

Career Competition

Commitment

Role	Commitment
Student	Substantial time for preparation
Educator	Substantial time to prepare students and coordinate events
Employer	A few hours or longer; time commitment flexible

Arrangement Information

What

Career competitions are a career preparation experience that provides students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of technical skills and career-ready practices through presentations or competitions that are judged by industry professionals and/or community members. Many career competitions are organized through Career Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) at the school, district, regional, state, national, and international levels.

Often, these presentations represent a culmination of learning and involve teamwork. Some career competitions focus explicitly on demonstrating technical skills; others emphasize leadership, public speaking, or other career-ready practices.

When

While some CTSO competitions are organized for middle grade and postsecondary students, most of these events are coordinated by secondary education leaders in support of high school Career Technical Education programs.

Time Commitment

Because career competitions serve as a culminating experience for many students, they require a substantial time commitment from both students and educators, even though the events themselves may range from a few hours to several days. Educators who coordinate these events can expect to invest significant time in securing space, recruiting judges and sponsors, purchasing and storing equipment, setting up for the event, facilitating scoring, and much more.

These competitions are a much lighter lift for employers, who often engage as sponsors and judges. In many cases, industry professionals can expect to spend only a few hours judging an event and are typically matched with competitions related to their industry, occupation, or area of expertise.

Benefits

For **students**, career competitions offer a fun, low-stakes way to receive feedback directly from industry professionals; demonstrate and test their mastery of academic content, technical skills, and career-ready practices against peers of similar age; and in some cases, compete at more advanced levels.

For **educators**, career competitions offer an opportunity to help students receive direct feedback from community and industry leaders and to collaborate with educators across their region who teach or coordinate similar programs of study. Additionally, the competitions serve as points of connection for engaging with local employers and demonstrating value to the broader community.

For **employers**, career competitions offer a relatively low-lift way to build their future talent pipeline, engage with students interested in their field, and give back to their broader community.