TAKE TECH

Handbook for companies

Graz, July 2012

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Introduction – What is Take Tech?

Take Tech is a highly successful and sustainable initiative of the Styrian Business Promotion Agency SFG, which was launched in the year 2009 on behalf of the Economic Department of the Government of Styria. Take Tech gives companies the opportunity to inform students about the broad scope of activities and excellent career prospects offered by them in technical and scientific professions. Young people aged between 8 and 18 from all types of schools in Styria are provided with a wider, more sensitive and more objective view that will help them to make informed decisions on their professional future. Furthermore, the initiative intends to counteract current trends leading away from traditional apprenticeships, which is widely supported by the media.

Through Take Tech companies can present themselves as attractive and future-proof employers with manifold training and career opportunities. In doing so, they have almost unlimited possibilities to arouse students' enthusiasm for their business activity and philosophy and win them over. If requested, all proposed measures are professionally supported by Take Tech. There are no limits to creativity.

Summarising, it can be stated that Take Tech is an excellent opportunity to bring the worlds of young people and economy together, dissolving both prejudice as well as existing constraints. The initiative with its numerous measures and methods marks an important step towards strengthening the innovation capacity and long-term competitiveness of Europe's economy.

Source: http://www.sfg.at

Services for companies

With Take Tech, companies can decide which potential young employees they would like to welcome at their premises and which exciting programme they would like to present to their visitors. As regards the programme, the following rules apply:

- No limits to phantasy
- Maximum organisational freedom

Source: http://www.sfg.at

To support the preparation, execution and follow-up of successful company visits for a specific target group, Take Tech offers the following services:

- Personal support with the preparation of company visits
- Basic workshop "Target group: students – How to organise exciting company visits."
- Advanced workshop for companies with creative ideas and the latest tips and tricks
- Networking meetings with teachers from the region to establish contacts and exchange ideas
- Working documents for the organisation of company visits for young people

Information on the use of this document

Company visits can be extremely enriching and motivating experiences for students, teachers and employees alike. Employees gain new insights into their own fields of activity by explaining their work to the young people. Students get the chance to have their burning questions regarding their future answered. And teachers can make valuable contributions in linking the contents of their teachings to everyday business practices. However, such a success can only be achieved if the company visit is interesting, lively and informative.

A company visit is lively when the participants are motivated to actively take part, speak out, find out, analyse, present, communicate and exchange ideas. To accomplish this, it is necessary to bring them into contact with other participants and the employees of your company by using different methods and choosing the right size and composition of the group. This handbook offers a range of methods that will help you to make your company visits truly inspiring, lively and binding experiences that will long be remembered in the most positive way.

Children and young people usually don't find it very exciting to sit still and listen. To reach the desired effect and get them enthusiastic about your company it is necessary to make the company visit a **real experience**. Enthusiasm is achieved when there is something to be experienced, when new contacts are established and new things can be tried out.

This handbook is intended to help you organise successful company visits that are fun for all participants, create positive relations between students and your company and provide useful information.

Success criteria for company visits:

- Bring students together with each other and with the people working in your company. Machines don't tell much but people do. Let your employees be a part of the event. Especially apprentices are often very proud when the get the chance to talk about their job and play an active role in the company visit.
- Meet children and young people on equal footing. You want them to become interested in your company, but is your company interested in them and their lives?

- Cover a variety of interests and needs. Enjoy having personal contact, giving information, answering questions, creating practical experiences and giving an outlook on the future.
- Plan and prepare the event thoroughly and include many participative and creative activities.
- Have fun planning and carrying out company visits.

A company visit becomes especially interesting if the central issues and questions of the young visitors are identified and discussed. In this context, thorough planning is essential. A well-considered selection of schools and age groups is certainly helpful as is a previous exchange with teachers about the topics currently discussed in class. It is extremely motivating for students to realise that the things they learn at school do actually have a practical relevance for their later work life. Furthermore, it is of utmost importance to ask neither too much nor too little of the group. To avoid this, the first part (theoretical part) of this handbook offers plenty of questions and suggestions that support you with the preparation, execution, and follow-up of your company visit. The second part (practical part) contains a selection of the latest and most important methods for a lively and interesting organisation and presentation of events and is also roughly divided into the three stages of preparation, execution, and follow-up.

We wish you joy and success with your company visit as well as many enriching experiences!

Preparation of company visits

In the following chapters, we will present a series of preparatory questions and activities in various steps. Only if the target group and its needs are taken seriously you can win the best candidates for a job your company.

Step 1: Preliminary considerations

Before starting with the preparation of your company visit, you and your team should consider the following questions:

- What are the overall goals we want to achieve through the Take Tech initiative?
- What message do we want to pass in to our young guests?
- Which problems have we encountered so far?
- Which points worked very well?

Step 2: What is the relevance of the company visit for our company?

After having answered all fundamental questions, you should clarify the following points, first for yourself and then with your team:

- What do we want to achieve with this company visit?
- How can we benefit from its results and put them to a meaningful subsequent usage?
- Who in our company would profit from this visit and the subsequent usage of its results? Who should take part in it (management, marketing, team leaders, etc.)?
- How many resources can we make available for the company visit (time, costs, etc.)?
- Which target group (school type, age, etc.) do we want to focus on? Who is particularly relevant to our company?

Step 3: Questions related to the target group

The questions related to the target group are the core of every thorough preparation and form the basis for all subsequent work.

- From which schools would we like to invite students?
- Which school type is this?
- How old are the students?
- What are the wishes, needs, aims and expectations of both students and teachers?
- What previous experiences do the students have? What do they already know (technical knowledge)? What can we expect of them?
- Are they being sent here or do they come voluntarily?
- What is the ideal group size?
- Who are the contact persons at the school? Can I contact them in advance to get extra information and coordinate the programme with them?
- How can we maintain contact with students and teachers?
- How will the school use the results of the company visit?

Step 4: Announcing the company visit

Companies should make use of the opportunity to present themselves briefly in the form of a written invitation. When designing the invitation, the following rules should be observed:

- Use many pictures
- Find a catching title
- Use direct speech ("We are very pleased to invite you...")
- Give a short overview of the programme
  (How do the students profit from the individual activities?)
- Give organisational information (place, start, end, additional information)

Step 5: Preparation work

At the beginning of each close involvement with young people there is a lot of preparation work to do. Thorough preparation guarantees long-term success and facilitates a direct access to the target group.

- Get in touch with the teacher who is responsible; learn about the expectations of the visitors and the programme of the company visit. If possible, integrate topics that are currently discussed in class into your programme. This way, these topics get practical relevance for the students.
- Inform all participating employees about the programme and their individual roles and tasks. Provide all necessary background information about the group (school, age, previous knowledge, interests, etc.).
- Find a suitable room and organise all necessary materials. Consider optimum room size, arrangement of tables and chairs (recommendation: put chairs in a circle and tables close to the walls for group work), presentation tools (flip chart, pin board and pins, pens, cards, beamer, etc.), music (to create a good atmosphere upon arrival and in breaks), reception area (Where can the students gather when they arrive? Where would they feel comfortable? What are possible activities to shorten the waiting time before the programme starts?), etc.
- Make sure that all equipment and information for the tour is available, e.g. protective clothing, route information, guide (if necessary), etc.
- Provide material about your company, e.g. presentation, film, photos, historical outline, product samples, information brochures (to take away), information about job applications (procedure, contact details, etc.).
- Prepare posters or presentations with information about the programme and instructions for the individual activities.

Important note!

- Inform your guests in advance about all safety regulations and necessary precautions.
- If necessary, provide protective clothing.
- It is very popular to take pictures or videos during company visits. Inform your visitors which information they may distribute freely and which information is subject to secrecy provisions.
- When you take pictures or videos, make sure to obtain consent for their publication.
- Provide supervision for hands-on activities, e.g. by an employee.

The programme of a company visit

On the following page you will find a rough programme scheme for a company visit. When it comes to arranging the programme and choosing the adequate methods, you should pay particular attention to one aspect: dramaturgy. Like in a good movie, it is the dramatic composition of the event that creates the suspense. Films usually start in a harmonic and rather neutral atmosphere. You get to know the individual characters and learn the general setting of the story. As the story continues you slowly start to anticipate the film's climax. After this climax has been reached, the suspense eases and at the end, the story is brought back to a neutral atmosphere.

Company visits start with a harmonic and neutral atmosphere too. At the beginning, the guests are familiarised with the organisational details and get a brief outline so that they know what lies ahead of them. In the next stage it is important to inspire their curiosity with interesting pieces of information and stories about the company. An important aspect is to make them participate as early as possible.

The tour through the company is the highlight of every company visit. Therefore, it is important to create suspense when preparing the students for it. Another highlight can be the final analysis when all participants exchange their experiences.

In the final stage, references are made to the goals defined at the beginning of the event. Further steps regarding documentation and future contacts are discussed. Finally, the event is rounded off smoothly; the visitors are well informed and take a positive image of the company with them. Options for future contacts, internships, apprenticeships, etc. create another arc of suspense for the time after the visit. This will keep their interest in your company alive.

Programme and dramaturgy of company visits

(Programme in standard format, *dramaturgy in italics*)

Welcome: Welcome the guests, take them to the seminar room, present programme
Create positive atmosphere, familiarise guests with the programme

Presentation of the company: Tell stories, give examples, show product samples
Create suspense

Detecting expectations, interests, and previous experiences of students: Activate, create movement
Take your guests serious, connect with them

Preparation for the tour through the company: Communicate goals, carry out group work, apply creative methods
Maximise anticipation and create involvement

Tour through the company: Treasure hunt, hands-on activities, working with the product, contacts with employees, photos, videos
Promote activation and participation

Analysis and follow-up of the tour through the company: Exchange experiences, record results, link experiences with topics discussed in school, apply creative methods
Stimulate interest for the future

End: Feedback, possibilities for future contact between students and company, documentation
Round off the event, relate outcome to the start of the event

Example of a programme for a company visit

Time	Activities	Comments
9:00	Reception of the guests in the foyer by HR manager or general manager Completion of formalities Proceed to the seminar room	
9:10	Welcoming address Introduction of the programme	Visualise programme (e.g. on flip chart or pin board)
9:15	Ask the group about its expectations. Goal: Get a first impression of the students, have them participate and find out about their interests.	Possible methods: "Mood Barometer", "Speed Dating", writing on cards, etc.
9:30	• Outline the history of the company: What does the company do today and how has it developed? • Which jobs are there in the company? • What is so special about this company? • Manufacturing companies: show demonstration material Goal: Provide students with a concept of the company; let them know what is so special about the company and/or its products. Which opportunities does the company offer?	Important: Ask the group many questions, show lots of pictures, tell stories and give examples, make clear what all this implies for them (make them want to work for the company). If appropriate, invite employees to tell their stories and explain why the enjoy working here.
10:00	Short break	
10:15	Prepare for the tour through the company: Form small groups of students in which they can explore the company. Make them elaborate questions to answer on their tour.	Dividing them into small groups has the advantage that the individual students get more involved.

Time	Activities	Comments
10:30	Tour through the company There are various options: • Traditional guided tour of the entire group through the premises (can be boring) • Specialised tour through one specific area: Individual employees each take care of one small group and give a more detailed insight into their fields of responsibility. • Marketplace: Participants are split into small groups that go from one area to another. At each "station", they remain for a while. • Treasure hunt: Participants go on a treasure hunt and try to answer a set of questions given to them.	Options depend on age and previous knowledge of the students. Thorough preparation is very important here so that the time available for the tour is efficiently used. The experience is enriched when employees from different departments take part in the tour. Make sure to talk about issues like safety and business secrecy in advance.
11:30	Analysis and summary of the experiences made during the tour: The groups are mixed up and students talk about the experiences they have made during the tour through the company. Back in their initial groups they create presentations on various topics, e.g. What was especially interesting to us? What do we want to know more about? What astonished us the most? What can we tell parents/friends about the company?	Make sure that everybody gets to participate, encourage personal exchange.
12:00	Presentation of the experiences: • Different forms of presentations are possible, e.g. songs, poems, sketches, pictures, etc. • Students tell a story, e.g. one that particularly fascinated them. • Presentations can also be made in gallery format.	Alternative forms of presentations are more fun (especially young people want to experience rather than listen) and create stronger bonds with the topic and the company.

Time	Activities	Comments
12:30	End of the event: • Talk about possible follow-up steps at school • Which parts of information will flow back to the company? • How do the students stay in touch with the company (if desired)? • Feedback round (or special forms of feedback, e.g. ball bearing method) • Hand out small gifts or information material • Conclusion and farewell	Important: What shall remain in the minds of the students after the visit?

Methods and guidelines

The following collection of methods, the brief guidelines and tips are intended to give an overview of the wide range of methods that can be used for planning a company visit. One of the most important aspects when selecting your methods is that you are comfortable with them and that you can imagine using them in practice. Work out your programme in such a way that you can memorise it easily and lead your audience smoothly through the event. Experiences from past events can always be used to improve and enrich the following ones. Over the time, you become more and more open to improvisation.

The programme should take into account the different needs of participants and appeal to all senses. It is recommended to combine different methods, so that students are given enough room to speak out and participate and you can make use of all human perception channels. The best strategy to activate all types of learners is to provide a perfect mix of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic stimuli (see figure below).

Types of learners

Source: http://blog.collegenetwork.com
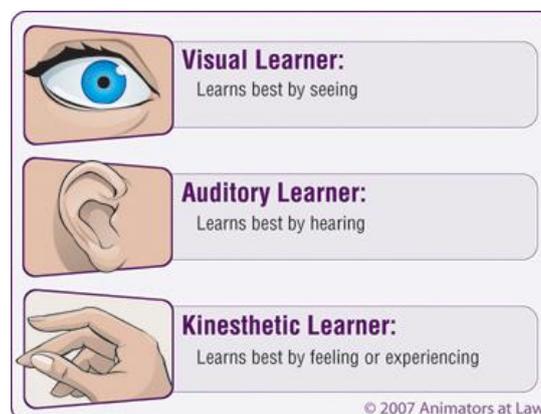
This ensures the long-term success of your work and students will be grateful for it. The needs of the group members can vary and include the following: receive interesting information, exchange with others (social aspect), make a unique experience or receive practical tips for their personal development (future perspectives, job opportunities, etc.).

Preparation

1) Involve parents

Already at the preparation stage you should make use of one of the most important resources in the lives of young people – their parents. They are usually their most trusted persons and a determining factor in their decision-making processes. If you manage to win them for your ideas you have already achieved a lot. With regard to involving parents, you should observe the following tips:

Useful tips

1. Take into account the situation of working parents and hold the event either in the afternoon or on a Saturday.

2. Supply useful information for parents with your information and promotional material.

3. At the event, place information aimed at parents in a separate room (e.g. facts and figures, statistics, information about career prospects, living standards, etc.).

4. Point out why it is useful to continue a specific career path and give information about the type and level of education necessary for the jobs in question (Which field / school type do most applicants come from?)

5. Familiarise parents with the company website and show them where they can find information about job vacancies.

6. If your company has its own newsletter, offer parents the possibility to sign up for it. This way, they are regularly informed about the company's current activities.

2) "Parents letter"

A "Parents letter" is an ideal tool for companies that wish to present themselves to the parents as possible future employers. It can be supplemented with information folders and other papers. Use this opportunity and send "Parents letters" to the school you have chosen to inform parents in advance about the excursion and/or your company. On the following page you find an example of an invitation to an "Open Day":

Take Tech Open Day at COMPANY NAME!

Open the door to a better future for your children!

- Did you know that our country is suffering a severe shortage of skilled labour in technical and scientific fields?
- Did you know that this is a Europe-wide problem?

Especially in technical and scientific fields, numerous companies are **looking for qualified and suitable applicants**. As part of the Take Tech initiative, COMPANY NAME opens its doors and invites students to get to know the company and its field of activity.

Come and learn about the manifold opportunities provided by COMPANY NAME, join an interactive exchange and make sure that your children receive the best possible education.

What is Take Tech?

Take Tech is an initiative that aims to arouse students' interest in technical and scientific professions. Take Tech offers a great variety of tools and services that promote the cooperation between schools and companies and support joint activities.

All ideas, tools and methods provided by Take Tech are designed to facilitate cooperation between education and industry. Take Tech has made great contributions in promoting technical and scientific jobs among students.

Open Day

- Information for students and parents
- Interactive exchange
- Demonstrations and presentations
- Practical career advice

The Open Day provides a unique insight into the activities of COMPANY NAME and supports students with their career choices.

Place, date

-------------------------------   -------------------------------
          Headmaster   Parent

Start / Introduction

A successful start and a good first impression determine whether somebody is given further attention or, in this case, also whether you can catch and maintain the students' interest in your company. Therefore, you should pay particular attention to the start of your presentation. A 16 year old girl has other feelings and interests than a 12 year old. The methods you choose as well as your diction and your entire appearance should fit your target group. Before describing the individual methods, we will give you a few simple but very useful tips:

Document results

There are different ways to document the results achieved during the visit. You can put flipchart posters on the walls and leave them there so that the theme remains visible to the audience throughout the event. Alternatively, you can take pictures or videos.

Tell stories

Stories create vivid pictures in the minds of the listeners. Whereas abstract information easily disappears from the memory, pictures stay for a very long time. Try to tell as many stories as possible in your presentation, use pictures to explain what you mean. Suitable stories are legends surrounding the foundation of the company, special characteristics of the owner, critical situations in the past, examples of how to make business with faraway countries, extraordinary careers, etc.

Ask questions

He who asks, leads! This maxim is true for the production and presentation of events in general and for company visits in particular. Ask as many open questions as possible (questions that begin with 'wh': why, where, who etc.) This type of questions allows the respondent to answer freely and encourages individual thinking and open discussions. This strategy will help you to stick to the theme and remain clear about what you want from your participants at every step.

1) "Mood Barometer"

Duration:	max. 20 minutes		Age:	any

Materials:	3 previously prepared cards with the numbers '1', '5' and '10' written on them	

Initial situation:	The participants stand in a circle.

Procedure:	Place the 3 cards on the floor so that they form a scale from 1 to 10. Then read a question, e.g. 'What mood are you currently in?' Ask the students to choose a position on the scale. '1' means 'absolutely uninterested', '10' means 'full of curiosity and enthusiasm'. When everybody has found their place, ask them why they have chosen it. In this exercise, any questions can be asked, e.g. 'What do you already know about the company?' Also the scale can vary. There are no limits to your imagination.

Benefits:	All participants are activated right at the beginning. Initial hurdles of communication are overcome in a playful and interactive way. Differences within the group become visible. Very often, young people succumb to peer pressure and give very similar answers.

2) "Speed Dating"

Duration:	approx. 10 minutes			Age:	12 +

Materials:	Moderation cards, pin board or flip chart	

Initial situation:	A suitable room with variable seating, plenty of chairs

Procedure:	**Step 1:** Instruct the students to form pairs. If possible, these pairs should consist of people who usually don't have a lot to do with each other. Ask them a question, e.g. 'What do you expect from this company visit?', 'What do you already know about the company?', 'What are you particularly interested in?' which they are to discuss. Each student shall write the results of the discussions down on the card. After a certain time, e.g. 2 minutes, an acoustic signal marks the end of the round and new pairs are formed. Depending on the size of the group and on the number of topics, this step is repeated several times (usually 3-4 times). **Step 2:** Ask participants to come forward with their cards, which are then fixed to the pin board or flipchart.

Benefits:	The students are activated and get in touch with each other. The method helps to find out what mood of the group is in and reveals its interests.

3) Presentation of the programme

Duration:	max. 40 minutes			Age:	any

Materials:	A previously prepared flip chart showing the programme (well-structured and simple)	

Initial situation:	No particular setting, students' attention is required.

Procedure:	Explain the programme, give organisational details (schedule, breaks, etc.), provide information about the location, procedures (for group work, the tour, etc.), establish rules (mobile phones, smoking, etc.); Afterwards there is time to answer any remaining questions. They should be dealt with seriously.

Benefits:	Provides orientation, clarity and confidence.

4) _____ **(Room for your own ideas.)**

Duration:				**Age:**	

Materials:		

Initial situation:	

Procedure:	

Benefits:	

Group work

Attending a group of students requires a lot of intuition and sensitivity. The capability to identify social structures and individual characteristics is of utmost importance. The methods described below will help you facilitate active group work and, at the same time, learn about the characteristics of the group's individuals. This is not intended as a complete list of all educational methods (this would go well beyond the scope of the task at hand and require specific qualifications) but rather as a 'starting aid' for a deeper exploration of the topic.

1) Leading group work

Duration:	Introduction: 10 min. Working time: 20 min.			Age:	any

Materials:	A previously prepared presentation tool (flipchart, PowerPoint, etc.)	

Initial situation:	All students are together, later they are divided into in small groups (max. 5-6 persons).

Procedure:	Use the presentation tool to clarify the task at hand. Then determine working time and desired result (e.g. answers written on a poster) and location for the group work. Explain rules and the meaning of signals (e.g. acoustic). Time: 5 minutes. Form random groups (e.g. using playing cards). Time: 5 minutes. Group work phase: Go from group to group and make sure they understood the task. If necessary, provide assistance. Time: 20 minutes.

Benefits:	This method facilitates the exchange between the participants. For shy students it is easier to speak in small groups.

2) Marketplace of ideas

Duration:	max. 60 minutes			Age:	12+

Materials:	Poster paper, poster pens, poster stands or pin boards	

Initial situation:	Students are divided into small groups (max. 5 persons). The groups have to name spokespersons.

Procedure:	Ask the groups to create posters using a lot of symbols and as little text as possible (see information on group work under 1). After the work phase, the groups move in one defined direction from one poster to the next. At each station, a previously elected spokesperson presents the results of the group work. It is recommended to mark the intervals at which the groups proceed with acoustic signals.

Benefits:	Group work can be presented. Students are given the opportunity to present their impressions to a group and learn to speak in front of others. Creativity is required. The group stays in motion and there is a lot of interaction. This method offers great opportunities for feedbacks and ideas.

3) MaxMix

Duration:	depends on the age of the participants			Age:	any

Materials:	None	

Initial situation:	Students are divided into small groups. After each work phase they meet again and form new groups.

Procedure:	After completing their group work, instruct students to form new groups that must be composed of completely new members: The MixMax group. Partners from the initial groups must not be in the same MixMax group. The students in the MaxMix groups tell each other about the work in their initial groups. Afterwards, the students may return to their initial groups, exchange new information and continue to work on the basis of this information (This step depends on the age of the participants and the time available.).

Benefits:	This method allows a quick transfer of information and constitutes an excellent opportunity to bring all participants to one level of knowledge. It guarantees a good social mix and promotes interaction and communication.

4) Whispering

Duration:	5-10 minutes			Age	any

Materials:	Usually none If more complex issues are discussed: notepad	

Initial situation:	Chairs are put in a circle, the exercise can be used as relaxation at any time to loosen up

Procedure:	During or after a work phase, tell the students to turn to their left neighbour and answer 2 or 3 questions (after a presentation these could be: 'What did we like about it?', 'Which parts did we not understand?', 'Which questions do we have about it?' etc.). Afterwards, ask each pair for a short statement. Alternatively, you can start a discussion round.

Benefits:	This exercise is an ideal method to encourage discussions after a presentation or to make short relaxing breaks between long presentations (after long periods of concentration). Perfect for the activation of the participants. Whispering can also be used for an intermediate reflection, summary or repetition of information.

5) _____ (Room for your own ideas.)

Duration:				**Age:**	

Materials:		

Initial situation:	

Procedure:	

Benefits:	

Additional tips for tours through the company

Traditionally, a tour through a company implies that a large group of people walks through the premises while their guide explains how the individual machines work. Due to the noise in the production halls half of the group hears nothing. But this is by far not the only way to organise such tours. There are many possibilities to extend the scope of activities and make company tours more interesting.

Treasure hunt through parts of the premises

Important: It must be exactly defined where the students are allowed to go and where they aren't. Make sure to provide enough supervision and adequate briefing for the staff members involved.

- Students are allowed to make **experiments**, e.g. carry out quality checks on the products, simple steps in the production process, etc.
- Students get the chance to come up with ideas for **alternative uses** of products or parts thereof, or elaborate creative **marketing strategies**.
- Staff members guide small groups through the premises. This allows for a better exchange.
- Small groups investigate **one specific area** and can dedicate more attention to this part of the company. Later, in the analysis and summary they report their experiences to the other groups.
- Students prepare and conduct **interviews** with individual staff members to learn about their areas of responsibility, careers, interests, problems, challenges, etc.
- Students take part in a **quiz** (individually or in groups) where they have to answer (or guess) specific questions related to the company, e.g. 'What is this machine for?', 'What is this work piece for?', 'What does this person work on?', 'How could the workflow be like in this area?', 'Who could make this decision? Who is needed for this?', 'Which safety hazards could there be?'
- Students are asked to come up with a creative **title** for the tour.

Depending on the characteristics of your company there are many other possibilities to make such tours more interesting (e.g. ride with the refuse collection vehicle in waste management firms).

Games

There are many short games that can be played to loosen up. Sometimes, games can also be used to explain a specific topic. The following game is a brilliant method to exemplify the importance of cooperation in your company:

"Cooperative arm wrestling"

The participants are seated opposite each other, so that their knees almost touch.

All of them rest their right elbow on their right knee and grip each other's hand – like you would do in arm wrestling. They are then given the task to pin the back of the other's hand onto their own left knee as often as possible. Automatically, all participants start to push as hard as they can. Soon, some of them realise that the goal can be achieved much easier when let loose.

This can be taken as an example of how important it is to cooperate with others and to listen closely when given instructions.

End of the event / Feedback

It is recommended to conclude every company visit with a feedback round. There are, however, some facts that suggest that such a feedback should round not take place right after the event because at that point the students are already tired and lack concentration. Typical questions, e.g. 'What did you like about this event and what didn't you like?' are not very meaningful either, because every group has its own dynamics and hierarchy and hardly anyone would honestly say what they think. For this reason, we would like to present two other methods of obtaining feedback.

Web-based enquiries are not just a simple means to retrieve information, they also give you the possibility to analyse the results and present them graphically. Such web-based feedback forms can easily be implemented by any IT specialist. By assigning individual access codes, the feedbacks are anonymous but still linked to one particular event. This allows you evaluate each company visit in a highly professional manner.

Another option is to give your feedback forms together with an invitation to an evaluation interview to the teacher or person accompanying the group. Ideally, the forms are completed one or two days after the event at home or in class and then submitted to the teacher. Take the opportunity and meet with members of the teaching staff. This way you will get serious feedback from both students and teachers.

On the following pages, you will find an example of a feedback form and descriptions of possible feedback methods. The feedback form is regularly used in connection with Take Tech and has proven to be very useful and informative due to its excellent mixture of open and multiple choice questions and its manageable scope.

Take the opportunity and get feedback from your visits. Use the results to improve yourself because with every improvement of your presentation you improve your recruitment potential.

Take Tech – Feedback form for students

Please take a little time to give us your feedback.

Which school do you attend? _____

Which year were you born in? _____

Which company did you visit? _____

Which job(s) did you get to know via Take Tech?

_____

_____

Do you already know which profession you would like to pursue?

Yes ☐   **No** ☐   **I haven't decided yet** ☐

If yes, which one? _____

Did this Take Tech event have an influence on the profession you would like to pursue?

Yes ☐   **No** ☐

If yes, in which way?

☐ The professions I got to know at the Take Tech event were new to me.

☐ Via Take Tech I learned about a profession I would like to pursue in the future.

☐ Through Take Tech my opinion about the profession/professional fields presented changed.

☐ I got a more realistic concept about the profession I'd like to pursue.

☐ Now I know exactly what I would like to do.

The preparation in class for the company visit was...

☐ very good   ☐ good   ☐ not very good   ☐ poor

The company visit was...

☐ very good   ☐ good   ☐ not very good   ☐ poor

The possibility to produce something was...

☐ very good   ☐ good   ☐ not very good   ☐ poor

The possibility to ask questions was...

☐ very good   ☐ good   ☐ not very good   ☐ poor

At the Take Tech event I particularly liked

☐ the tour through the company

☐ the experiment

☐ the interviews with the employees

☐ the information provided

☐ this:_____

At the Take Tech event I didn't like…

☐ the tour through the company

☐ the experiment

☐ the preparation

☐ the noise

☐ the information provided

☐ this:_____

What else I would like to say:

_____

_____

Thank you very much!

1) Ball bearing method

Duration:	approx. 30 minutes (2 min./round)			**Age:**	10+

Materials:	Presentation tool (board, flipchart, etc.)	

Initial situation:	The students are divided into 2 groups of equal size. One group forms an inner circle, the other an outer circle with students facing each other.

Procedure:	Give students 1 or 2 questions to discuss, e.g. 'What was particularly interesting to me?' or 'What else would I like to tell the organisers?' After 1-2 minutes all students in the outer circle stand up and move one seat to the left. They discuss the same (or other) questions with their new partners. The procedure is repeated several times. Finally, individual students are asked for their statements, which are then written down on the board or flipchart and discussed briefly.

Benefits:	This method facilitates social interaction; many students get to talk with each other (also those who don't easily talk). By writing down and discussing the answers a serious feedback atmosphere is created.

2) Feedback cascade

Duration:	approx. 20-30 minutes (2-3 min./round)			**Age:**	12+

Materials:	Flipchart or board, pen	

Initial situation:	Participants sit in pairs scattered around the room

Procedure:	Ask students 2 or 3 final questions to discuss in pairs. Each discussion lasts about 2-3 minutes. Then two pairs meet and all four students discuss these questions (to make it more exciting, an extra question can be added). After that, two groups of four meet and the questions are discussed in a group of eight. Finally, the group of eight selects a spokesperson. The spokesperson presents the answers to the entire group where they are discussed briefly and then written down on the board or flipchart.

Benefits:	With this method, many students get in touch with each other. Not everyone has to speak in front of the entire group. Thus, inhibitions to speak in public are avoided.

3) _____ **(Room for your own ideas.)**

Duration:				**Age:**	

Materials:		

Initial situation:	

Procedure:	

Benefits:	

Additional tips for conclusion and follow-up

Establish and maintain contact

- Distribute information material, inform about holiday jobs, internships and other possibilities to stay in contact.
- Send a photo documentary to the school or have it published on your company website.
- Distribute cameras among the students, so that they can document the event and send the pictures to your company.

Maintain contact with the school and/or the teachers in order to be able to organise further visits or stay in touch with the students. Evaluate the company visit for yourself and with the employees who took part in it. This way you can learn a lot and become even more efficient and creative and have more fun with every visit.

Insight – gained through personal experience

Example of a joint project between a school and a company

I. Description of the measure *(initial situation & idea, contents, etc.)*

Insight is a programme that offers special forms of company visits.

After intense preparation and in agreement with the school and the company in question, students are given the opportunity to organise and manage the entire processes of a company on a special hands-on day.

Through this experience, students get an insight into everyday business life and learn to take responsibility. They can utilise and deepen their acquired knowledge in practice. Trying to manage a company or a department is a unique hands-on experience and will fill them with enthusiasm for a particular job.

Time needed (1 hour = 60 min.):

Preparation:	3 hours
Execution:	4 hours
Follow-up:	2 hours
Work with parents:	1 hour

II. Intended effects

a) Qualitative effects *(What shall be achieved with this measure?)*

Students get the chance to improve their concept of the (apprenticeship) job of their choice. They learn about the occupational profile of their desired profession, get to know the workings of our economy and learn to take responsibility. They are further given the opportunity to establish contacts that can be useful for their later job search, cooperation between schools and economy is improved. Students get a deeper insight into everyday business life.

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b) Quantitative effects *(How many participants can be reached?)*

1 – 3 companies

20 – 30 students

c) Additional benefits created by the measure *(press, networks, etc.)*
Students can use the feedback they receive from the companies for their future applications. They and the companies can use the contacts established for finding an apprentice(ship). Contacts between schools and the economy can be used for further measures and projects. With successful PR both companies and schools can make their commitment known to a wider public.

III. Target groups / beneficiaries
Students in 9th or 10th grade Regional companies

Project goals of INSIGHT

Project goals for students:

- Insight into the occupational profile of the desired profession
- Awareness of the profiles of qualification required by the economy
- Insight into various fields of responsibility
- Opportunity to take responsibility
- Hands-on activities to try their hand at the desired occupation and compare their experiences with their existing concepts (idea vs. reality)
- Potential contacts for later job search
- Practicing key skills by using them (communication, appearance, ability to work in a team, etc.)
- Feedback from the company and a certificate that can be supplied with applications

Project goals for schools:

- Positive PR, media interest
- Close contacts with the economy
- More practical focus in teaching
- Cooperation long-term partnerships and with companies

Project goals for companies:

- Possibility to establish contacts with potential employees

- Realistic representation of workflows and processes

- Practice-oriented presentation of job profiles

- PR work through announcements in regional newspapers, leaflets and press articles

- Consolidation of contacts with schools, access to schools for the search of new employees

Execution of INSIGHT

Preparation work at school (4-6 teaching units):

- Presentation of the project's content and process

- Distribution of information material

- Elaboration of occupational profiles of the individual professions

"Hands-on day" at the company:

- On a normal workday, students can try their hand at the tasks of an employee.

- Students are insured against accidents and third party liability (Austria).

- If possible, work pieces are prepared and produced.

- Students are introduced to different jobs (branch office management, office, cash desk, sales, etc.)

Press conference:

On the hands-on day, the company holds a press conference to which representatives of the school, teachers and press are invited.

Preparatory work for INSIGHT

Insight Coach:

- Business contacts

- Preparation of hands-on days with the company

- PR work

- Preparation of working documents and certificates

School:

- Information of the parents

- Preparation of the students for the hands-on day (good manners, etc.)

- PR work (students create leaflets for themselves and the parents)

- Reflection and feedback

Company:

- Nomination of a person in charge

- Preparation of a written assignment incl. work plan

- Coordination of hands-on days

- Feedback interview with the students

Take Tech on Facebook

Over the recent years, social media have become popular marketing and communication tools. The online platform Facebook is currently used by 840.5 million users worldwide and 201.3 million users in Europe.[1] Especially young people prefer to use Facebook for their everyday conversations.

Facebook is an ideal means to directly approach your target groups. It can be used to establish contacts and exchange ideas and experiences. However, for a successful and attractive appearance on Facebook, you should make some considerations in advance. What do you want to achieve with the site? Who do you want to reach? How can you achieve this?

Goal of the site	The goal of Take Tech's presence on Facebook is to provide a communication platform for young people and motivate them to directly get in touch with companies and the initiative itself. On this site, students receive useful information about technical and scientific professions (through Take Tech itself and a range of activities carried out in this context).
	You too have the opportunity to take part in this site, present your company and give students a good first impression. This way, they will know what the company they are going to visit actually deals with. You can further use the platform to exchange experiences and establish contacts.
	In this project, Facebook serves as an additional marketing tool. Its main purpose is to keep users and visitors up to date rather than acquire new participants.
	The information provided on Facebook includes:
	- Date of the Action Week
	- Start of the search for partner companies/schools
	- Network meetings
	- Take Tech workshops

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[1] As of April 2012, Social Media Schweiz

Goal of the site	- Photos and videos from the Action Week - National events on career guidance - Information on career guidance - Information on employer branding
Target groups	Young people aged 8-19, teachers
Goals of the project	Increase students' interest in technical occupations, improve the preparation for the "Take Tech Action Week", exchange experiences, establish contacts
Goals of the organiser	For the organisers, it is important that companies present themselves to students in a modern and contemporary way on their preferred communication platform. This benefits the image of Take Tech and enhances its success, its media profile and the sustainability of both the initiative and the own brand.
Success measurement	We count the number of visitors, postings and feedbacks
Networking activities	Links with Facebook sites of partner companies, presentation of websites on the wall
Risks	Negative comments

We hope this handbook is a useful practical resource that helps you make your company visits lively and interesting experiences for you and your visitors!

Create your own programme:

Time	Activities	Comments
	Description, moderator question, desired result, contribution to the overall objectives	Material, persons who need to be informed, places, preparation work
	Description, moderator question, desired result, contribution to the overall objectives	Material, persons who need to be informed, places, preparation work

Time	Activities	Comments
	Description, moderator question, desired result, contribution to the overall objectives	Material, persons who need to be informed, places, preparation work
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	Description, moderator question, desired result, contribution to the overall objectives	Material, persons who need to be informed, places, preparation work
	Description, moderator question, desired result, contribution to the overall objectives	Material, persons who need to be informed, places, preparation work

Write down your own methods and creative ideas for company visits:

Contact information

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Further information on the internet:

➢ http://take-tech.eu

Website of the EU project Take Tech with download area (movie, tools, etc.)

➢ http://facebook.com/sfg.taketech

Example of a national Facebook presence from Austria with useful information and ideas