

ADVISORY COMMITTEE BEST PRACTICES

Advisory Speed Dating (short informational interviews) – Advisory members are divided into groups of three or four, and then students rotate through the tables. Students are required to collect contact information and follow-up. Advisory members often set up coffee meetings or tours afterwards. Some do job shadows.

Advisors as Guest Speakers – One college uses guest speakers for an introductory class by bringing in a guest speaker to each class. Twice a week for 10 weeks means he has 20 guest speakers during the quarter. Students are asked to turn in notes. Advisors as guest speakers can also be used as one-time speakers to enhance the curriculum or for job preparation when the topic includes what employers are looking for when they hire.

Annual Advisory Dinner – An appreciation celebration held in the spring. Guest speakers, recognition, “partner of the year” award, networking, and community and college engagement are components that can be included in this type of event. All committee members are invited and it is paid for by worker retraining dollars.

Application Screening – Advisory members can participate in student application screening or on faculty hiring committees.

Award Presentation – A celebration of success to publically recognize an employer partner. This award can help solidify a relationship and obtain greater buy-in from a company.

Career Fair – Employers are brought in for an industry specific job fair. Advisory members help to recruit other businesses and are happy to attend because they can recruit new employees and talk to students trained for their industry. To boost attendance, feeder programs and high school students are also invited to attend.

Communication Between Meetings – This can take on many forms, some examples are:

- Weekly/bi-weekly short updates on the program
- Quarterly newsletters with student success stories
- When the program is mentioned in a publication, mail a copy to your members with a short note
- If a problem was discussed in a meeting, loop back with the resolution or next step

Curriculum Development – Industry subject matter experts can serve on skills panels, or participate in the development of learning objectives. Advisors can also provide ideas for incorporating industry standards into lesson plans.

Employer Associations – Partnering with employer associations allows you to connect with a group of like employers. A representative from an employer association can be the voice of many at committee meetings.

Lauren Hadley, MA Ed.
Shoreline Community College
lhadley@shoreline.edu

Employer Panel – An industry specific employer panel for program students can be held that can also be open to the campus community for marketing purposes. Small round table networking follows this panel event.

Industry Lead Student Exercises - Committee members present a problem for students to solve. Students put together a proposal to solve the problem, and presented it to the committee. The committee provides a critique and an evaluation of the student work.

In-kind Donations of Materials, Equipment, and Space – Donations can improve the learning environment and opportunities for students.

Internships – Industry partners can provide internships for students that reinforce classroom learning and provide a feedback loop to make adjustments to the curriculum.

Learning communities – Be a place of learning for each other. Be more than a training place, become a place to network, and a place where advisors can come together as an industry.

Membership

- Engage with industry professional organizations – a member from an association can represent many voices.
- Membership based on feeder programs or next step programs, i.e. high school programs, bachelor programs, masters etc.

Mock Interviews – Set up interviews for students preparing to apply for jobs. This provides students an opportunity to practice interview skills with advisors. Advisors provide feedback to improve student interview skills.

Off-Campus Meetings – Hold advisory meetings off campus and industry locations to provide enhanced networking opportunities for TAC members and industry tours for faculty.

President’s Round Table for Workforce – Their role as advisors is to look at workforce training to help determine the mix of programs offered by the college. They look at trends from various clusters. Membership includes business, but also Economic Development Council, Employment Security, Workforce Development Council. President convenes the meeting and it is staffed by the workforce dean.

Scholarships – Develop program scholarships to support students.

Surveys - When industry input is needed for curriculum staff use electronic surveys prior to the meeting to ask questions of advisors. At the meetings the results are shared, but this leaves most of the meeting time for student engagement.

Student Chapters – Develop student chapters of the professional organizations in your industry.

Workforce Education Advisory Board – This group focuses on all workforce education and focuses on a higher level. This group also does plan reviews and discusses gap analysis.

Lauren Hadley, MA Ed.
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lhadley@shoreline.edu