

USING BROADER COMMUNITY RESOURCES TO PROMOTE MORE CAREER POSSIBILITIES

Dr. Morton Tener

Many of our business students do not go directly into the business world but secure jobs that are business-related. Also, there are other business students that go on to post-high school education.

As educators we have to reach out to a broader section of the business, professional and technical community in order to provide more career paths for students. Work study programs have become common additions to the high school curriculum across the country. True, many non-college bound students gain practical experience in the working world and often get a head start in salary or keeping jobs once they graduate. But why should programs be concentrated upon semi-skilled entry level positions? There should be a broader scope than the usual cooperative education programs. Programs should be available that expose students to the widest possible range of skills and professions in the areas of accounting, airline work, communications, fire-fighting, architecture, interior decorating, child care, social work, nursing, etc.

Students who are interested in such a program can be placed in jobs after school hours on weekends, or a period at the end of the school day for designated hours per week. A teacher or a counselor can be the contact person who will clear the placement and monitor the students' experience. Students will keep daily journals and review the journals regularly with faculty advisors. There will be seminars where students can share experiences, journal recording and projects with other students. Academic credit will be given for this program.

There could be excellent benefits from such a program. Students can increase the level of confidence in themselves and their abilities, their communication skills, awareness of responsibility and independence and a sense of what they hope to get from their education. Some students could receive enough training to qualify for jobs with their sponsors and other businesses. It also can be more advantageous when applying for admissions to colleges or vocational schools because of their employment exposure. The on-site experience is far more beneficial than the theory emphasized in the classroom.

Most sponsors will enjoy working and sharing with young enthusiastic people. It also provides an opportunity to enhance the reputation of the local

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school district. Parents will also gain a positive impression of the students' growth of social skills and maturity. They will be able to see more value in the education of their children.

This community learning project will be a coordinated effort of the business community, school, home and students. With the support of administrators and faculty, programs like this could function everywhere. All can benefit from this out-of-school learning.

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