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NFIB's Young Entrepreneur Foundation Interview a Small Business Professional

Take Our Daughters
& Sons to Work®

Objective:

- To learn the life skills of asking good questions and speaking in public
- To learn the ins and outs of small business employment from a true professional
- To understand both the benefits and challenges of working in a small business

Material:

- Paper

Timeframe: 1 hour for the full activity. Be sure to talk to employees before the day of the event to get gather volunteers to be interviewed. Prepare the employees with some possible interview questions and remind them to be patient with the kids and positive and honest about their professional experiences.

Activities:

- Start by asking the students what they want to be when they grow up? Do they have goals? Have they thought about what they need to do in order to achieve their goals?
- Have the students split up into pairs. Explain that they will have the opportunity to interview an employee of the business. Have them brainstorm questions they could ask to help them learn more about the business, the career, and what it takes to become a small business owner or employee.
- Assign the students who they should interview based on their career interests and send them off to interview the employee.
- Students use the questions they created to interview the employees.
- Once all the students return, have them present what they learned to the rest of the group. Give each pair 2-5 minutes to explain how their conversation went and what was discussed.

Alternative Activity:

Instead of having the students do individual interviews, have the owner of the small business come to the group for a press conference. Have the small business owner start out by telling the students about his/her business and how he/she became a small business owner. Then have the students use the questions they prepared to understand his/her business more.

Sample Interview Questions:

Here are some sample questions to ask the employees:

- What matters most to you in the jobs you have?
- Did you want these things in your job when you started work? How have your ideas changed and why?
- What advice would you give us about looking for a good place to work?
- Could you describe one of your typical workdays for me?
- What skills are required in your position on a day-to-day basis?
- What parts of your job do you find most challenging?
- What do you find most enjoyable?
- Are there any negatives to your job?
- How many hours do you work in a typical week?
- Who are the most important people in the industry today?
- How did you get your job?
- If you could start all over again, would you change your career path in any way? Why?
- What educational preparation would you recommend for someone who wants to advance in this field?