basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Guidelines to support Schools in the implementation of Careers Week in Term 3 Week 8 of each year

Version 2

2027

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1. Purpose of the Careers Week Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide your school with a step-by-step process, with templates to participate in Careers Week. These guidelines offer an activity to host college and university students, entrepreneurs and people working in industry in term 3, week 8 each year.

2. Who should manage Careers Week activities in the School

Given the rate of change in industry demands, it is suggested that your school nominate a Head of Careers who holds a current position in the School Management Team (SMT). It is also suggested that the nomination have a close interest in the future careers of learners. The SMT representative co-chair the Careers Committee, together with a learner representative, nominated by the Representative Council of Learners (RCL). The Careers Committee will also comprise interested Life Orientation teachers, and other co-opted representatives.

3. What is Careers Week

There are 3 (three) objectives of Careers Week. The first is to link basic education to tertiary education by having students come to the school to talk about their tertiary education journeys. The second is to link basic education to industry by having employers and employees come to the school to talk about their career journeys. The third objective is to link basic education and entrepreneurship by having entrepreneurs come to the school to talk about their work journeys.

4. Why your School can benefit from Careers Week

International longitudinal studies have found that learners who attend 4 or more career talks achieve better academically, have better chances to find employment when leaving school. By implementing Careers Week, your learners will be in a position to get better marks, and become more likely to find or create work. Learners are also up to 47% more likely to be in education, employment and training when leaving school[1]. The Careers Week will thus ensure learners get better marks, study further, and become more likely to find or create work.

5. When and where Careers Week take place each year

Space for Careers Week is being included in the curriculum for all grades in term 3, week 8. Your school may select 1 (one) day for each grade to participate in Careers Week. All Careers Week related activities are to be held on the school premises by bringing external stakeholders to the school each year to talk about further studies, entrepreneurship and jobs.

6. How can Careers Week be implemented in your school each year

The first step to implementing a successful careers week is to nominate a Head of Careers for the school. The Head of Careers will then establish a Careers Committee together with a RCL nominated learners.

The Careers Committee will identify and confirm speakers for Careers Week. Speakers will be coordinated by the Careers Committee during Careers Week, and will be thanked and certificated on completion of their talks.

Finally, the Careers Committee will survey learners, teachers and speakers to confirm how Careers Week can be better implemented the next year.

[1] https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/career-talks-with-guest-speakers_93594cb3-en.html

Basic steps to implement Careers Week in your school each year

Step 1: Select a Head and Deputy Head of Careers to represent your School

To ensure the Careers Week becomes a great success, it is essential that the school nominate a Head of Careers who holds a current position in the School Management Team (SMT). It is recommended that a Deputy Head of Careers be nominated to ensure programme continuity.

Step 2: Set up your Careers Committee

The Careers Committee will coordinate all activities relating to Careers Week. It is requested that adequate space be allocated to the Careers Committee for roundtable meetings, and resources be provided to the committee to support them in their critically important work.

Step 3: Identify speakers for Careers Week at your School

The Careers Committee will identify college and university students, entrepreneurs and people in industry to speak to learners during term 3, week 8 of each year. The number of speakers will be determined by available space for all learners to hear from at least 1 speaker each year. School Management Team (SMT), School Governing Board (SGB) and teachers have family or friends who are college and university students, entrepreneurs and people in industry to speak. Furthermore, parents and guardians can be invited to provide recommendations for career talk speakers. Local companies, colleges and universities can also be provide with invitations.

Step 4: Invite Speakers and provide them with Speaker Notes

Speakers will be formally invited by the school and provided with speaker notes to assist them in preparation. It is possible that the same speakers will participate in the schools Careers Week each year. It is therefore important to build positive relationships with speakers.

Step 5: Remind speakers and host them during Careers Week

As speakers will be identified early in the year, it is important to remind them at least a month, a week and a day before the activity. The reminder can confirm how excited the school is to host the speaker. The speaker will be received at arrival on day and escorted to their venue.

Step 6: Thank and certificate guest speakers

It is important for speakers to be thanked and recognised for the time and effort they invested into the careers of learners. Formally thank the speaker on the day and provide them with a certificate of service. Also provide the speaker with a very short survey to complete on the day.

Step 7: Conduct surveys and plan for the next year

The Careers Committee will conduct short surveys with learners, teachers and speakers to confirm what worked well and what can be done better. These findings will inform Careers Week planning for the next year.

The following Annexures provide examples for the Careers Committee to use when planning for, implementing, and evaluating Careers Week. The examples can be edited as needed. The editable versions are available on the Careers Week website (www.careersweek.co.za).

Annexure A: Example of Careers Committee Terms of Reference

NATIONAL CAREERS WEEK

Careers Committee

Terms of Reference

Programme of work for the committee:
The Careers Committee is responsible to plan, implement, and evaluate the Careers Week.

Responsibilities of the committee:
1. Reach out to alumni, parents, and community to compile a speaker list for careers week.
2. Confirm speakers and provide them with a speakers list.
3. Remind speakers and answer any questions they have.
4. Receive speakers on the day and coordinate their talks.
5. Thank and certificate speakers for their talks.
6. Select a winning assignment for each grade.
7. Award certificates to winning learners.
8. Upload winning assignments to the Careers Week website.
9. Conduct surveys with learners, teachers and speakers.
10. Constitute new committee and plan for the next year.

Structure of the committee:
The Careers Committee will be chaired by [School's Nominated Head of Careers] and co-chaired by [learner nominated by the Representative Council of Learners (RCL)]. The Careers Committee will also comprise interested Life Orientation teachers, and other co-opted representatives.

Proxies: Each member will have a nominated proxy for in the event they cannot attend.

Quorum: A quorum will be formed when at least half of the members are present.

Frequency of meetings:
The committee will meet as often as needed, but at least twice per term. The next meeting date will be agreed to as the final agenda item of each meeting. A special meeting will be held once a year to celebrate progress and orientate new members.

Succession:
Should a member not attend two meetings without prior notice or proxy, they will be removed from the committee. It is the responsibility of each member to submit a replacement recommendation when they will be vacating their position. An orientation meeting will be held with all new members.

Venue and time:
A suitable space will be allocated for round table meetings.

Meetings records:
A meeting agenda will be circulated at least 1 week prior to the meeting. The compilation of meeting minutes will be on rotation. Short action minutes are suggested as opposed to extensive notes. Action minutes will include activities, who is responsible, and timeframes for completion. The previous action minutes will be reviewed as the first agenda item of each meeting.

Backup of records:
All meeting minutes and records will be printed and kept on file, as well as stored online through a folder that is openly accessible and managed by the school.

WhatsApp group:
A Careers Committee WhatsApp group will be setup to simplify communication and collaboration. The WhatsApp group will be managed by the Co-Chairpersons'. Exiting members will be removed from the group.

Activities:
It is critical that the Careers Committee does not commit to achieving too many activities at once. It is suggested that one activity be focused on at a time, with extensive planning.

Risks and mitigation:
The Careers Committee will seek to identify and manage risks related to all Careers Week activities, and inform the relevant stakeholders of such risks, as the need arises.

Review of this terms of reference:
These terms of reference are to be updated as the Careers Committee evolves.
Any updated versions will need to be signed by all members of the committee.

Signature of agreement and support:

1. [School Name] Head of Careers

Name: _____ Surname:_____

Date:_____ Signature:_____

2. Learner nominated by the Representative Council of Learners (RCL)

Name: _____ Surname:_____

Date:_____ Signature:_____

3. Life Orientation Teacher

Name: _____ Surname:_____

Date:_____ Signature:_____

3. Other Representatives

Name: _____ Surname:_____

Date:_____ Signature:_____

Annexure B: Example of Speaker List

NATIONAL CAREERS WEEK

SPEAKER LIST

Date: [Year]
School Name: [School Name]
Chairperson: [Name and Surname]
Co-chairperson: [Name and Surname]

Speaker Topic	Grade	Title	Name	Surname	Email Address	Phone Number	Date	Speaker time	Hosting sheet
e.g. Entrepreneurship	Grade 9	Ms	Boitumelo	Motshwene	bmotshwene@example.com	082 555 5555	15/09/2026	10:30	23/04/2026
e.g. College life	Grade 8	Ms	Carmen	Adams	cadams@example.com	073 555 5555	15/09/2026	11:30	24/04/2026
e.g. Jobs in Demand	Grade 10	Mr	Maximus	Senzani	msenzani@examples.com	072 555 5555	16/09/2026	10:20	25/04/2026

Annexure C: Example of Speaker Invitation Letter

[Company Name]
[Company Address]
[City and Province]
Area Code]

[Date]

Dear [Employer Name],

We are excited to invite you to participate as a guest speaker during our upcoming **Careers Week** at [School Name]. This event provides a unique opportunity for professionals to engage with students and share their career journeys, offering valuable insights into your industry, business, and the educational pathways that led to your success.

Why Should You Participate?

As a guest speaker, your presentation will help learners gain a deeper understanding of potential career paths, industry-specific knowledge, and the education and training required to enter various fields. The interaction also fosters a practical connection between classroom learning and real-world applications, making the academic material more relevant and engaging.

According to our research carried out in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, key outcomes for employees volunteering in schools include[1]:

- Increased motivation and productivity at work,
- Enhanced sense of personal health and wellbeing,
- Greater work satisfaction and employer loyalty.

Additionally, participating in this event offers several benefits for your company and employees:

Exposure to Future Talent: By sharing your company's mission, values, and career opportunities, you'll help students explore potential job opportunities and the skills needed in your industry.

Employee Engagement: Your employees will gain experience in public speaking, mentoring, and communicating with the next generation of workers, enhancing their leadership skills.

Community Connection: This opportunity allows your company to demonstrate its commitment to education while strengthening ties to the local community and fostering goodwill.

How Does It Work?

Guest speaker presentations can be conducted in-person at the school *[or virtually via platforms like Microsoft Teams, depending on the format that works best for you]*. These sessions are designed to meet specific learning objectives and are linked to the school's curriculum.

If you or any of your employees are interested in participating, please contact us to discuss scheduling, planning, and logistics. We would be thrilled to have you share your expertise with our learners and inspire them as they explore their future career paths.

We look forward to your participation in making this Careers Week a success!

Warm regards,

[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[School Name]
[Contact Information]

[1] https://www.educationandemployers.org/volunteering-boosts-employees-during-lockdown-new-research-shows/

Annexure D: Example of Speaker Notes

NATIONAL CAREERS WEEK

Event Details:
Date of Talk: _____
Time of Talk: _____
Location: _____
[School address or virtual meeting link, if applicable]

Arrival Information:
- **Arrival Time:** Please arrive by [Arrival Time], so we can get you settled before the presentation.
- **Contact Person:** [Name of the Head of Careers or Teacher]
- **Contact Details:** [Phone number and Email address]

In case you need any assistance on the day, feel free to reach out.

Parking Arrangements:
[Provide details on where to park (e.g., guest parking area)]

Collection by Learners:
Meeting Point: [Location where the learners will meet you – e.g., school reception]

Preparation Checklist:
Before the Talk:
- Build talking points that will engage students and encourage discussion.
- If presenting virtually, schedule a test run to ensure everything works smoothly.

Presentation Tips:
- Plan for your talk to be about 10-15 minutes with 10 minutes for questions and answers.
- Introduction: Introduce yourself, your company, and your role.
- Set expectations for the presentation.
- Use Visual Aids: Bring materials, tools, or products that help illustrate your work.
- Describe a Typical Day: Share insights into the company's culture and what a typical day looks like.
- Educational Path: Discuss your educational background and career progression.
- Relate School to Work: Explain how school subjects like relate to your job.
- Emphasise the importance of soft skills such as punctuality and reliability.
- Mistakes and Solutions: If possible, share challenges you've faced and how you overcame them.
- Make It Interactive: Encourage questions, role play, or mock scenarios to make the talk engaging.

After the Talk:
- Provide Feedback: After your session, please complete the provided feedback survey.
- Consider how your participation can enhance your company's visibility in the community.
- Ask the Head of Careers about additional opportunities such as hosting students for job shadows, internships, or apprenticeships.

Contact Information:
For any last-minute questions or concerns, please contact:
[Your Name and Surname]
[Your Contact Details]

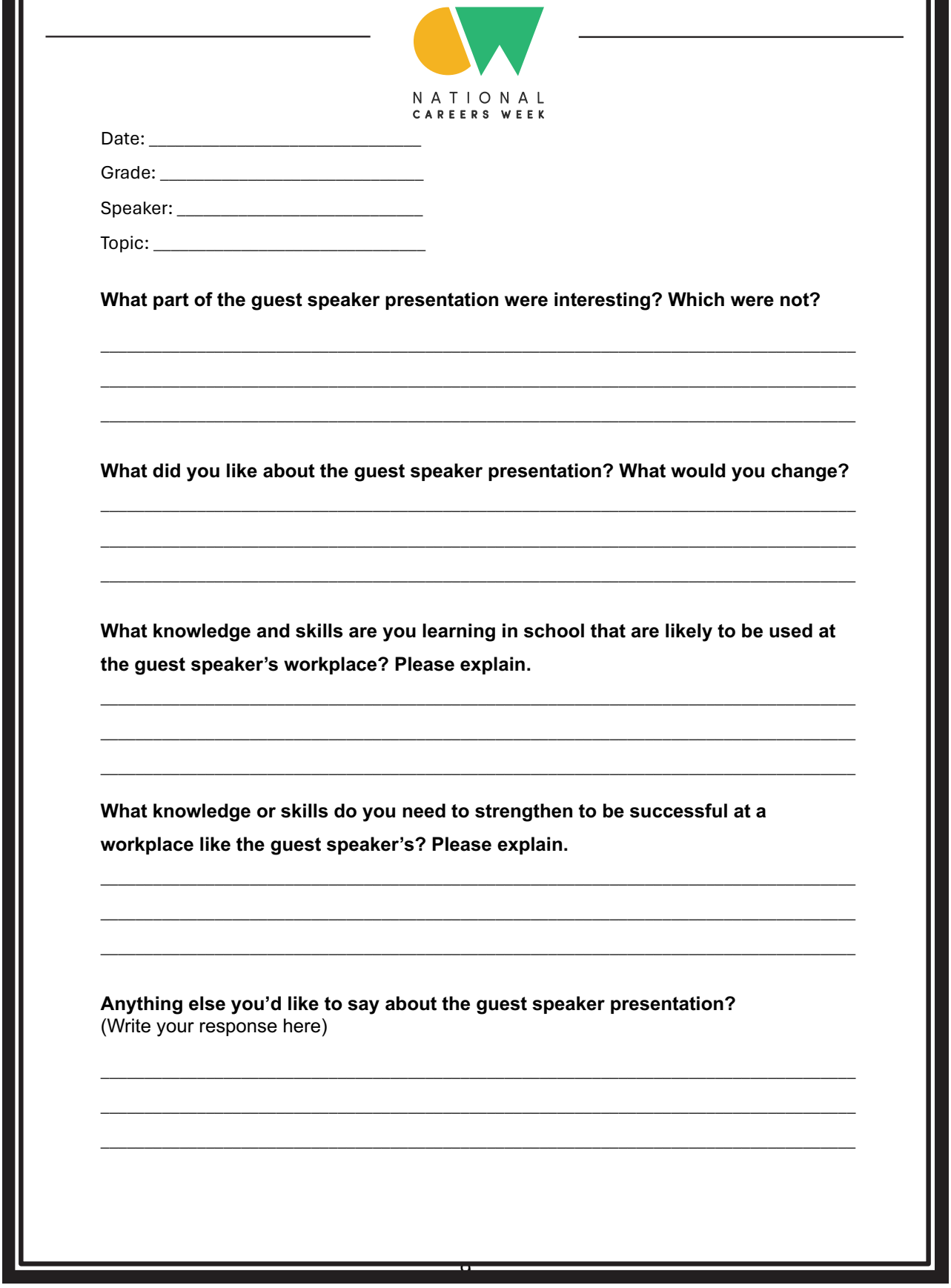
We look forward to your presentation and are grateful for your support during Careers Week!

[School Name] Careers Week Team

Annexure E: Example of Speaker Certificate



Annexure F: Example of Careers Week Evaluation Survey



Date: _____

Grade: _____

Speaker: _____

Topic: _____

What part of the guest speaker presentation were interesting? Which were not?

_____

_____

_____

What did you like about the guest speaker presentation? What would you change?

_____

_____

_____

What knowledge and skills are you learning in school that are likely to be used at the guest speaker's workplace? Please explain.

_____

_____

_____

What knowledge or skills do you need to strengthen to be successful at a workplace like the guest speaker's? Please explain.

_____

_____

_____

Anything else you'd like to say about the guest speaker presentation?
(Write your response here)

_____

_____

_____