



# How to Engage Employers:

*A Guide for Schools and Colleges*



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ENTERPRISE  
COMPANY

The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership Skills Team have collated this employer engagement guide to help schools and colleges to develop and/or enhance their education-business links.

The purpose of this guide is to help your school or college to build long-lasting relationships with local businesses to enhance the interventions your students receive throughout their time at your establishment. The guide offers top tips to help you engage with businesses and then sustain those relationships. It is designed as a practical guide to give you the confidence to get started.

Do bear in mind:

*"There is no single perfect business data source."*





<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. How to Get Started</b> <i>Five handy tips to help you engage.</i>	4-5
<b>2. Case Studies</b> <i>How a local school and college have already developed successful employer engagement activities.</i>	6-7
<b>3. Templates</b> <i>We have created some sample documents to help you to get started, keep going, and create a database of contacts.</i>	8-15
<b>4. Other sources of help</b> <i>Organisations who may be able to help with education-business offers, and other sources of business data.</i>	16-17

## Tip 1. Plan ahead.

*Before you start to contact employers, it is worth planning ahead, and thinking about the following.*

Why do you need to engage with businesses?

Think about:

- What are you looking to achieve? What is your need? What is your ask?
- It is also useful to think about it from the employer's perspective – what are you offering them in return?
- Can you give the employer a menu of options regarding school/college engagement; for example if they cannot help on this occasion, can you suggest other activities that they could engage with in the future?
- The 2017 Careers Strategy emphasises the importance of schools engaging with local businesses to support careers education programmes.

Consider why businesses would engage with schools.

*For emotional reasons:*

- Personal connection, e.g. they have family at the school or a relative works at the school or college.
- History, e.g. they are an alumni of the school or college.
- Locality, a local employer wants to give something back to the local area.

*For commercial reasons:*

- Skills shortages – to attract young people into their industry.
- Recruitment of future workforce with the right attributes.
- To recruit apprentices.
- To help change perceptions of certain industries.
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) positioning – being seen to give something back.

## Tip 2. How to engage.

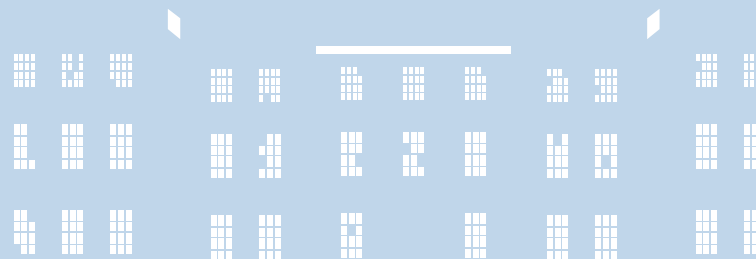
*Start early and consider the following routes to engage businesses.*

Start by looking at what information and contacts already exist in the school or college and collate those details first (this reduces duplication and is a good start for your database - see pages 14-15). Try:

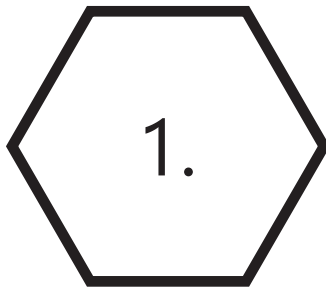
- Staff networks (e.g. family, friends, Governors).
- Student networks (parents, relatives).
- Alumni network.
- Supply chains (IT, Catering, Maintenance).
- If your school or college has an Enterprise Adviser, they may have wider employer links or suggestions.

Remember to research the organisation before contacting them. Try:

- Using social media e.g. websites, Twitter, LinkedIn.
- Known school-employer support offers, such as the Enterprise Adviser Network, STEM, Finders4Schools and Inspiring the Future (see more on these later).
- Knock on doors! Walk around your local area and say hello to local businesses.
- Setting your students projects on finding out about the labour market/employers (possibly based on sector, occupations or locality).
- Setting students a task to build an employer network (see the South Charnwood High School case study on page 7).
- Asking local businesses to set your students a challenge that could, in turn, benefit their business (see the Forum Talent Potential case studies [www.forum-talent-potential.org/good-practice](http://www.forum-talent-potential.org/good-practice)).
- Local economic news through local business pages.
- Local business networks such as East Midlands Chamber, Federation of Small Businesses and/or innovation and incubation hubs (e.g. University Innovation Centres).
- Local job fairs and/or business events.
- Local business parks.
- Local newspapers, free magazines/parish council newsletters.







# How To Get Started

*Five handy tips to help you engage.*

## Tip 3. If you get some time with a business, think about how you will use it.

Prepare for your meetings:

- Have you prepared a 'value proposition': a marketing statement that your organisation uses to summarise why an employer should engage with you? What is in it for the business?
- Offer engagement options; some small businesses have limited staff/time resource so could they engage via a careers fair or a webinar? Are they willing to do a blog or update about getting into their company?
- Who will you target in the business? Individuals at the appropriate level? Decision makers?

How will you host the business?

- Where? When? Can you invite the business into the school or college for a coffee and introduction?
- Make sure that there is a suitable room available.
- Prepare refreshments.
- Who will lead the meeting from the school?

## Tip 4. Having secured time with a business, what happens next?

Think about how you can maintain and develop the relationships with the employers you have engaged:

- Log the contact and outcome, and start to build up a relationship history; can they go on a mailing list?
- Follow up with the business, thanking them for their time and agree the next steps.
- Share information and activity internally to prevent duplication or crossed wires.
- Keep your promises! Make sure you carry out any actions that you agreed to.
- Keep a database to help next time. Let other staff know about this! See pages 14-15 for an example.
- Communicate through the year to businesses so they are part of your school-business community.
- Remember that relationships need maintaining. Contact businesses regularly with updates and invite them to special events at the school such as awards evenings.

## Tip 5. Getting the most out of activities.

Be clear on the aims and objectives for all participants:

- Brief employers before events/activities so that they know what to expect.
- Remember most business leaders are not educationalists.
- Stimulate active engagement from students.
- How can you embed the learning into the curriculum?
- Evaluate the activity from all perspectives (as per the Gatsby benchmarks): employers, students and teachers. This will make sure you measure the outcomes and learning opportunities. It will also ensure your event gets better and better each time you run it.

## 2.

## Case Studies

*Local schools and colleges have developed some successful employer engagement activities that may help you.*

### South Charnwood United Business Alliance (SCUBA)

See SCUBA event videos on: <https://youtu.be/iAw6qVBA23I>

South Charnwood High School launched a new initiative called the South Charnwood United Business Alliance (SCUBA), which aims to **strengthen relationships between businesses in the local community**, as well as providing the opportunity to build links with the school.

The South Charnwood students were set the task to coordinate and build a **local business database**, contacting local employers through phone calls, flyers and emails. The students created the brand SCUBA and logo; they also organised and hosted all aspects of the business networking event launch.

The students had to apply in writing for the position of school Business Ambassador and were interviewed, initially by staff and this year by the previous Business Ambassadors to **enhance their work related skills/experience**.

Simon Andrews, Deputy Headteacher, describes the programme further: "We have seen our Business Ambassadors develop and improve skills such as **communication, organisation, working as a team, maintaining a positive attitude, keeping calm under stress, problem solving and time management**. The local business leaders were impressed by the students' maturity and confidence before and during the SCUBA business events.

"The initiative has grown in impetus and we have established a core of businesses that are committed to supporting the school and each other. As a by-product, local employers have offered to: provide work experience for students; attend a careers speed networking event for Year 9 students; organise STEM

visits and deliver talks to students in assemblies. "Overall, it has been a **tremendous success for the students**, the local business community and consequently the school."

The drive behind starting the initiative came from Dan Lamoon, the school's **Enterprise Adviser**, who has been instrumental in every aspect of the journey. Both staff and students alike have found him **inspirational** and have benefited enormously from **his passion and knowledge**.

Dan commented: "Building a business community needs to be at the foundations of any business. We are **building vital relationships** with local businesses and organisations to strengthen and grow the enterprise provisions within the school. By recruiting a team of Year 10 ambassadors to work alongside the senior staff to market and coordinate the events and initiatives; we have created an employability programme for the 10 to 15 pupils involved each year, along with a unique selling point for SCUBA to connect and engage with businesses. Both these direct outcomes are helping to drive a **culture of enterprise throughout the school**."

“ It has been wonderful to see the Business Ambassadors grow in **confidence** as the SCUBA events have developed. One student stunned us with her amazing natural ability to persuade a number of business leaders to attend our launch event over the phone. All of the Business Ambassadors have developed skills that they never thought they had, such as the **resilience to overcome barriers** and disappointment/rejection and yet keep going. ”

Kathryn Juskiewicz, Assistant Headteacher,  
South Charnwood



## The Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth 1 College Business Networking Breakfast

In 2017 Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth 1 College hosted their first regular Business Networking Breakfast Meeting. The purpose of these sessions is to offer local businesses the opportunity to **connect** with one another in an informal and philanthropic environment; offering **business support** to one another commercially while also being a **critical friend** to the college.

Although the snow was causing travel chaos across the county, the first network meeting was well attended. Attendees included: Bru, McDonalds, Infonote, Leicester University, Newby Castleman, RSM, Colab, LEBC and the LLEP.

The discussions were wide ranging but related to ensuring WQE students are not only **'work-ready'** but also have an **understanding of what working in different industries actually looks like**. One idea was for WQE to host business seminars. Students sign up on a first-come-first-serve basis (adding an element of exclusivity and intrigue) and have the opportunity to have **in-depth conversations with business leaders**. From a business leader's perspective this provides direct access to a potential talent pool and also raises the profile of their industry and their business.

“ One of the most important elements of the discussions in the business network meeting was getting across **the importance employers place on work experience** of any kind (paid or unpaid) and that **students need to demonstrate that they are rounded individuals** and not just focus on their grades and UCAS points. ”

Roger Peacock, CEO Infonote, Business Volunteer

“ At this exciting event, we shared our *Employability Strategy (Developing Young Professionals)* and also our vision for the future with the group and we had a **really interesting and productive conversation** about work experience. It was great to be able to get the views of employers on our plans and challenges and particularly to find out how they could help address some of these going forward. As a direct result of the network meeting we are now looking to implement a range of 'Business Seminars' for students to find out more about **different aspects of employability** – so as well as the group acting as an advisory and consultative panel (which is extremely useful) they are also able to offer concrete support in designing and delivering opportunities for WQE students. ”

Kate O'Farrell, Careers Education Manager, WQE

Both of these employer engagement activities have been developed as part of the Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN). The EAN is a Government-led initiative delivered nationally by the Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC). Working in partnership with the CEC, the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership's (LLEP) role is to localise and tailor the programme to meet the needs of Leicester and Leicestershire. To find out more about this programme and to get involved, please contact [ean@llep.org.uk](mailto:ean@llep.org.uk).

3.

## Templates

*We have created some sample documents to help you **get inspired**, **keep going** and **create a database** of contacts.*

3a.

Exemplar letter/phone script

3b.

Template project plan

3c.

Sample responses for overcoming challenges

3d.

Template employer engagement tracker or 'database'



3a.

## 'Get inspired' with this exemplar letter/phone script

Use the example below to get started. We suggest that you adapt it to align to the values of your school or college so that it is personal.

School/College Name  
School/College Address  
School/College Post Code

Business Name  
Business Address  
Business Post Code  
Date

Dear [Named Business Person],

[I/we] are contacting you on behalf of [school/college name]. At [school/college name] we are always striving to provide our students with impactful experiences they can call upon once they have left our establishment to help them succeed in the future. Therefore, in order to help prepare our students for the world of work we would like to partner with local businesses like [business name] to inspire, motivate and inform them of all the possibilities available to them in [the business sector].

We understand that time is valuable to businesses and consequently have a range of engagement opportunities planned. We hope that something below is of interest but if not, we are always looking for innovative ways to work with businesses so we would be happy to discuss alternative options.

[list your engagement opportunities e.g.]

- Careers Talks: 20 minutes to one hour long and are run at either 8:45am or 1:30pm daily
- Careers Fair: Friday April 20th, 1:30pm-3:30pm (students) 3:30pm-4:30pm (parents and families)
- Mock Interviews: Wednesday 9th May, Year 10, 9:30-11:30, 20 minutes slots
- Work Experience: 11-22 June, in one or two week slots

Students who receive four or more meaningful interactions with employers during their secondary school career are 86% less likely to be not in education, employment or training (NEET). Therefore, working together we can make a huge impact on the futures of the [school name] students. Help us to develop your next generation of employees.

If you are interested please email [insert email for member of SLT – a senior person in the school will have more impact on the businesses you are contacting] with the following information. We will then follow up with you in more detail.

- Your name
- Your business name
- Your job title
- The opportunities you are interested in supporting us with

Thank you again for taking the time to read this letter, we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards,

[Head Teacher and Governor responsible for careers]

### 3b. Get started with this template project plan

Pre activity Planning	Date action allocated	Staff member	Date action completed by	Hints and tips
Agree staff project team (for allocating specific tasks).				Include a member of SLT, teaching, CEIAG and maybe a Governor as well.
Talk to your Enterprise Adviser.				They may have links to additional support/ employer contacts.
Get a group of students to be involved alongside staff.				Create Student Ambassadors.
Agree date(s) for event(s).				Employers will need at least 3-4 weeks notice.
Identify year group and student numbers.				Specific groups e.g. not going to university.
Identify number of employers needed.				Go for 20% contingency on the number of employers you need to allow for drop out. What is the ratio of learner to employer?
Issue a staff wide email outlining the event.				Ask for volunteers and give a deadline for responses.
Add the activity to Tracker.				This will link activities to Gatsby Benchmarks. Contact your Enterprise Coordinator for more information.
Identify which employers you want to target.				Think about labour market information (LMI). Who is recruiting locally? What are the skills shortages? Who is recruiting apprentices locally?
Budget (tea, coffee, biscuits etc.).				A warm and expectant welcome is critical.
Track all employers contacted and outcomes.				Even if someone says 'No', record this and ask if you can keep them up-to-date on the work of the school and its young people.
Issue initial confirmation to employers on their involvement or input.				Manage expectations - who are the year group? What are they thinking about (University, Apprenticeships, entry to work or unsure)?
Book 15 minute update meeting with staff project team (weekly?).				Check against the plan/identify any problems/look at employer tracking spreadsheet.
Post all activity dates on the school website and intranet.				Invite parents to get involved.
<b>Resources</b>				
Book room(s)				Classroom - but do you need a 'waiting room'?
Ensure you have enough tables/chairs for the event.				For student and guests.
Confirm room layout.				Interview style/Speed Networking etc.
Book Headteacher/Principal or SLT member to welcome employers and start the activity.				Make employers understand how important their contribution is to young people.
Create a rolling PowerPoint for the event, welcoming businesses and celebrating the day/future events.				Good to welcome employers but get them thinking about supporting schools in other ways.

<b>Marketing &amp; Resources</b>	<b>Date action allocated</b>	<b>Staff member</b>	<b>Date action completed by</b>	<b>Hints and tips</b>
Create a prompt sheet for employers (see page 18).				Example available from your LLEP Enterprise Coordinator.
Create a prompt sheet for students.				Example available from your LLEP Enterprise Coordinator.
Create a student feedback form.				Example available from your LLEP Enterprise Coordinator.
Create an employer feedback form.				Example available from your LLEP Enterprise Coordinator.
Create a staff feedback form.				Take staff views onboard and create ownership/continuous improvement and honest evaluation.
Nominate a member of staff to take pictures and talk about the event on social media.				This person can spot the opportunities that staff involved in the session may not - share with employers.
Student consent forms for photography.				
Issue reminders to employers with instructions/handouts.				If there is over a month until the event then keep employers 'warm' with some level of contact.
Send an invite email to confirmed employers with any instructions or pre-activity planning.				The more you can brief employers the better.
Invite local MP and Councillors.				Give as much notice as possible and ideally let them know about future events.
Invite local media (newspaper or radio).				Give as much notice as possible.
Invite Governors.				Give as much notice as possible.
Invite PTA or any other groups.				Give as much notice as possible.
Use social media to attract volunteers from local businesses.				Use Facebook/LinkedIn/Twitter, include a #hashtag for your schools careers activities.
Keep the staff intranet up-to-date.				How they can get involved/CPD/embed employability into lessons.
<b>On the day logistics</b>				
Ensure there is someone to greet visitors and/or direct them to the correct room.				It could be students who meet and greet but they need to be prepared.
Create a welcome sign or presentation in reception.				Can students design this?
Register the visitors (signing in sheet).				Can students help?
Cloakroom for employers' coats.				
Refreshments laid out.				Can students help?
Welcome note/agenda or programme.				Can students design this?
Promote next event and gain commitment (record on spreadsheet).				
Handouts ready for employers.				
Short thank you from staff and students.				Maximum impact comes from students thanking employers as well as staff.
<b>Post-event</b>				
Thank you event/debrief with employers.				At least an email (include an invite to future events).
Thank you event/debrief with staff.				Good to complete the loop internally and think about learning for the next event.
Case study or press release.				Useful for website and local media, post on social media too.
Social media posts.				Include your employers (use the tracking spreadsheet to engage them).
Blog on school or college website.				Also on school intranet.

## Overcome challenges with these top tips

You may have already sent out emails/letters or you may be cold calling, either way these techniques are applicable. We have compiled eight frequent challenges presented by employers with some helpful tips on how to overcome these.

- Research, Research, Research! Research the company before you do anything else.
- Check if your school or college has existing (or previous) links with the organisation you are contacting.
- Create yourself a script and practice with a colleague or friend; they may be able to come up with objections, enabling you to prepare, before your conversation with employers.
- You may want your Enterprise Adviser (EA) - or other existing business links - to look over your prompt sheet for pointers on how best to approach the conversation.
- Also ensure you have a list of your target companies and ideally specific contact names with job roles, to give your EA a better idea for suggesting suitable approaches.
- Don't forget to keep it a two-way conversation, prepare some questions about their organisation beforehand and ask them - this will provide you with more information to better direct your request.
- Acknowledge when it is a definitive 'no' and let it go. There is a fine line and you do not want to annoy them as they could be a link for you in the future through another avenue.
- Put together your own prompt sheet of pointers for potential objections. When you encounter new ones, add them to the

### 1. Getting past the 'Gatekeepers'.

The gatekeepers could be the receptionists or a PA. Befriend them, they will be your best route. They will often try to say no before they understand your ask, so be nice and get their attention - use your research to drop key words in your first few sentences. This may be something along the lines of "We are looking to make sure young people understand what businesses like yours really look for in their candidates so that they leave school ready for the world of work."

### 4. "We have had a bad experience."

Some employers may tell you that they supported a young person and had a bad experience. In this case, turn it around and ask them to use that story to support other young people. It will help to prepare young people to interact with employers more appropriately in the future.

list and create a response for next time to learn from your experiences.

- When speaking with a business, make sure that you are actively listening as this will help to overcome barriers and build rapport. Rather than passively listening to the person (or not listening at all) pay close attention to the other person's choice of words, their tone of voice and their body language. Often, finding common ground, empathising and then overcoming barriers is more effective than trying to offer an immediate solution.

## 2. "We don't have the time."

Everyone has this issue, so be sensitive. Ask them how much time they feel they would have to give you and then give an example of a way they can be involved with even less time. Perhaps a 30 minute Q&A session with a small group of students (they don't have to prepare anything). This could be via conference call or Skype: students have the opportunity to see the volunteer in their business environment; they are participating in a business activity; and the employer doesn't need time out of the work place.

## 3. "We've never done anything like this before."

A response could be, "Experience is not required, everyone has to start somewhere - like ABC Ltd who now regularly support us with Q&A sessions." Supporting your request will give the business the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge through this experience. Tell them that they will be supported, offer pre-support/briefing and for them to speak to other business volunteers (for example, your EA) who have already done this - don't forget to get permission first.

## 5. "We don't have enough staff."

Support could be from anyone in the company and not just the person you are speaking to. The company can use it as an opportunity for someone to be upskilled, given wider responsibility with varying tasks and maybe even have a project of their own.

## 6. "What's in it for us?"

Have a clear offer ready for the business. What can your school do for them? For example, could you offer your school premises as a venue or meeting space? Could you use your community standing to raise awareness of their company through social media? Could you offer them a team building activity such as volunteering to refurbish a room or set an enterprise challenge for a group of students? Maybe you can put a package together in return for business support?

## 7. "Just put it in an email for me."

Agree to send them more information but don't hang up yet. Ask them an open-ended follow-up question such as, "Just so I know what to include in my email, can you tell me how you recruit young people?" Use your research to think of something that may be of interest or a challenge to them. Agree to send them an email as requested but also that you will call back as a courtesy to follow up on the conversation.

## 8. "I am not the right person to talk to."

If you are not speaking to a decision maker, ask to speak with the appropriate person. If they are unavailable ask to schedule a call or a meeting at a point they will be available.



# 3d.

## Create a database with this Employer Engagement Tracker

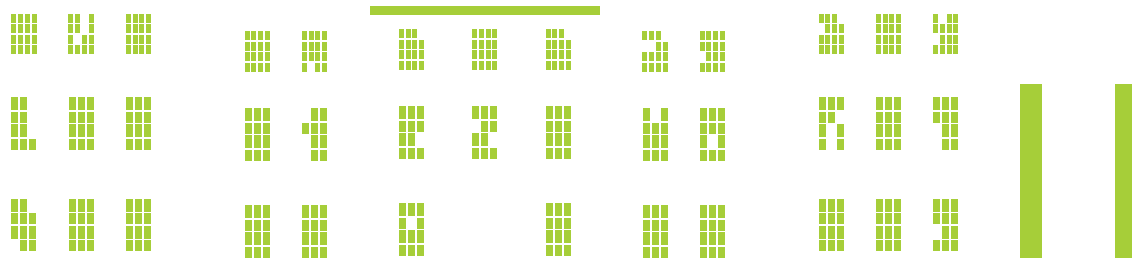
This simple Excel database is designed to help you capture all communication with businesses.

By populating this database, over time you will develop a strong and sustainable group of employers who have committed to working with you. Knowing what these businesses are prepared to offer, and when, will help you to plan for events in advance. This will allow you to be more efficient in the way you engage with businesses, lessening the need for last minute calls and it will avoid multiple people from the school contacting the same employer.

Company Name	Type of Business	Main Contact	Job Title	Phone No.	Email	Facebook	Twitter
Tastes	Cafe	John Harper	Owner		john.harper@tastesgoodya.com	Y	tastesgoodya
ACME Enterprises	Transport and Haulage	Sarah Adams	HR Manager	0116 000 0000	sadams@acmemovers.co.uk	Y	acmeenterprises
R H Olston Solicitors	Solicitors	Roger or Helen Olston	Partners	01509 000 000	info@rhlegal.org.uk	Y	N

Please note that new regulations concerning data protection (GDPR - General Data Protection Regulation) are coming into force from May 2018. If you are collecting data, please ensure you ask for the person's permission and that you are compliant with the regulations.

[www.gdpr-legislation.co.uk](http://www.gdpr-legislation.co.uk)





Date Contacted	Initial Method of Contact (phone, email, letter, in person)	Careers Talks	Careers Fair	Mock Interviews	Work Experience	Staff Member Following Up	Notes
15.11.17	Email	Y	N	N	Y	Bob Dylan	BD to call - available most wednesdays.
08.01.18	Phone	Y	N	Y	Y	Tina Turner	TT speaking to Sarah and arranging for 2 students to do w/ex in July for one week consecutively. Sarah can do mock interviews.
16.01.18	Email	N	N	N	N	Bob Dylan	Currently too busy and cannot commit. Happy to get school emails. Maybe do a careers talk later in the year so call back in May.

Download this template from [www.llep.org.uk/investing-in-our-people](http://www.llep.org.uk/investing-in-our-people).

## 4.

## Other sources of help

*In this section we signpost to some organisations that may be able to help through their education support programmes as well as other sources of business data that may be of use to your school or college.*

### **4a. Consider local and national organisations who offer help to schools and colleges:**

- The Careers and Enterprise Company - [www.llep.org.uk/investing-in-our-people/the-careers-and-enterprise-company](http://www.llep.org.uk/investing-in-our-people/the-careers-and-enterprise-company).
- LEBC (STEM and other offers) - [www.leics-ebc.org.uk](http://www.leics-ebc.org.uk).
- Leicestershire Cares - [www.leicestershirecares.co.uk](http://www.leicestershirecares.co.uk).
- Founders4Schools - [www.founders4schools.org.uk/search](http://www.founders4schools.org.uk/search).
- Inspiring the Future - [www.inspiringthefuture.org](http://www.inspiringthefuture.org).
- Apprenticeship Support & Knowledge for Schools (ASK) - [www.workpays.co.uk/](http://www.workpays.co.uk/)
- LLEP - signposting support [www.llep.org.uk/investing-in-our-people/choosing-a-career/careers-advice-useful-links](http://www.llep.org.uk/investing-in-our-people/choosing-a-career/careers-advice-useful-links).
- FREE webinars are a great way to bring employers into the classroom in general, see: [learnliveuk.com](http://learnliveuk.com) and [resources.amazingapprenticeships.com/live-broadcasts](http://resources.amazingapprenticeships.com/live-broadcasts).
- Leicester Employment Hub - [employmenthub@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:employmenthub@leicester.gov.uk).
- Some colleges have existing Employer Engagement teams that could be utilised.

### **4b. Consider the types of businesses you are researching and approaching.**

Many organisations focus on large, well-known names but most local businesses are small or micro. We have put together a breakdown of company size in Leicester and Leicestershire below:

Employment Size (no of employees in brackets)	LLEP Area	LLEP Area %
Total no of Businesses	42,440	100
Micro (0 to 9)	37,760	89.0
Small (10 to 49)	3,845	9.1
Medium-sized (50 to 249)	675	1.6
Large (250+)	160	0.4

Remember, you do need to persevere – no one will hand you a list of business contacts on a plate.

Do not forget about the many small businesses who are near your school or college!



#### 4c. Business Data

The LLEP is unable to pass on business data without the express permission of the individuals. However, you may find the following list of information sources useful.

You may find it easier to narrow down the type of business that you want to connect with by size, sector and geography to enable evaluation of your approach.

You will need to be quite tenacious as mail mergers/letters/emails may elicit a low response. A personal touch can be more effective.

- *Leicester Mercury Top 200 Businesses*

It is worth checking the Leicester Mercury as it has daily business news, a monthly business supplement and publishes a Top 200 Leicestershire Businesses list each year.

- *Free to use business search websites*
  - [www.directory.leicestermercury.co.uk](http://www.directory.leicestermercury.co.uk)
  - [www.freeindex.co.uk/east\\_midlands/leicester](http://www.freeindex.co.uk/east_midlands/leicester)
  - [www.ileicestershire.com](http://www.ileicestershire.com)
- *Trade or industry-specific websites, particularly those that include directories of members*
  - [www.leicestershiretextileshub.co.uk/manufacturer-search](http://www.leicestershiretextileshub.co.uk/manufacturer-search)
  - [www.midlandsaerospace.org.uk/members](http://www.midlandsaerospace.org.uk/members)
- *Regulated sectors where information is readily available in the public domain*

For example: Education (schools and colleges) or Social Care (Care Homes / Domiciliary Care).

- *Consider also*
  - Generic search engines, e.g. Bing or Google.
  - Business sections of local newspapers – growth, acquisitions, new sites etc. Also other stories relating to businesses.
  - Companies house.
  - Attendance at Business Network Groups.
  - Social Media Channels, such as LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook or Instagram.

- *Purchased Data*

We are very aware that schools or colleges may not have any budget to purchase data but have included information on this aspect just in case! Many organisations purchase data (records) from Business Databases to obtain contact names and e-mail addresses in order to target organisations in specific sectors or by size. There is usually a minimum purchase amount, e.g. 1,000 records. Most will aggregate data from a range of other sources to create a picture of businesses in the local economy:

- East Midlands Chamber - [www.emc-dnl.co.uk](http://www.emc-dnl.co.uk) preferential rates are given to members who need to purchase targeted business data. There is a publicly available member's directory on their website.
- Federation of Small Businesses - [www.fsb.org.uk/regions/leicestershire-northamptonshire-rutland](http://www.fsb.org.uk/regions/leicestershire-northamptonshire-rutland) may have data available to purchase.
- Institute of Directors - [www.iod.com/events-community/regions/east-midlands](http://www.iod.com/events-community/regions/east-midlands).
- Business Insider - sells marketing databases for top 500 companies in the East Midlands [www.insidermedia.com/databases/midlands-top-500-companies](http://www.insidermedia.com/databases/midlands-top-500-companies).

**Please remember to always act in accordance with the Data Protection Act.**

*In May 2018 this will become the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) - [www.gdpr-legislation.co.uk](http://www.gdpr-legislation.co.uk).*



*Once you have found your employer volunteers, make sure they are prepared and confident to help your students. We have put together some ideas for talking points below.*

The employer could talk about:

- Name, job role, company and what the company does.
- Their role and how they got into this role.
- How long have they been doing the job?
- What would they say to young people about this industry?
- What soft skills are important in their role (e.g. team work)?
- How many people are employed in their company?
- What sorts of job roles/careers are there in their organisation?
- Do they take on apprentices?
- What are the GCSEs/qualification/skills that are most valued by their organisation?
- What is the most popular role enquired about by young people?
- What, in reality, are the job roles with the most vacancies (contrary to the above)?
- The most challenging part of the role.
- What they love most about the role.
- How is their job different to what they first expected it to be?
- Do they travel a lot with their work?
- What's the best piece of advice they can give about careers?
- How future technology/robotics might affect their sector.
- Top tips for getting into their area of work.
- Top tips on how young people can impress an employer.
- What are the opportunities for promotion/development?
- What are the skills shortages in the industry?
- Suggest that they bring along a piece of equipment that they use day to day to open discussions, or some news stories about their industry.
- They could talk about current challenges and could set the young people an activity about how they might solve this!



*Thank you for taking the time to read this Employer Engagement Guide. Now it is over to you. Use the space opposite to start your Employer Engagement action plan.*



*Employer Engagement Action Plan*

*We would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following people in the creation of this guide.*

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