TIPS ON WORKING WITH STUDENTS

Show, don’t tell – teens love hands-on, tangible activities that allow them to get up and move, think, communicate and share their ideas.

As adults, we sometimes forget the pressure many teens feel in making major decisions about their future. In fact, if it's been a while since you were in high school, you could probably use a refresher on how teenagers roll. So here you go, a few ideas to support your career mentoring efforts. Thanks for making a difference in their lives!

Top Tips on Interacting with high school students

- Teens think of themselves as adults and want you to treat them that way.
- Actively ask teens' opinions
- When engaging with teenagers, they may appear disinterested or slow to respond. This is often masking the desire to not appear foolish in front of their peers. Each student still wants to be noticed and appreciated.
- This age group needs to have fun.
- Students will respond to your enthusiasm, respect and encouragement.
- Nothing is more important to the student than knowing that you authentically care about their future. Students will know that you took the time and energy to prepare for this day and that you volunteered to do so.
- Wear your business attire; look like an “expert.”
- Smile, shake hands (if appropriate), and maintain eye contact.
- Give your name, and ask each student his or her name.
- Be yourself.
- Talk about your early aspirations, as well as your current job and how you obtained it.
- Taylor the conversation to meet the needs of the students. Use language, examples, and analogies that students can understand, but don’t talk down to them.
- Avoid any use of gender, racial, or ethnic stereotypes.
- Wait at least 5 seconds for an answer after asking a question.
- Use as many open-ended questions as possible.
- Don’t answer your own questions, and avoid criticizing or rejecting wrong answers from students.
- Students are inquisitive to the extent that the subject matter has immediate personal application and they want to know all about it now.

Source: adapted from Junior Achievement materials