



PARTNER'S GUIDE TO SCHOOL NETWORKING AND ENGAGEMENT



Build Your Future (BYF) encourages both industry representatives and educators to create meaningful connections. Together, let’s spread the word about the wide range of successful construction career paths and inspire the next generation of craft professionals.

Not sure how to connect with schools and teachers? The best point of contact varies from district to district. Here are some tips and tricks to help you find the right person, ask the best questions, and make a meaningful connection.

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WHERE TO START

To find the best point of contact, start by identifying local middle and high school where you would like to present. Introduce yourself and your reason for calling, then ask them who the best contact is. Call the school to ask who the best contact is, you may also identify this information on the school district's website.

Once you've found your local school district's website, look for a staff directory which may list key individuals to contact.



**Career & technical
education director**



**Guidance or career
counselor**



**Volunteer & business
partnership coordinator**



**Special programs
coordinator**



WHO TO CONTACT

If you're not able to find these positions, start checking local schools for other contacts. Navigate to the school's website where you want to present and find the "Faculty & Staff" page, which will list:

- Principals/vice principals/deans
- School counselors
- STEM teachers (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)
- CTE (Career & Technical Education) teachers

Some schools have CTE or Business Advisory Boards. Those are also great contacts to start with, if available in your community.



PRO TIP

If anyone in your organization knows somebody at a local school, leverage those relationships to find the best point of contact quickly.



QUESTIONS TO ASK

Introduce yourself and provide a brief summary of your request.

Always start the conversation by being clear about who you are, who you work for and what you are trying to do. Help educators and counselors introduce students to the opportunities of a career in construction.

“Are you the best person to help?”

If the response is “Yes,” great! Keep the conversation going. If not, thank them for their time and contact who they refer you to.

“What approvals are needed and how far in advance do I need to obtain them?”

“Are in-class visits an option? Are virtual visits an option?”

“If visits are not an option, may I provide a recorded presentation or video to be shown in classrooms at your school?”



! REMINDER

Every school is different, including with how and when they discuss career options with students. Some schools regularly engage with students, while others prefer to do a presentation for students once a year. Ask what works best for them; it's important to adapt to their needs to allow you to achieve your goal.

WAYS TO CONNECT / STUDENTS

Once you have made a connection, it is important to have a plan for how to connect with students. There are endless ways to engage with students and introduce them to the world of construction. Whichever way you interact with students, remember the intention is to get students excited about careers in construction while being a resource for any future questions.

Here are some suggestions for how to connect with students:

CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS

With the emergence of virtual and hybrid learning environments, it may be possible to host your presentation virtually.

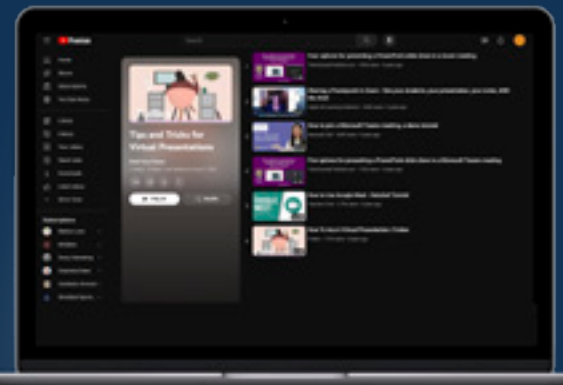
Make sure you test your technology before going live!

Use BYF's pre-made Industry Recruitment PowerPoint with talking points, available at byf.org/resources. This will help you create an interactive presentation that speaks about your company and the benefits of a career in construction.



PRO TIP

If you are using a virtual platform to present, check here for a few useful videos: byf.org/video-tips.



Research suggests that students respond well to people who they can relate to. Choose a person who can speak with authenticity and conveys the energy and personality you want to display at your organization. Make sure your representative is prepared to answer questions and provide relatable examples.

WAYS TO CONNECT / EDUCATORS

Sometimes you can't connect with students. In that case, ask if you can connect with counselors and teachers.

“May I send you some materials to distribute to counselors and teachers?”

BYF has dedicated a page to provide educators with free classroom materials. Share this page with educators to bring the topic of construction careers into the classroom: byf.org/classroom.

SHARE EDUCATOR RESOURCES

BYF has created complete lesson plans along with several interactive classroom activities suitable for students in middle and high school. Introduce students to the career opportunities in construction through exploration.



All of our classroom resources can be found here:
byf.org/classroom.

If you are sending BYF resources to a teacher, utilize the email template in the appendix and point them to our educator resources page.

EDUCATE THE EDUCATORS

BYF research shows that educators and counselors want to talk to students about the opportunities in construction — they just don't know enough about the industry to lead conversations. You have an opportunity to help current and future students by providing these resources to counselors, teachers, and school administrators.

WAYS TO CONNECT / EDUCATORS

ENGAGEMENT

A great way to engage with educators is to ask if you can host a breakfast or lunch for the teachers. Even if you're not able to present to the students, see if you can share resources with the educators and let them know they have a contact in the industry through you.

Don't underestimate the importance of connecting with school administration. Principals, deans and department chairs can distribute your message to more people as well as colleagues in other districts!



PRO TIP

If you are sending resources, make sure your point of contact knows you are interested in future engagements and presentation opportunities with students!

CAREER DAYS

Attending career days is an effective way to get in front of students.

Not sure what to do? We have helpful hints for career day exhibitors on our resources page and in appendix B. It's a great resource for first-time exhibitors.

SITE VISITS

One of the best ways to get students excited about construction is by putting them in the middle of the action and hosting a site visit. By bringing students on site, they can see the variety of craft specialties and better gauge what they may be interested in. This can be done in-person or virtually depending on what your company and the teacher find more feasible. For a virtual site visit, all you have to do is Zoom into the classroom and walk them around on site.

CAREERSTARTER / EDUCATORS

CareerStarter is a free tool to help educators guide students to explore careers in construction.



- 1** Create an employer account on **app.skillhero.works/careerstarter-signup-organization**
It is a great way to connect to local educational programs and students directly.
- 2** Use BYF's pre-made CareerStarter PowerPoint to get students on the platform.
- 3** Be sure to have students favorite your company.



FOLLOWING UP

It's critical to think about school outreach as an opportunity to build lasting connections between your company and local schools.

After your connection, send thank you emails to each contact you spoke with and let them know you are happy to help with any questions about careers in construction.



PRO TIP

If you met students during your outreach that you'd love to hire when they are ready, you can find and connect them to one of your job opportunities on CareerStarter!

APPENDIX A

EMAIL TEMPLATE

When providing classroom resources, be sure to establish that you are open to answering questions from educators or students.

Please feel free to use the following email template:

SUBJECT: Resources for Students to Explore Careers in Construction

BODY: Hello [Teacher Name],

[Explain how you got their information if you haven't previously spoken, or remind them of conversations you have had. i.e. After speaking with you Thursday, I wanted to send some resources for you to share in your classroom. Please use these resources to help introduce students to careers in construction.]

The resources below were developed by Build Your Future, a national construction initiative geared toward shifting perceptions of careers in construction while recruiting the next generation of craft professionals.

- Explore resources for teachers here: byf.org/educators.
- Explore FREE classroom materials, including a full lesson plan here: byf.org/classroom.
- Have your students create an account on app.skillhero.works/careerstarter-signup-organization, where they can format resumes, explore careers that align with their interests and connect with training and employers to find jobs!

Thank you for supporting the construction industry and introducing your students to these important career paths!

If you have any questions or comments, please reach me at **[insert contact information]**.

I look forward to hearing from you!

APPENDIX B

HELPFUL HINTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CAREER DAY

Dynamic Displays

TV screens, computers and iPads are all attention grabbers. If you walk around showing your website to students on an iPad, you will most likely attract others who are curious. Playing interesting videos on TV screen or displaying a new technological tool you use will also bring students to your booth, allowing you to open the door for conversation.

Pre-Made Instructor Packs

If you have additional information for instructors, it's nice to have pre-made instructor packs. Ours include pre-made packs of trading cards, posters, collateral orderforms, catalogs, pens and carpentry pencils.

Keep It Fun

Interesting displays are key to drawing attention from students. Create an inviting atmosphere with engaging pieces displayed to encourage students to come and interact with your booth.

Trinkets & Giveaways

Free stuff always gets attention. Be sure to have a few cool (branded) items for students and teachers to take home. Construction craft trading cards, pens and pencils, posters and t-shirts are just a few of the many things that will attract visitors.

Social Media

Many students will have their phones at the event. Encourage them to follow your organization on social media. Run a contest for social media engagement or offer prizes for new followers. If they do not have smart phones, make sure to tell them to visit the sites when they get home.

Extra Bags

If you have a lot of print material or trinkets, have at least a few extra branded bags behind the booth. They are helpful for handing out customized packets of collateral quickly.



Thank you!

We are grateful to you for your commitment to the industry by spreading the word about meaningful careers in construction.

Together, we are building the talent pipeline that will build America!



Build Your Future



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