

Transition
T E N N E S S E E

Building Student Work-Based Learning Experiences

Hope Armstrong and Leah Burgess

Objectives



Define work-based learning



Discuss four types of work-based learning experiences



Explore how using PINS can lead to identifying work-based learning experiences

Objectives Cont.



Discuss resources for planning work-based learning experiences



Review strategies for building relationships with employers

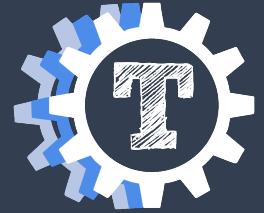


Identify other considerations for employment

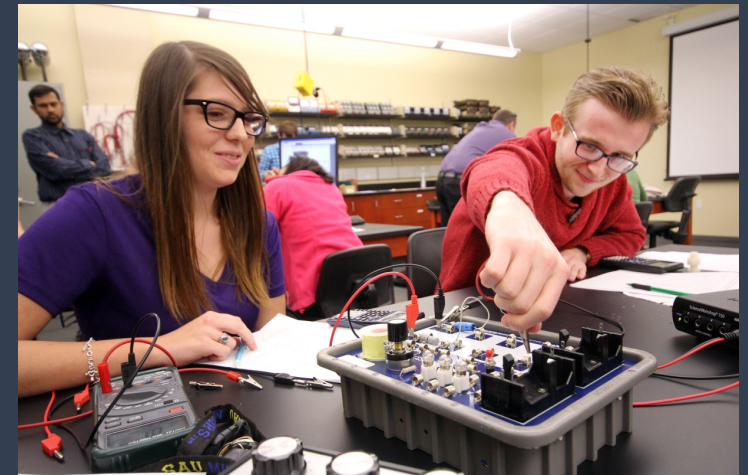
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Work-Based Learning

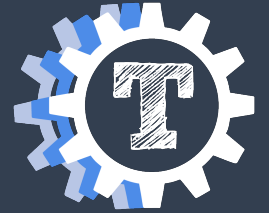
DOE: Work-Based Learning



- Approach that bridges the gap between high school and high-demand careers in Tennessee
- Work-based learning is meant to build on classroom instruction to develop employability skills that prepare students for success in postsecondary education (PSE) or future careers
- Students may earn school credit for work-based learning capstone experiences

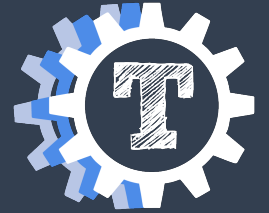


School-Based Examples



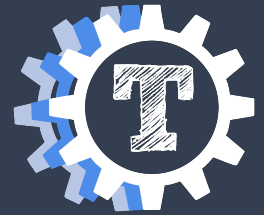
- On Tuesday and Thursday during their work-based learning class or block, three students work in the cafeteria
 - They help with food preparation, washing dishes, and cleaning
- On Wednesday and Friday during their work-based learning class or block, two students work in the front office
 - They help with sorting mail, making copies, and filing documents

Pre-ETS: Work-Based Learning



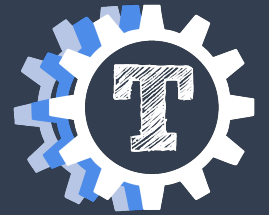
- Uses the workplace or real work to provide students with knowledge and skills
 - Helps connect school experiences to real-life work and future career opportunities
- Direct employer and community involvement is an essential component of work-based learning to ensure student engagement

Community-Based Examples



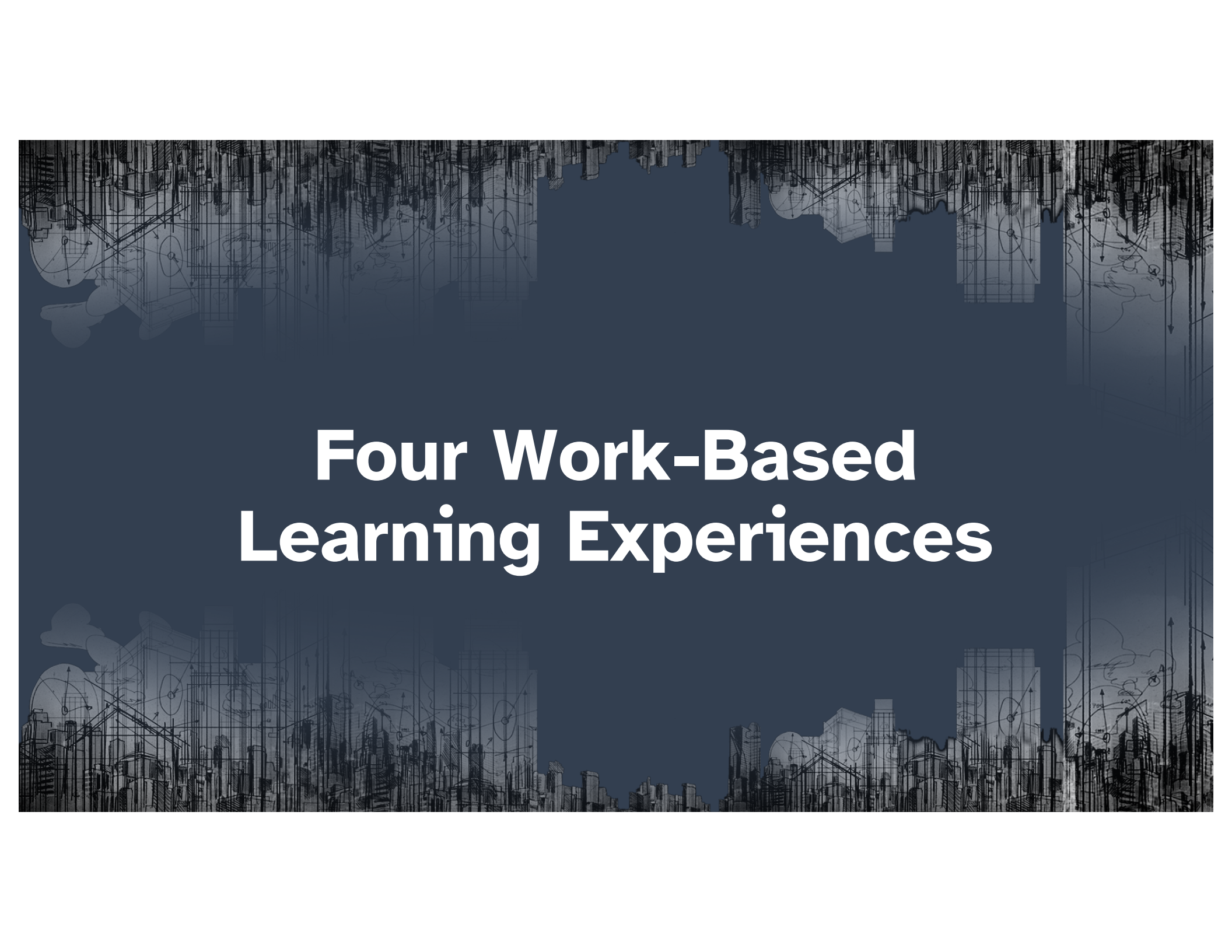
- Job Shadowing
 - Students visit the local newspaper and spend the afternoon learning the job responsibilities of an editor and journalist
- Informational Interviews
 - One student who is interested in working at a library meets with a local librarian to ask questions about the job and educational requirements

Long-Term Benefits of Work-Based Learning



- Predictor of more positive postsecondary employment, education, and independent living outcomes
- Development of connections that may lead naturally to employment



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Four Work-Based Learning Experiences

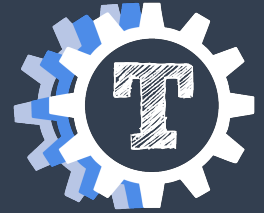
Work-Based Learning Experiences

- Focusing on:
 - Non-paid experiences
 - Service learning
 - Volunteering
 - Paid experiences
- Consider the student's needs when determining what work-based learning experience to coordinate

Work-based learning experiences, may include:

- Job Shadowing
- Career Mentorship
- Career Related Competitions
- Informational Interviews
- Paid Internships
- Non-paid Internships
- Practicum
- Service Learning
- Student-led Enterprises
- Simulated Workplace Experience
- Paid Work Experience
- Non-Paid Work Experience
- Volunteering
- Workplace Tours/Field Trips

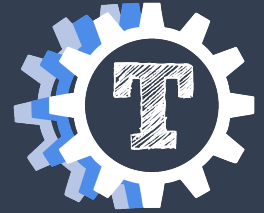
Non-Paid Work Experience



- Gain work experience and explore career interests
 - Option for students with limited work experience
- Help the student learn more about tasks they like or dislike in a job
- Potential for flexible hours
- Employers are often willing to let the student try multiple jobs or tasks within the company



Service Learning



Approach

that combines what the student is learning in the classroom with community activities

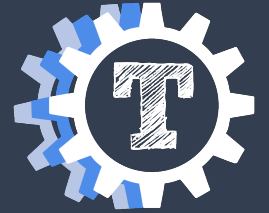
Extend

learning beyond academics and lay the foundation for personal growth throughout the student's educational experience

Process

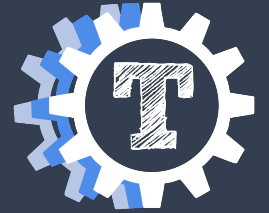
of engaging students in creating a project in the community, implementing the project, and reflecting on the experience

Benefits of Service Learning



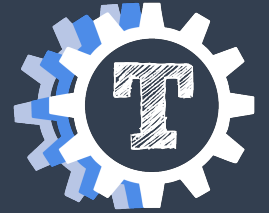
- Increased self-esteem
- Opportunities to build relationships with same-age peers without disabilities
- Improved perceptions of students with disabilities
- Opportunities for career exploration
- Engaging in problem-solving
- Learning job-specific skills
- Examples:
 - Starting a community garden
 - Organizing a food drive

Volunteering



- Donates time or efforts to causes or organizations
- Ways for students to explore careers and interests
 - Not directly tied to classroom instruction
- Short-term or one-time event

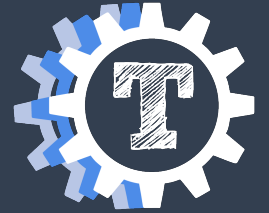
Benefits of Volunteering



- Research on volunteering shows:
 - Improved social skills, self-confidence, and social networks
 - Enhances self-perception, community engagement, and future employment prospects
 - Encourages independence and empowers youth to achieve their employment goals
 - Adds experience to their resume

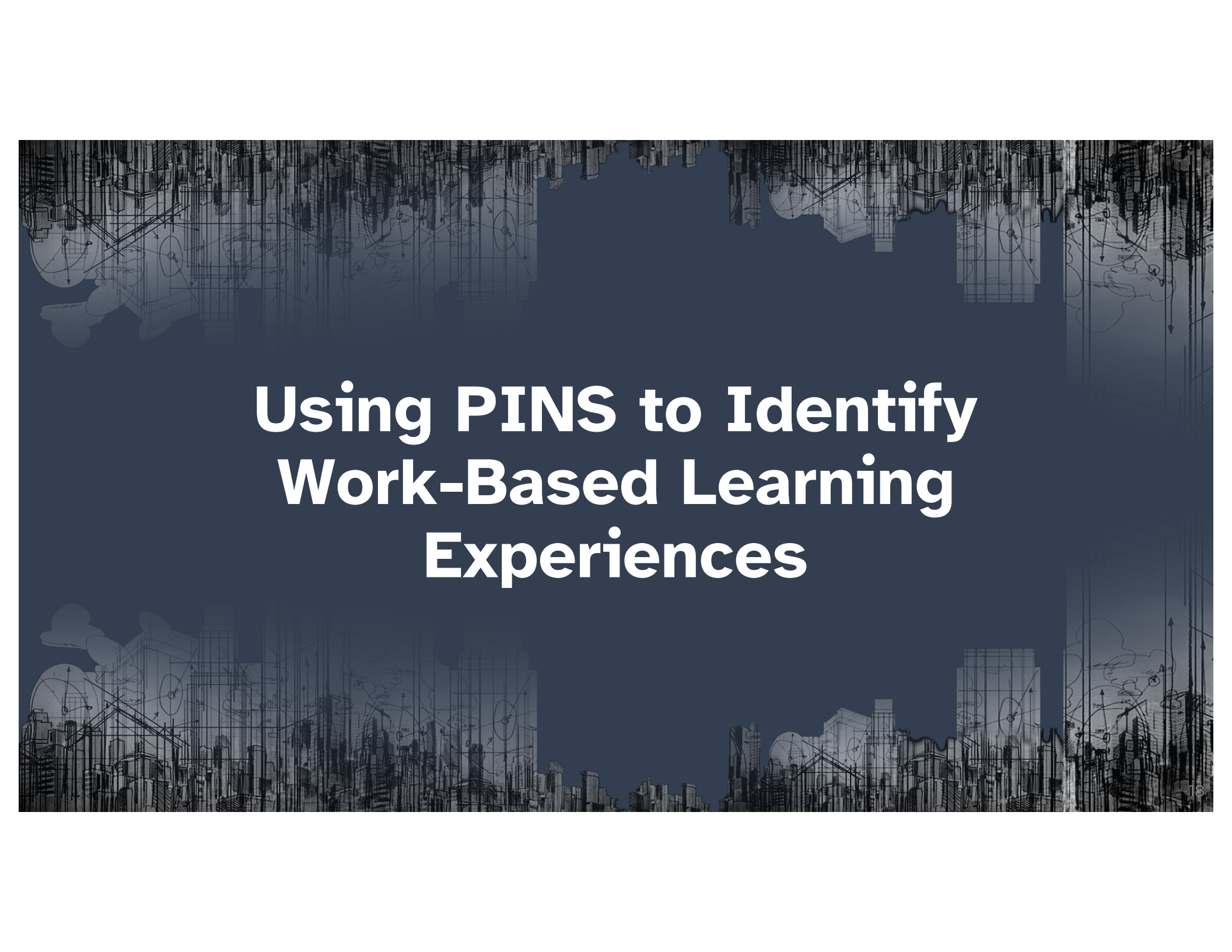


Paid Work-Based Learning Experiences



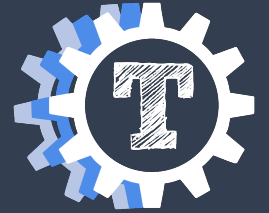
- Focuses on general workplace skills and career preparation within a specific industry of the student's interests
- To obtain a paid experience students may need to complete:
 - An application for the position
 - An interview process
- Paid experiences in high school prepare students for meaningful employment opportunities post-high school





Using PINS to Identify Work-Based Learning Experiences

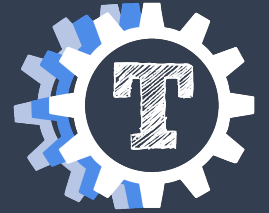
What are PINS?



- Preferences
 - Example: Working independently or working with a team
- Interests
 - Example: Helping others or providing a service
- Needs
 - Example: Work somewhere they can use the bus as transportation
- Strengths
 - Example: Communication

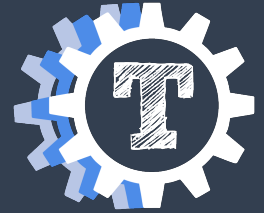


PINS and Identifying Career Interests



- Start by having students explore different career clusters that align with their careers of interest
 - Pictorial interest inventories, CareerOneStop career videos and assessments
- After identifying career clusters, students can narrow their career choices within the cluster of their interest
 - Can assist students in identifying businesses in the area where they are interested in completing a WBL experience

Drew's PINS and Work-Based Learning Options



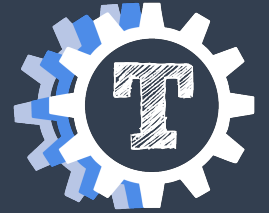
All About Drew:

- 18-year-old
- Type 1 diabetes that requires ongoing management by a nurse while he is at school
- Uses 1- and 2-word phrases to get his needs met and interact with others

Drew's PINS:

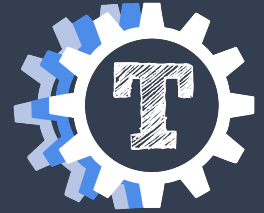
- Prefers a set routine throughout the day
- Excels when school-based work experiences involved sorting, putting items back in a specific location, and engaging in tasks that have a clear beginning, middle, and end
- Does not enjoy tasks that involve cleaning (i.e., sweeping, wiping down surfaces, washing dishes)

Drew's Examples



- Service Learning: starting a community food or clothing drive
- Non-paid experience: volunteering at the local library
- Paid experience: working as a donation attendant at the local thrift store

Nic's PINS and Work-Based Learning Options



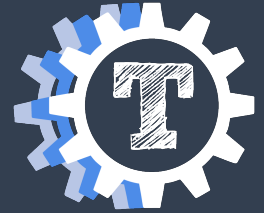
All About Nic:

- 20-year-old
- Uses modified sign language, gestures, shaking his head yes or no, leading staff by the hand, as well using his AAC device equipped with TouchChat

Nic's PINS:

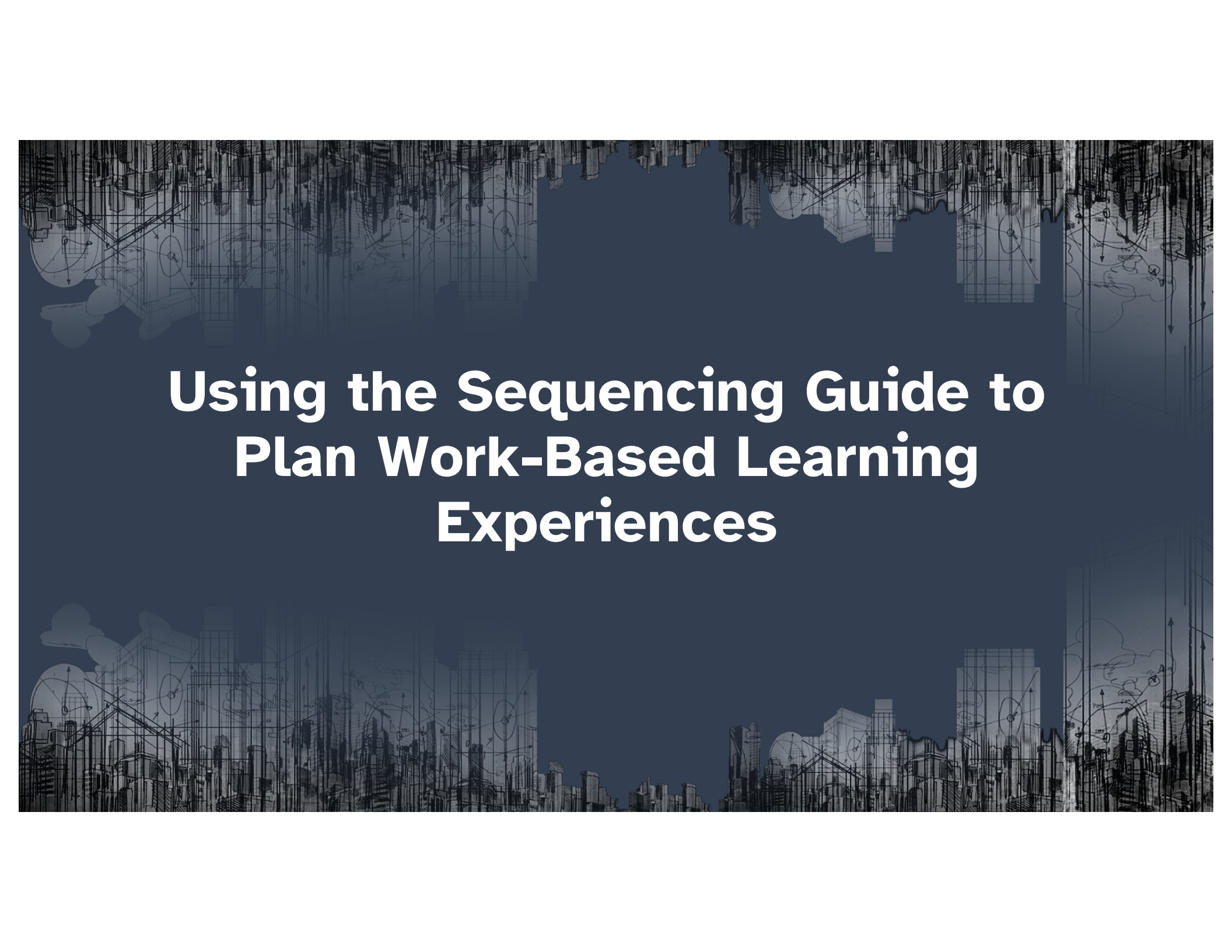
- Loves buses and enjoys taking the Metro Bus throughout the week
- Interested in cooking and preparing his own meals but has difficulty maintaining sanitary practices
- Goes to the grocery store and shops for food for his lunch and for food used for weekly cooking lessons

Nic's Examples



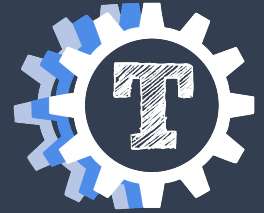
- Internship: Metro Bus to learn more about working in bus maintenance, bus scheduler, and bus driver
- Volunteer opportunities: local Boys and Girls Club, shelter for cooking and preparing meals
- Paid experience: Bus ticket agent at Metro Bus station





Using the Sequencing Guide to Plan Work-Based Learning Experiences

Pre-ETS Sequencing Guide



- Facilitates needs-based activity planning
- Provides structured learning experiences for students
- Ensures students have the preparation needed for work-based learning experiences

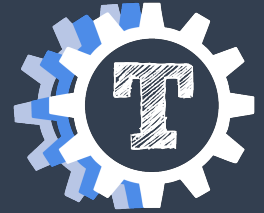


Pre-Employment Transition Services Sequencing Guide

January 24, 2022
1st Edition



Individualizing Learning Experiences



- Provides step-by-step guide to preparing and completing work-based learning experiences with students
- Maximizes the learning opportunities for each experience

Work-Based Learning Experiences – Short Form [Additional Sequencing Guide Information: Long Form](#)

Work-Based Learning involves students building on classroom-based instruction to develop employability skills. These skills prepare students for success in postsecondary education and future careers. These learning experiences must include direct involvement with industry or community professionals. It can occur in the community or at school and should be provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible. Experiences may occur during the school day, outside the school day, or even when school is not in session. Some of the most common competency categories under the Work-Based Learning Experiences category are:

- Career Awareness
- Career Exploration
- Work Experience
- Job Skills

Category: Career Awareness – Workplace Tours

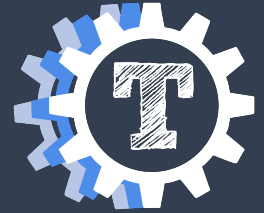
Skill Topic: Working knowledge of workplace tours

1. Explain how workplace tours can provide opportunities to explore careers:
 - a. Provide exposure to potential careers and jobs
 - b. Learn about the business
 - c. Learn about the professional and educational experiences of employees
 - d. Observe work tasks
 - e. Interact with employees and ask questions
 - f. Build knowledge about the education and training needed for entry into the industry

Skill Topic: Developing the skills necessary to participate in workplace tours

1. Introduce and provide relevant details about themselves to new people
 - a. Name
 - b. Grade
 - c. Job(s) they are interested in learning about

Work-Based Learning Experiences: Job Shadowing



- 1 Determine what they want to learn from the job shadowing experience and create a list of questions to ask
 - How did you get started at this job?
 - What skills and additional education did you need to be successful at your job?
 - What work tasks do you enjoy the most?
 - What job tasks do you find the most challenging?
 - What is something that most people don't know about this job?
- 2 Understand the logistics and expectations for professionalism during the job shadow
- 3 Actively participate in the job shadow experience by being attentive, professional, and engaged

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Building Relationships with Employers



**Have you connected with
employers?**

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**What barriers are you currently
experiencing when setting up
Work-Based Learning
experiences?**

Barriers



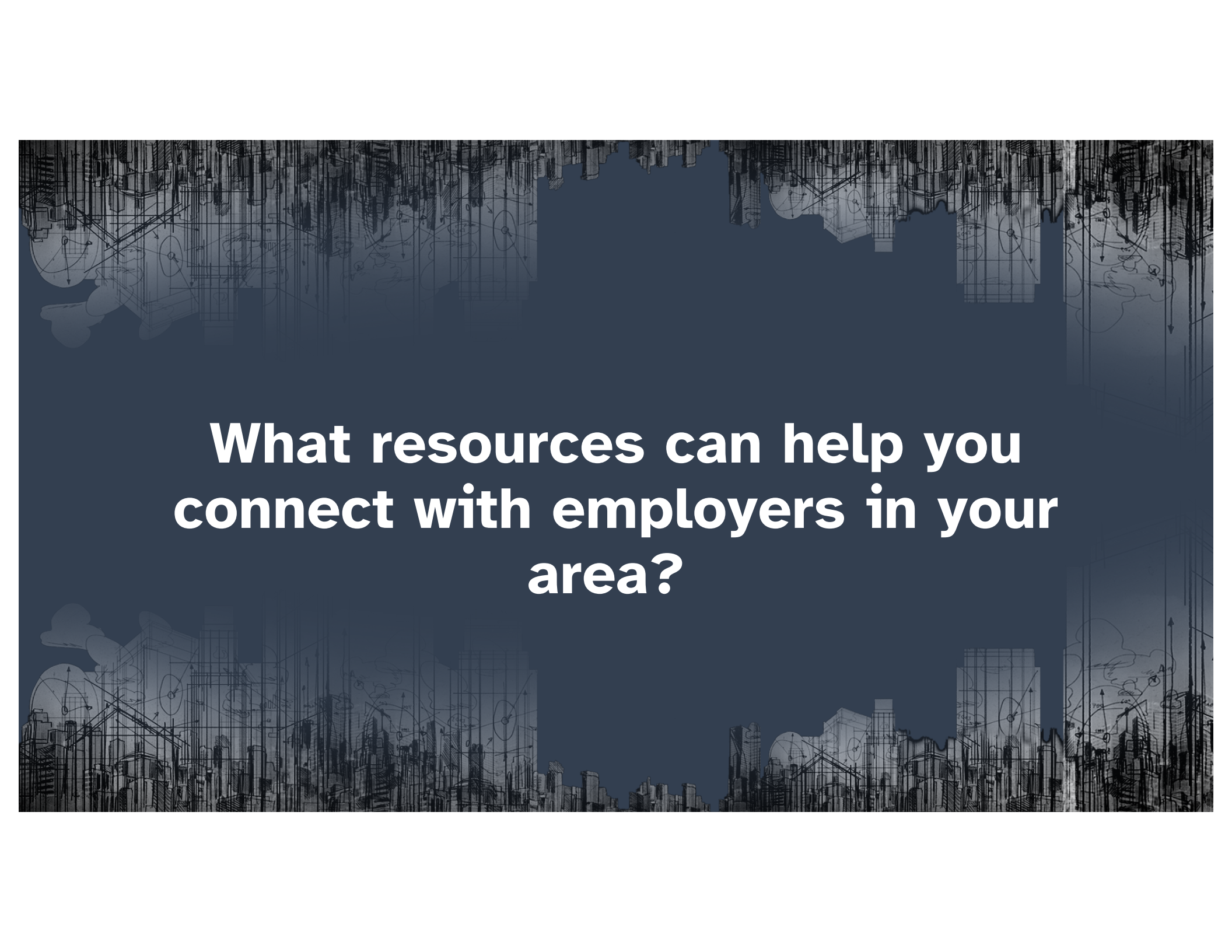
Liability concerns

Employer
perception

Lack of employer
resources

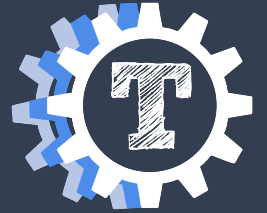
Lack of WBL
opportunities
that meet
students' PINS

Logistics of
scheduling WBL
within the
school day



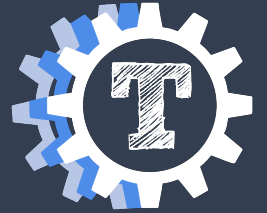
**What resources can help you
connect with employers in your
area?**

Liability Concerns



- Solutions:
 - Offer a copy of the district/agency coverage that will cover the student on the job site
 - Provide an informational packet that covers logistical concerns for potential employers
 - Develop a release/waiver for students & families to sign

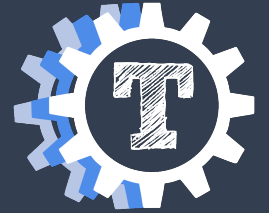
Employer Perception



- Solutions:
 - Use social media/brochures to spotlight student Work-Based Learning success stories
 - Community involvement: have conversations with employers, invite and host events for employers and community members at the school

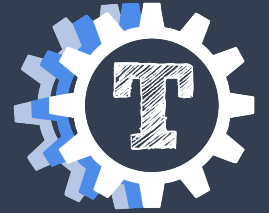


Lack of Employer Resources

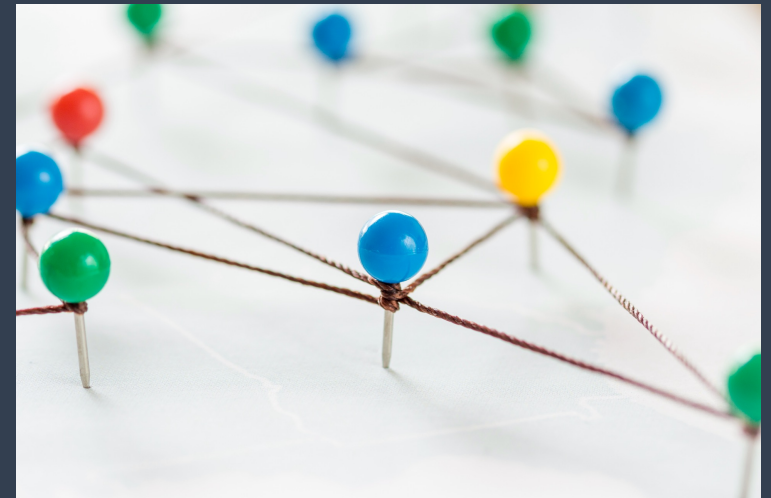


- Solutions:
 - Explain the benefits of job coaches and Vocational Rehabilitation
 - Ensure that students and school staff are well-trained before going to the job site
 - Ask the employer what skills the student will need
 - Brainstorm accommodations students may need for their work-based learning experiences
 - Look into financial incentives for employers
 - Stipends, grants, tax credits

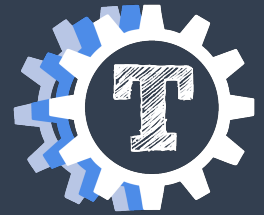
Lack of Opportunities



- Solutions:
 - Use friends/family/personal connections and ask for others to help by doing the same
 - Look into volunteer and unpaid opportunities
 - Attend Chamber of Commerce meetings and other community events
 - Identify the needs of the business



Scheduling Work-Based Learning



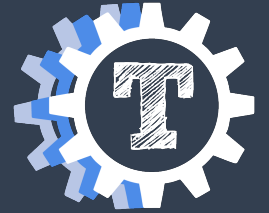
- Solutions:
 - Prioritize small/local businesses
 - Brainstorm scheduling work-based learning experiences with the employer
 - Collaborate when scheduling student experiences
 - Meet with school counselors for help with class schedules





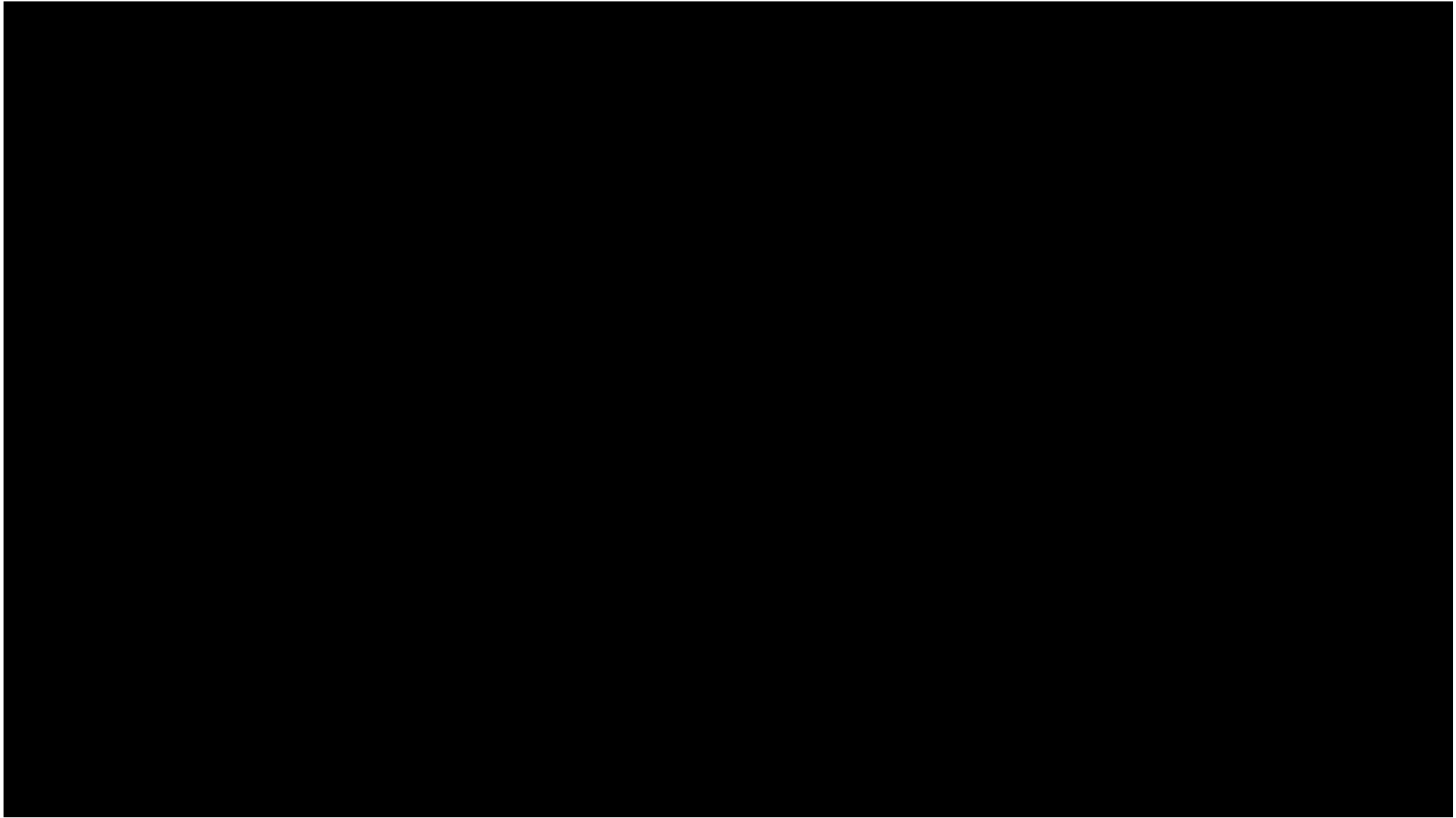
Strategies for Connecting with Employers

Be Positive

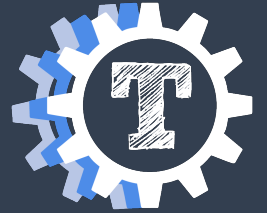


- Sell your students and their strengths
 - What attributes do your students bring to the table?
 - How might your students' skills contribute to business operations?
- Provide solutions to employers
 - Present solutions if accommodations are needed
 - Discuss options with employers
 - Tasks lists, alarms on a smartwatch



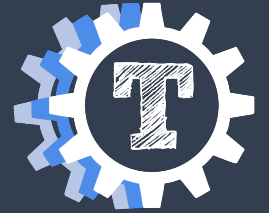


Take Action



- Cold calls
 - Call and be ready with a quick elevator pitch
 - Ask for a time to call back or a time to visit in person
- Walk-ins
 - Visit the business
 - Is the business accessible for the student's needs?
- Use personal connections
 - Do you know someone who owns a business?
 - Do the student's parents know someone in the community or at the Chamber of Commerce?
 - Create a list of your resources and networks

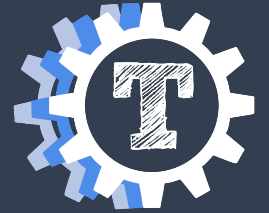
Pitch to Employers



- The “pitch” to employers
 - Focus on student strengths, skillsets, and interests
 - One-page profile or digital resume to demonstrate skillset
 - Lead with that will make them a good fit for the business, not with disability or deficits
 - Include information about the supports the employer will receive



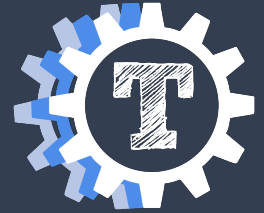
Develop Relationships



- Gauge their willingness to provide work-based learning experiences
- Discuss the day-to-day operations at the business
- Keep an open mind about employer needs
 - Work-based learning may be new to the employer
- Create a way to stay organized when contacting multiple employers



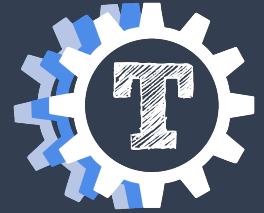
Identify Employer Needs



- Identifying an area where a student could help with the day-to-day operations
 - Example: You are at a local arts and crafts store shopping for supplies. You notice that the store is getting deliveries but there is no employee on the floor to accept and organize the deliveries. You speak with the manager and identify an opportunity for a student to make deliveries run smoothly.



Maintain Employer Relationships



- Relationships with employers should be ongoing and maintained
- Engage in collaborative efforts to ensure that the student is successful
 - Designated times to check in
 - Check-in with the manager to discuss the student's progress
- Provide employers with opportunities to increase their involvement
 - Invite employers to events at the schools you work with
 - Recommend participating businesses to family and friends
 - Promote participating businesses at the schools you work with



At Brixx Pizza, it's a franchise



Other Considerations

Transportation



- Explore the area to see if they have local ride-share options
 - Identify areas that are geographically accessible for students
- Teach students how to use rideshare apps like Uber or Lyft
- Identifying bus routes
 - Use Google Maps to identify bus stops, bus routes, and times
- Aid students in creating a “My Route” on Google Maps
- Help students think about their support network and who may be able to assist with transportation
 - Church vans or carpools

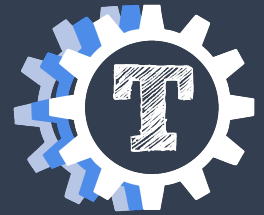
Accommodations



- An adjustment to a job or work environment that makes it possible for a person with a disability to do their job duties
- Examples of Accommodations
 - Task lists
 - Video reminders
 - Smartphone Apps
- Resource:
 - Job Accommodation Network
 - Information on accommodations
 - Information for employers
 - A to Z of Disabilities and Accommodations



On-the-Job Supports: Job Coaching



Supported Employment Service

Paid staff from an outside agency that helps a person learn their job responsibilities

Designed as a short-term support to assist students with gaining independence on-the-job

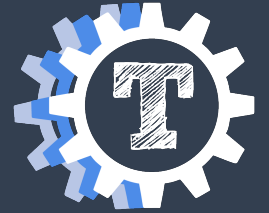
Job coach fades as the student becomes more independent, and natural supports are established

On-the-Job Supports: Natural Supports



- Resources that are already present and available to all persons in community environments
 - Includes family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, and members of clubs or civic groups
- Staff members who may be willing to spend extra time coaching a person
- Examples of how natural supports can help students:
 - A peer or supervisor who checks a task list at the end of the day
 - Working beside a student to make sure tasks get done
 - Reminding when scheduled breaks are over

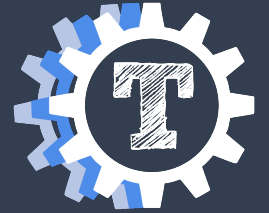
Other Employment Options



- Students could also consider other employment options:
 - Apprenticeships
 - Customized employment
 - Self-employment



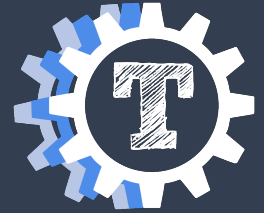
Apprenticeships



- Provides an opportunity to gain the skills and technical knowledge needed to become an expert in the field
- Earn nationally recognized credentials that can lead to higher salaries and more job opportunities
- Get an education without accumulating student debt
- Can receive pay while learning skills during on-the-job training

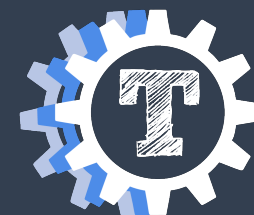


Customized Employment



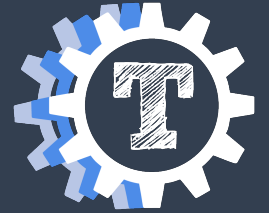
- Building a relationship between an employee and an employer that is personalized to meet the needs of both
 - A curated job that benefits the employee and the employer
 - Example: A magazine company creates a delivery position
- In Tennessee, guidelines require training to provide customized employment
- Check with your agency to see what Customized Employment Trainings are approved

Self-Employment



- Occurs when an individual starts and conducts business operations on their own or as a partner, rather than working for an employer
- Individuals with disabilities are about two times more likely to pursue self-employment than individuals without a disability
- Self-employment can be flexibly designed, tailored to an individual's PINS, and bypass common barriers to employment
- Previous research has shown that Pre-ETS providers and VR counselors who know more about self-employment have:
 - More positive attitudes about self-employment
 - Increased likelihood of successful self-employment for their students/clients with disabilities

Takeaways



Defined work-based learning and reviewed school- and community-based examples



Reviewed four types of work-based learning experiences and explored the benefits associated with each experience



Explored how using PINS can lead to work-based learning experiences

Takeaways Cont.



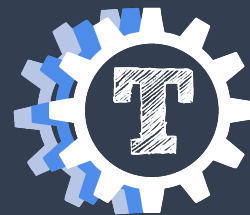
Discussed using the Sequencing Guide as a resource to plan work-based learning experiences



Reviewed strategies for building relationships with employers



Identified other considerations for employment



Questions?

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