

Simulated Workplace Experience

Commitment

Role	Commitment
Student	Moderate to substantial commitment; ongoing school-based engagement
Educator	Moderate to substantial commitment; ongoing school-based engagement
Employer	Moderate commitment; repeated engagement, often one day or less at a time

Arrangement Information

What

In simulated workplace experiences, students engage in activities that are intentionally structured to replicate work environments. These experiences often include many aspects of working in an organization, including simulated hiring processes, requirements to follow safety protocols, and regular feedback from leaders on work products and outcomes. Classrooms or Career Technical Education labs serve as job sites where students take on roles in safety management, quality assurance, human resources, and more. Workplace attendance, project completion, and industry credentials and certifications are used to measure “employee” success. For these experiences to be most effective, sustained industry involvement is essential; it allows students to develop and apply their skills in line with industry standards and expectations.

Simulated workplace experiences are especially useful in contexts where student travel may be difficult or employers are hesitant to host students on site. Students still benefit from being immersed in realistic work activities and from receiving regular feedback from industry professionals, all without leaving the school campus. These activities help enhance programs of study with real-world experiences, expanding opportunities for students who are geographically disconnected from employers or face barriers such as a lack of resources, transportation, or insurance to participate in worksite experiences.

Simulated workplace experiences should reflect authentic industry practices and include employer and industry partner input in their design.

When

These experiences are most commonly designed to serve high school students.

Time Commitment

For both students and educators, these experiences are a substantial time commitment, although that time often overlaps with regularly scheduled classroom periods. For employers, these experiences offer the opportunity to engage students in real work, provide students with real feedback, and build meaningful relationships, all without students entering the physical workspace and through a moderate time commitment. This arrangement can be ideal for organizations with significant safety risks or those that are geographically distant from students.

Benefits

For **students**, simulated work experiences provide opportunities to solve problems, set goals, collaborate with others, navigate workplace challenges, and communicate effectively in teams while developing technical skills and career-ready practices. Students may apply and interview for specific roles, gaining experience with typical workplace hiring processes. They may also complete projects evaluated by employers or industry professionals, helping them build confidence and learn how to receive and apply professional feedback.

For **educators**, simulated workplace experiences create opportunities to connect classroom learning to real-world applications in meaningful and engaging ways. These experiences transform classrooms into industry-aligned learning environments in which students can apply technical knowledge and career-ready practices through authentic projects and workplace structures.

For **employers**, simulated workplace experiences require less time and logistical coordination than more intensive forms of work-based learning, while still providing meaningful opportunities to share industry expertise and help shape students' knowledge, skills, and career readiness. Employers can contribute through project design, mentorship, feedback, guest instruction, or evaluation of student work, helping ensure that learning remains aligned with workforce needs.