Chapter 6

Strategies for Using WISCareers

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Strategies for Promoting Usage

Below are strategies to assist you in encouraging teachers, administrators, students, and parents/guardians to use the WISCareers website. These strategies are based on research conducted by Kimbrin Cornelius at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Teachers and Administrators

Use active strategies when promoting the site to teachers. Schools that effectively use WISCareers have a high number of teachers using the site with students, and in a wide variety of subject areas. According to our research, active strategies (e.g., an in-service) are much more effective than passive ones (e.g., a memo). However, any action is better than no action. Examples of both active and passive strategies include:

- Encourage teachers to attend the WISCareers Regional Trainings
- Schedule in-service trainings for your district or school (Wisconsin Careers will lead in-service programming for no charge)
- Create an account for each teacher or provide them with your school’s registration code
- Meet with new teachers for individual training
- Demonstrate WISCareers to all teachers
- Email information about the site including the registration code to all teachers
- Use promotional materials found on the WISCareers Professional site under Support and Resources.

When promoting WISCareers to teachers, focus on the subject areas most likely to involve career development. One of the best ways to encourage career exploration is to integrate career development activities and the website into the curriculum. Teachers in these subject areas may be especially interested in the website:

- English/Language Arts
- Special Education
- FACE
- Agriculture
- Career and Technical Education.

See page 64 for examples of practical applications for specific subject areas.

Make time to be in the classroom to teach WISCareers. If you generally don’t teach in the classroom, consider pairing up with someone who does. Your success in the classroom may inspire other teachers to follow your lead.

Students

Use active strategies when promoting the site to students. According to our research, active strategies (e.g., training students in their sophomore English classes) are much more effective than passive ones (e.g., mentioning WISCareers in a school newsletter). However, any action is better than no action. Examples of both active and passive strategies include:

- Create a systematic and organized way to get all students to create an account. (e.g. choose a week when English teachers take every class into the computer lab for this activity)
- Have 8th grade students begin saving items to their WISCareers Locker, which can move easily with them to high school
- Include an article on WISCareers in your school newsletter
- Link to WISCareers on your school homepage
- Place a link to WISCareers on your computers’ desktops
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- Post registration codes in the library and guidance office
- Encourage a group of students to make posters promoting WISCareers.

**Require students to use the site multiple times in multiple grades.** Our research indicates that schools with the highest WISCareers usage require their students to login several times throughout high school. This familiarizes students with the site so they can use it on their own when they have career-related or college-related questions.

**Target a grade where the most career guidance occurs, and make a plan that ensures all students will log in.** For example, require a resume to be written in all Sophomore English classes. Further examples can be found on page 64.

**Parents and Guardians**

Partner with parents and guardians to optimize career development success for each of your students. Research suggests that parents play the most significant role in their teens’ career decision making. Ideas for promoting usage with parents include:

- Make WISCareers part of your parents’ night or parent/teacher conferences.
- Plan time for parents to sit with their child in a computer lab to go through the website; have a guidance counselor give demonstrations
- Invite a Wisconsin Careers representative to your event
- Inform parents about WISCareers in letters, newsletters, and/or emails
- Include information on your school’s website on pages that parents are likely to visit
- Plan to have the WISCareers coordinator from your school give a demonstration at the next PTO/PTA meeting.

**Practical Applications**

Below are practical applications taken directly from counselors and teachers who actively use the WISCareers website. These ideas represent just a few of the ways to use the website.

**Ideas for Counselors to Use with Students**

- Require students to take three assessments before registering for classes. This helps give direction to selection of courses through increased self-awareness and awareness of occupations.
- To enhance the process listed above, encourage students to focus on the Helpful High School Courses section for each occupation of interest
- Encourage students to use the School Search in the Education section to find schools that best fit their needs
- Show students how to use the Financial Aid and Scholarship information to find financial resources for post secondary education and/or training
- Encourage students to use the Wisconsin Employers database (found in the Job Seeking section) to help them find job shadowing and informational interviewing opportunities
- Show students with previous job experience (internships, part-time jobs, etc.) how to use the Transferable Skills Assessment to link to other related occupations
- To help students prepare for their summer job search, have them use the Resume tool and the Cover Letter Generator found in the Job Seeking section
- Help students make the college application process easier by showing them how to use our website to apply to colleges online
- For those students who are interested in specific programs of study or majors direct them to the
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School Search to look at all the schools that offer those programs

- Show valuable relationships between assessments and occupations by using one of our assessments or by entering the results of other assessments (e.g. ASVAB, CAI, COPS, CDM, COPES, Holland, IDEAS, OVIS, SDS, SDI, Strong, VPI)
- Have 8th and 10th graders enter their Wisconsin Career Assessment results and then explore matching occupations
- For students looking for alternatives to 2 or 4 year colleges, explore adult apprenticeships options under Education or Occupations

Ideas for Teachers to Use with Students

- Invite the WISCareers coordinator at your school to give a demonstration of the site to your class, and then have students log in and take an assessment
- Bring career awareness and your subject area together by using the Classroom Activities feature -- search for appropriate activities by grade, subject area, Wisconsin learning standards, and core competencies
- Require students to take three assessments before registering for classes. This helps give direction to selection of courses through increased self-awareness and awareness of occupations.
- To enhance the process listed above, encourage students to focus on the Helpful High School Courses section for each occupation of interest
- Show students with previous job experience (internships, part-time jobs, etc.) how to use the Transferable Skills Assessment to link to other related occupations
- Encourage students to use the School Search in the Education section to find schools that best fit their needs
- Show students how to use the Financial Aid and Scholarship information to find financial resources for post secondary education and/or training
- Have 5th grade through 7th grade students complete Career Planning: Explore -- a self-contained career development module
- Use a Treasure Hunt worksheet to make career exploration fun for your students (See website, Promoting Usage, for an example)
- Have students save three occupations of interest in their WISCareers Locker and write a report on their favorite one
- Have students research salary and employment outlook information for an in-depth look at occupations they are interested in
- Assign students to give a speech about an occupation using WISCareers as a resource
- Bring in guest speakers to share information about a specific occupation -- find potential speakers using the Employers Database
- Assign students to use the Wisconsin Employers database (found in the Job Seeking section) to help them find job shadowing and informational interviewing opportunities
- Use the budgeting section to help students get real-world answers about jobs and lifestyles
- Assign students to build a budget for the current year, and then have them enter the year they were born in the comparison budget area. Have a discussion about expenses, factors that cause inflation, necessities vs. expenses, levels of education and how they affect salary, etc.
- Use the Resume builder to help students prepare a resume
- In English/Language Arts classes, have students complete a resume and cover letter using the tools in WISCareers
- Have students complete a group presentation on specific careers or work areas
- Special Education teachers can use the search feature in Classroom Activities to find activities that meet IEP requirements for vocational education
- Use WISCareers Classroom Activities from home to help you write your lesson plans
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- Have students explore occupations related to their class work by using the Work Areas feature found in Browse Occupations. Below are some suggestions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Work Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>Agriculture, Nature, Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art, Music, and Drama</td>
<td>Art, Design, Communications, and Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/Foreign Language</td>
<td>Art, Design, Communications, and Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Education</td>
<td>Construction and Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science/Health</td>
<td>Health Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACE</td>
<td>Health Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Education</td>
<td>Industrial Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Education</td>
<td>Marketing and Sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Education</td>
<td>Mechanical and Repair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Education</td>
<td>Business and Office Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Scientific and Technical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Scientific and Technical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>Scientific and Technical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Service, Social Service, and Social Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACE</td>
<td>Service, Social Service, and Social Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ideas for Parents/Guardians to Use with Their Children

- Use the website to help students get real world answers about jobs and lifestyles
- Research adult apprenticeships options with your child under Education or Occupations.
- Explore colleges together using the School Search
- Use the Budgeting section to find out how much it will cost students to live on their own
- Explore occupations that your child is interested in and use the Browse Occupations to find a specific occupation
- Explore the occupation that you are have and discuss this with your child
- Looking for money for college? Explore the financial aid/scholarship information available on the website

Ideas for Individuals to Use

- Use the employer database to set up job shadowing and informational interviews
- Look for a new occupation that relates to your past experience! Take the Transferable Skills Assessment and enter any previous job including internships, part-time jobs, etc. You may want to try this for several of your past jobs.
- Research adult apprenticeships options under Education or Occupations.
- Use resume builder to create a winning resume
- Links to America’s Job Bank under Job Seeking for current job openings

Tips for using the WISCareers User Reports

- Access students’ WISCareers Locker to see if an assignment has been completed
- Coordinator reports to the school board how many times students have used the site as justification for continuing to financially support the resource
- Run reports to see what occupations students are choosing. Use this report when presenting to school board
- In the school newsletter, list the top 5 most popular occupations and colleges accessed by your students on the WISCareers website
- Get a report of the top occupations most frequently accessed by your students. This report can be sorted by gender, year, grade, ethnicity, and/or group
- Using the report mentioned above, invite speakers in the most popular occupations to attend
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your career fair. Plus, get a report on the students who have accessed these occupations and encourage them to attend the event

• When you have a college representative planning to visit your school, get a list of students from the User Reports who have accessed information on that college and let them know when the representative will be visiting

Customizing the WISCareers Website

We can customize the WISCareers website by adding your school’s logo to the Welcome page, as shown in the example below. All you need to do is email us (fbreit@education.wisc.edu) an electronic copy of your logo or, if it is already on your website, send us the website address and we will copy it from there.

Case Studies

Case studies are an effective way to examine and explore career development and career counseling using real world situations. The following case studies are provided to demonstrate specific applications of the WISCareers website for professionals to use with student and adult populations.

Case Study: University of Wisconsin Student

You are meeting with a client who has been taking general education courses, part-time, at the local two-year UW campus. She has completed over two semesters of course work. Her GPA is 2.9. She is working part-time at a bakery in town. She needs to make a decision about whether she will go to one of the four year campuses and get her Bachelor’s Degree or get an Associate’s Degree at the two-year campus, working for a few years before getting a 4-year degree. Finances are an issue for her and she has expressed some concern about paying for two more years of school and continuing to work part-time.

She is interested in Human Services. She likes her sociology and psychology courses but has also been intrigued with some of her science-based courses. She has taken nutrition, for example, and enjoyed the course, but feels she can only take an introductory course in chemistry, nothing more advanced. She knows she likes working with people, but doesn’t want to “leave” science. She has done some volunteer work at the food bank in town and liked both the administrative tasks and her direct contact with clients, especially the children. She enjoyed several opportunities she had to talk to some of the families about nutrition, diet, and related topics.

In addition, if she decides to pursue a four year degree, she will need information about financial aid opportunities and procedures. She wants to know what she should do.

What parts of the WISCareers website would you use to help her explore the answers to the questions below?

• How can she define her interests?
• How can she understand more about her skills and abilities?
• What tools and information are available to help her improve her financial situation?
• How can she learn more about the status of the job market in her areas of interest?
• What kinds of jobs could she get with different majors, such as human services, psychology, sociology?
• How can she gain a clearer understanding of the job opportunities available to her, in general and in Wisconsin?
• How can she find job openings in Southwest Wisconsin?

Issues

Understanding her interests
Understanding her skills and how they transfer

Sections of WISCareers that could be helpful

• Interest Profiler
• Transferable Skills Assessment