

Professional Development Situation: Meeting

Skill Focus: Making Connections to STEM Careers

Time Required: 25 minutes

STEM CAREER BRAINSTORMING

Participants will brainstorm STEM careers in a competition to learn how to connect activities to STEM careers.

Agenda

Hands-on Learning—20 minutes

- Brainstorming STEM Careers

Conclusions—5 minutes

Materials

- Optional: small prizes for the winning team
- Poster/chart paper for each team
- Writing utensil for participants
- Timer

Before the Session

- Send a pre-session email to participants:
 - *The next professional development opportunity to enhance our STEM skills will be on DATE at TIME at LOCATION. Our focus for this session will be Making Connections to STEM Careers. Let me know if you require any accommodations to participate in the training. I am happy to answer any questions you have and look forward to seeing you at the workshop. I can be reached at CONTACT INFO.*
- Read this guide.
 - *Italicized text indicates it can be used with participants in an email, slide deck, or spoken out loud.*
- Gather materials.

Session Outline

Brainstorming STEM Careers (20 min)

- This activity is designed to be a fun way to identify and discuss possible STEM job/careers and think about pathways to these jobs. The activity can be used with frontline staff, but also as an activity with youth. Encourage thinking “outside the box”.
 - *What are some unusual jobs/careers?*
- Split the group into teams of 2-3 people.
- Conduct three rounds of the competition, allowing for some discussion after each round. The team that gets the most points wins.
 - **Note:** A small prize is always a good way to spark interest.

Round 1: “Name That Job”

- Explain that the mission as a team is to brainstorm as many jobs and/or careers as possible in two minutes. This is any job that they can think of. Each team should record these on large poster paper.
 - If doing this with youth you may need someone to help record examples.
 - **Note:** it may help to set a timer that will go off after the two minutes are finished to help cue group that the round is over.
- Remind participants:
 - *Brainstorming means that you think quickly and come up with as many ideas as possible. Don’t worry about making sense or being silly. Just shout out whatever comes into your mind. This is a time to think outside the box!*
- At the end of the round, count the number of jobs and record on a score sheet. Numbers are the key here, not the quality of job titles.

Round 2: Where’s The STEM?

- During this round the teams are to put the jobs they have identified into one of the STEM areas. Give teams five minutes to complete this round. Review what STEM stands for – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.
 - *Which of the jobs would you classify as needing STEM knowledge?*
- Winning this round means that the team has identified at least one job for each STEM area – one point for each connection.
- Have each group discuss why and how they classified their jobs into STEM careers.
 - *What is the justification for your decisions?*
- Award participants one point for each connection they identified. Record the points for each team.

Round 3: Path Finder

- Each team should now choose one of the jobs/careers that they have identified and:
 1. *Explain why they think it would be classified in one of the STEM areas.*
 2. *Describe how one would prepare for the job/career.*
 3. *List where they would work if they had this job/career.*
- Give the teams five minutes to complete this round.
- Award one point for completion of each item above (a, b, c) for a possible total of three points.
- Upon completion of this round (or the bonus round), determine which team has won the challenge and distribute prizes and/or applause to the winning team.

Bonus Round

- In case of a tie or just for fun, have each team list someone they know or know of that has this job. It can be someone local or a famous person. For each person, they can identify, the team gets one point.
- Give teams two minutes for the bonus round.

Conclusion (5 min)

- *Which part of this game was easiest?*
- *Was the bonus round fair? Many of you may have had more access to STEM professionals in your life than others. It's always good to think about whether activities will disproportionately benefit students with families in STEM careers.*

After the Session

- Email the participants:
 - *Thank you for your participation in the recent Click2Science training. I hope you found it useful and applicable to your practice. Consider sharing your thoughts with a co-worker, supervisor, or friend. Additionally, you can reach me at ____.*

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