



Career Mentors: Inspiring youth into successful futures

SPEAKERS GUIDE

Thank you for supporting our students by sharing with them the benefits of your experience in the workplace. This Speakers Guide provides some useful guidelines for presenting your career path. Please review it as soon as you can and incorporate it's focus into your presentation. This consistent approach helps presentations fulfill Segue's reputation for bringing students outstanding speakers.

SEGUE'S PURPOSE

The purposes of the Segue Career Mentors are to inspire students about their future options and to help motivate them put more effort into school now. Your talk can help to clarify uncertainties many have about the options that could be available for them after they graduate from high school. For many students "the future" is just an abstract idea. When students can see a real future for themselves, it gives them something to work toward – and good reason to put extra effort into school.

When students realize that there are many genuine and honorable career opportunities available to them, school becomes more relevant. As they see tangible options for themselves, students are more likely to spend less time in leisure activities and invest more time in their schoolwork.

PREPARING YOUR PRESENTATION

Here are two steps for you to take before you enter the classroom:

- Write a 30-second introduction about yourself. The teacher will read it aloud to the students.
- Conduct a dry run of your presentation so that you are confident that you can cover the points you think most important within 15 minutes. The last thing you want to have happen is that you are out of time when you have more to say! There are also 5 minutes of Q & A after your talk.

ENTERING THE CLASSROOM

When you arrive at the classroom, the teacher may be in the midst of speaking to the class. Here are the first steps to take:

- Open the door and enter the class and wait for the teacher to finish speaking. The teacher will recognize you and then you can tell him/her that you are here to give your career presentation. Hand the teacher your 30-second introduction and ask him/her to read it when ready.
- Hand the teacher enough "Student Engagement Forms" for the class and ask that they be given to the students to help prompt their questions at the end of your talk. *(A copy of this form was attached in the email with this Speaker's Guide, asking that you print 100 of them).*

THE CONTENT OF YOUR PRESENTATION

You will have 15 minutes to make your presentation. It is followed by 5 minutes of Q & A with the students. The purpose of your talk to the students is to help them understand what success can look like in the workplace once they have a good education or vocational training. There are many things you can talk about that can be helpful for students.

Very important: Prior career speakers have asked us to include in this Guide a reminder about the age of this audience with whom you'll be speaking. Please adjust the words you choose to use to be appropriate for their age whether high school, middle school, or elementary school. Thank you.

Below is a list of primary topics that you can consider presenting. You might have experienced some or all of them in your career. Consider using any combination of them in your talk:

- Your thoughts about having a career when you were the students' age.
- Specific skills you learned in school that are useful now and apply to your job/career.
- Major challenges you faced in getting through school and how you overcame them.
- Your career path including the education or training that you needed.
- Examples from your path about how "more effort now equals more options in the future."
- The range of potential earnings in your line of work.
- Any role that financial aid or loans played in your post-high school education.
- A specific example from your life about punctuality, and/or about when you took a day away from school, or from the workplace, and how it came back to harm you in some way.
- How you may have had to break away from your peers in high school in order to pursue further education or a career for your own benefit.
- Lessons you've learned that might keep them from making the same mistakes.
- Major challenges you faced in determining your career and how you overcame them.
- The joys and fulfillment that your current career provides; why you would recommend it
- The actual tasks that you do every day on your job.
- The people who helped you along the way.

STARTING YOUR PRESENTATION

30 seconds. That is how quickly many kids will decide whether they are interested in what you have to say. Here are a few tips to get their attention during your first 30 seconds:

- Ask a question for a show of hands. An example is "How many of you have a good idea of what you want to do in the future?" Or "How many of you have _____ (fill in the blank with something unusual or interesting about your work) _____?"
- Optional: Consider showing a vivid picture related to your work that is large enough to see from the back of the room. Ask them "Can anyone tell me what this is?"
- Optional: Show an unusual object related to your work. Ask them "Can anyone tell me what this is or what it does?"
- Perhaps demonstrate an unusual skill related to your work.

KEEPING THEIR ATTENTION

A challenging part of a presentation is keeping the students' attention. Here are some tips you might consider:

- Use vivid stories, demonstrations, or examples from your life. Keep them short and crisp.
- If useful, engage them with questions, and a show of hands, throughout your presentation.
- Use common everyday language appropriate for this age group. Avoid professional jargon.
- Prompt the students to think of some questions they can ask you and the end of your talk.
- Engage the students with eye contact. Let them see that you care through your conduct.

CONCLUDING YOUR PRESENTATION

Comment briefly that the students are now at a time in their life where the choices are theirs to make. Emphasize that how they spend their time in school will greatly affect their future.. Encourage them to invest in themselves each day.

Suggest these actions to the students:

- Visit SegueProgram.org, and click "Students" link to find useful links about career futures, from college and internship lists, to financial aid, to how to write a resume.
- Visit the Career Center on their campus for more information about careers.
- Speak with their parents and other family relative to ask them about career options.
- Facebook or Twitter their friends about an interesting career path they just learned about.

CONSIDER POSTING YOUR PRESENTATION

Help Segue build a resource for students about real world career paths. Please send us a copy of your written career presentation as an email attachment (to: 15@SegueProgram.org). We are collecting these to post online or assemble into a book. Thank you.