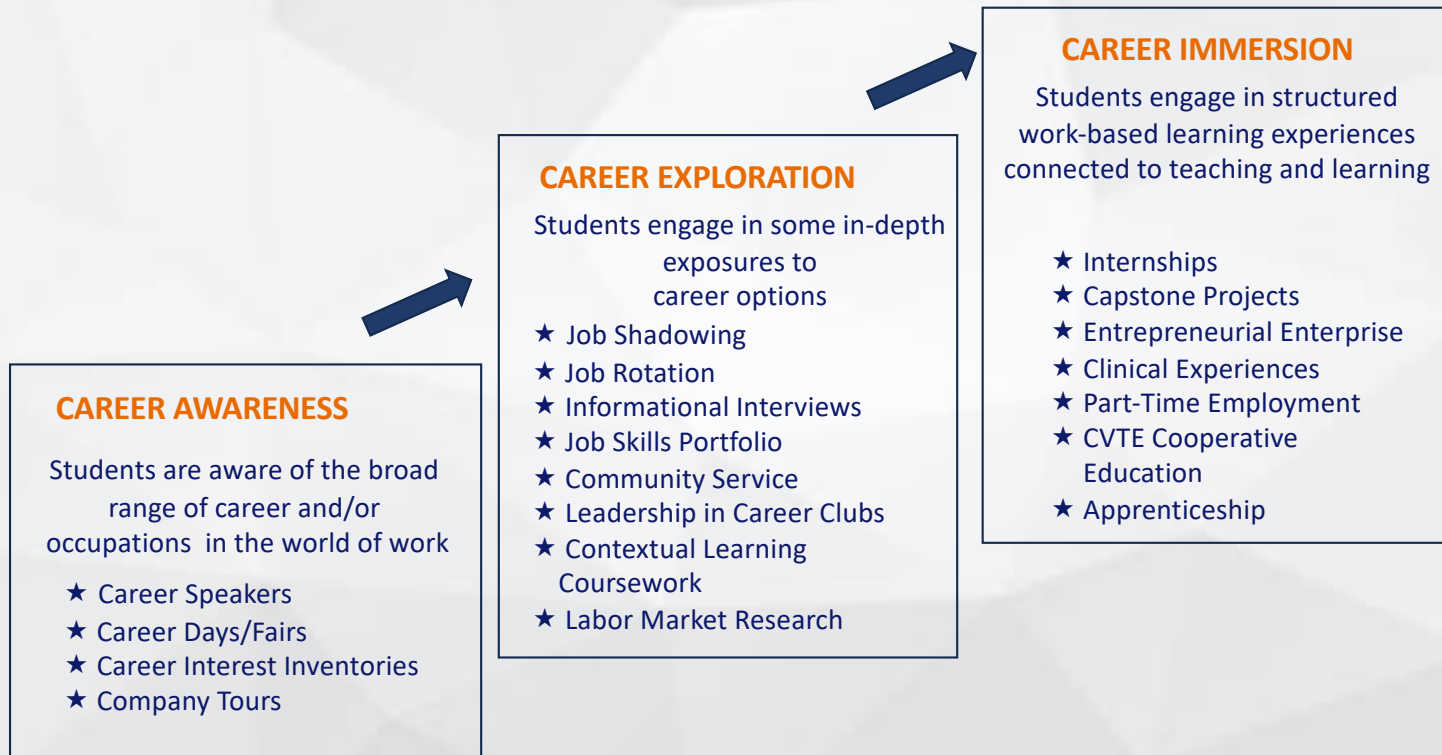
**Models include:**

- Career Fairs
- Interest Inventories
- Industry Projects
- Mock Interviews

Visit JFF's **Center for Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning** for more information: [jff.org/center](http://jff.org/center).

# Career Development Spectrum

The process through which an individual comes to understand his or her place in the world of work



## ABOUT THE MASSACHUSETTS WORK-BASED LEARNING PLAN

The **Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan (WBLP)** is designed to provide structure and depth to work-based learning experiences: to identify the skills to be focused on in the work experience; to open conversations about learning opportunities; to provide a structured approach to skill assessment; and to encourage reflection about short-term and long-term goals. The Work-Based Learning Plan includes a job description, list of skills, and reviews.

The WBLP was developed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education through an interagency collaboration of employers, educators and workforce development professionals.

It can be completed as a pen-and-paper document or through the online WBLP screens or the mobile WBLP screens. The online screens, mobile version and resources are found at <http://masswbl.org> and/or <http://massconnecting.org>

**Job Description and Skills:** To get started, write a brief job description and develop a list of three or more workplace and career-specific skills that will be the focus of the work-based learning experience. This list of skills, along with the set of six employability skills, will be the basis for the evaluation reviews. These skills are central to the Work-Based Learning Plan, valuable for structuring student reflection and learning and for documenting the skills developed through work-based learning programs across Massachusetts. This skills list can include a mixture of broad employability skills and more-specific career-related skills. Skill examples, along with definitions, are included in this guide and online. You can feel free to develop your own skills and definitions as well.

**Evaluation Reviews:** A first (baseline) review should be held early in the work-based learning experience, and a final review near the end of the work experience. For longer-term work experiences, there may be additional reviews at regular intervals. The review is a meeting between supervisor and participant, sometimes facilitated by a program coordinator. The first review is important for providing feedback early in the work experience and for setting goals. The second (final) review is an opportunity for the supervisor should draw attention to areas of improvement and skill gain, and to share ideas with the participant about how to continue to improve skills. The review meeting is an opportunity for discussion and reflection.

Evaluation ratings are based on a 5-point scale, illustrating how life-long learning and skill development occurs over time, with typical ratings for a new intern or entry-level employee in the range of 2's and 3's and with 4's and 5's reserved for examples of skills used to advance the work of your organization and for high levels of initiative and learning.

Typical ratings for new interns and entry-level workers would be in range of 2's and 3's.

4's and 5's are reserved for examples of skills used to advance the work of your organization and for high levels of initiative and learning.

1=Performance Improvement Needed	2=Developing	3=Competent	4=Proficient	5=Advanced
Needs to have a strategy to improve this skill	Developing this skill; learning to address challenges related to this skill; aware of next steps needed to develop this skill	Regularly demonstrates this skill; aware of the importance of this skill	Consistently demonstrates this skill; exceeds expectations, showing initiative to learn about, enhance and/or apply this skill	Can describe accomplishments using this skill to advance the work of your organization; exceeds expectations, showing initiative to apply and extend this skill

### Signatures and Copies:

- The WBLP should be signed by the supervisor and participant, attesting that the participant had the opportunity to discuss and reflect on these skills, and the ratings that have been selected for the participant. Either electronic or hand-signed signatures are acceptable.
- Copies of completed WBLPs should be given to the participant and to the program coordinator.
- The WBLP can be saved to a PDF or other convenient file type for the participant to include in a portfolio or other collection. Note that the WBLP is a useful document for participants to refer to when working on resumes, job applications and college applications and for teachers or program staff to refer back to when writing letters of recommendation.

# Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan

Participant's Name:

Participant's Email:

Participant's ID Number:

Job Title:

Worksite:

Worksite Supervisor Name:

Worksite Supervisor Email:

School / Program:

Staff / Teacher Name:

Start Date:

End Date:

**JOB DESCRIPTION** – Tasks, responsibilities, projects:

## EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

The employability skills below are essential in every work environment throughout one’s career. Please discuss and review these skills at least twice during this work-based learning experience, in a first, baseline review and in a second review near the end of the work-based learning experience. **(Two reviews to capture growth -- Be objective!)**

### KEY

- 1** = Performance Improvement Needed: Needs to have a strategy to improve this skill  
**2** = Developing: Developing this skill; learning to address challenges related to this skill; aware of next steps needed to develop this skill  
**3** = Competent: Demonstrates this skill; aware of the importance of this skill  
**4** = Proficient: Consistently demonstrates this skill; shows initiative to learn about, enhance or apply this skill  
**5** = Advanced: Exceeds expectations; works with high level of independence, acts as a role model, or shows initiative to apply and extend this skill

SKILL	PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS	REVIEWS Use 1-5 Scale (See Key Above)		COMMENTS Notes, goals, and reflections for Review #1 and Review #2
Attendance and Punctuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Arrives on time and prepared for work</li><li>Provides sufficient notice if unable to report for work</li></ul>	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
Motivation and Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Participates fully in tasks or projects from start to finish</li><li>Initiates interaction with supervisor for next task or project upon successful completion of previous one</li></ul>	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Communicates effectively, orally and in writing, using the language and vocabulary appropriate to a variety of audiences within the workplace including coworkers, supervisors and customers</li><li>Demonstrates active listening skills; focuses attentively, makes eye contact or other affirming gestures, confirms understanding and follows directions</li></ul>	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
Teamwork and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Works productively with co-workers, individually and in teams; support organization’s mission and goals</li><li>Accepts direction and constructive feedback with positive attitude</li></ul>	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Notifies and identifies challenges and problems that arise in the workplace</li><li>Brings concerns to attention of supervisors when appropriate</li><li>Develops solutions to challenges and problems by analyzing available information and looking at options, guided by expectations for the position and goals of the organization</li></ul>	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
Workplace Policy, Culture and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Exhibits understanding of workplace culture and policy</li><li>Dresses appropriately for position and duties</li><li>Practices personal hygiene appropriate for position and duties</li><li>Follows professional standards for use of computers, phones and social media</li><li>Respects confidentiality</li><li>Complies with health and safety rules for the workplace</li></ul>	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		

WORKPLACE & CAREER SPECIFIC SKILLS

Select three to five skills that will be a focus for this work-based learning experience. Choose from the following lists or identify other skills relevant to the specific workplace or career goals. Skill definitions are available in the resource guide and the online screens. See <http://massconnecting.org/wblp>

<b>Career / Engagement Skills</b> Active Learning Collecting and Organizing Information Creativity Customer Service Leadership Project Management Public Speaking / Presentations Teaching/Instructing Time Management Understanding All Aspects of the Industry	<b>Digital Literacy Skills</b> Computer Technology Database Use Graphic Design Media Literacy Office Suite Software Photo Editing Software Development Spreadsheet Use Web Development [Or industry specific technology]	<b>Applied Academic Skills</b> Applied Mathematics Reading Research and Analysis Writing  <b>STEM-Related Skills</b> Engineering Concepts Environmental Literacy Health Literacy Research and Analysis Science Lab Concepts	<b>Technical / Career-Specific Skills</b> Applied Arts and Design Blueprint Reading Child Development Cooking / Culinary Arts Early Childhood Math/Reading Literacy Equipment Operation Landscaping Maintenance / Repair / Painting Medical Office Skills [Or other skills applicable to the work experience]
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SKILL	SKILL DEFINITION	REVIEWS USE 1-5 SCALE (See Key Above)		COMMENTS Notes, goals, reflections for Review 1 and Review 2
		Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
		Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
		Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
		Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
		Rev #1		
		Rev #2		

COMMENTS & SIGNATURES

REVIEW #1:

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEW #2:

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Work-Based Learning: Best Practice Indicators**

**The following summarizes quality indicators for work-based learning from a variety of sources. It is useful to review these indicators to determine how well your work-based learning programs services are aligned with these best practice indicators.**

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### **Requirements for Quality Work-Based Learning**

1. Must be “well-structured and well-integrated with the school curriculum and culminate in products or services that demonstrate learning.”
2. Students must have “the opportunity to engage meaningfully with the experiences offered and to reflect thoughtfully on their learning.”
3. Participating employers must share the learning goals of instructors and students.
4. Programs must have strong links to the labor market.”

In other words, good WBL experiences should provide more than just a job or credits for the student and more than just “cheap labor” for the employer. The most effective WBL programs, research shows, have a clear link between what is learned in the classroom and what is learned on the job. The school-work connection does not happen automatically. It is clear that intentional planning and pedagogical decision-making need to occur for students to make the connections between school curriculum and workplace learning.”

*Source: Building High Quality Work-Based Learning Programs for High School Students, by Corinne Alfeld – January 2015 – Techniques Magazine*

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### **Quality Work-Based Learning Indicators**

1. Experiences provide exposure to a wide range of work sites in order to help youth make informed choices about career selections.
2. Experiences are age and stage appropriate, ranging from site visits and tours, job shadowing, internships (unpaid and paid), and paid work experience.
3. Work site learning is structured and links back to classroom instruction.
4. A trained mentor helps structure the learning at the worksite.
5. Periodic assessment and feedback is built into the training.
6. Youth are fully involved in choosing and structuring their experiences.
7. Outcomes are clear and measurable.

*Source: National Center on Workforce and Disability Youth*

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## **Work-Based Learning Best Practice Indicators (page 2)**

### **Quality Work-Based Learning Characteristics**

1. Clear program goals
2. Clear roles and responsibilities for worksite supervisors, mentors, teachers, support personnel, and other partners
3. Training plans that specify learning goals tailored to individual students with specific outcomes connected to student learning
4. Convenient links between students, schools, and employers
5. On-the-job learning
6. Range of work-based learning opportunities, especially those outside traditional youth employing industries (e.g., restaurants)
7. Mentor(s) at the worksite
8. Clear expectations and feedback to assess progress toward achieving goals
9. Assessments to identify skills, interests, and support needs at the worksite
10. Reinforcement of work-based learning outside of work
11. Appropriate academic, social, and administrative support for students, employers, and all partners.

*Source: Quality Work-Based Learning and Postschool Employment Success, By Richard Luecking and Meredith Gramlich, September 2003, National Center on Secondary Education and Transition*

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### **7 Principles for Effective Work-Based Learning**

1. Support entry and advancement in a career track
2. Provide meaningful job tasks that build career skills and knowledge
3. Offer compensation
4. Identify target skills and how gains will be validated
5. Reward skill development
6. Support college entry, persistence, and completion
7. Provide comprehensive student supports

*Source: Jobs for the Future - Making Work Based Learning Work*  
[www.jff.org/publications/making-work-based-learning-work](http://www.jff.org/publications/making-work-based-learning-work)

## Work-Based Learning Resources

### Massachusetts School To Career Connecting Activities

Includes access to *Work-Based Learning Plan Resource Guide* -

[www.massconnecting.org](http://www.massconnecting.org)

### Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

*Career Development Education: Activities Guide and Glossary* -

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/connect/cde/guideglossary.pdf>

### Jobs For the Future (JFF)

JFF has a variety of resources on their website: [www.jff.org](http://www.jff.org)

These include -

- Report: *Not As Hard As You Think: Engaging High School Students in Work-Based Learning*
- Report: *Making Work-Based Learning Work*
- *7 Principles for Effective Work-Based Learning*
- *Work-Based Learning Framework*
- *Work-Based Learning Self-Assessment Tool*
- *Work-Based Learning System Development Guide*

### U.S. Department of Education

- Work Based Learning Toolkit - <https://cte.ed.gov/toolkit>
- Federal Partners in Transition: *What to Know About Work-Based Learning for Students and Youth with Disabilities* -  
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ose/transition/products/fpt-fact-sheet--work-based-experiences--11-5-15.pdf>

### Center on Transition Innovations – Virginia Commonwealth University

*Fast Facts: Work Based Learning for Students with Disabilities* -

[http://centerontransition.org/documents/publications/Work\\_Based\\_Learning\\_Fast\\_Fact.pdf](http://centerontransition.org/documents/publications/Work_Based_Learning_Fast_Fact.pdf)

### National Center on Secondary Education and Transition

*Quality Work-Based Learning and Postschool Employment Success (2003)*

Summary brief on work-based learning specific to students with disabilities -

<http://www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=1192>

### Employment First Massachusetts

*Volunteering, Internships, and Unpaid Work Experiences: Legal and Practical Guidelines (2015)*

<https://employmentfirstma.org/files/DDS-Unpaid-Work-and-Volunteer-November-2015.pdf>