Improving Your Program’s Image: A “How To” Guide

Despite all of the attention that CTE is receiving, our field continues to fight stigmas and misunderstanding. How do you address these issues with specific audiences including parents, policymakers and employers. This session will feature suggestions and tools to help you improve perception and public awareness, including interactive role play to hone your skills.
CTE Stigmas

- **CTE is for students who can’t perform academically**
  - 80% of students taking a college prep course with rigorous CTE met college and career readiness goals, compared to 63% of those without CTE

- **CTE doesn’t lead to high-wage careers**
  - Participation in skills-training programs increases wages and earnings and some CTE graduates who earn postsecondary credentials less than a bachelor’s degree out earn 4-year degree holders

- **CTE leads to narrow career options**
  - CTE covers 16 Career Clusters, 79+ pathways, and leads to hundreds of careers, from engineers to medical technicians.

- **CTE is for students who want to work right after high school**
  - 91% of high school graduates who earned 2-3 CTE credits enrolled in college
Problematic Quotes

“When I was going to school ... there were people in class, one person in particular, who wasn’t, like, the greatest student. He just wasn’t. And yet I saw him one day and he was able to fix a car engine blindfolded.”
Problematic Quotes

Regarding the Swiss apprenticeship program, "they do something that we don't do. They look at it as a white collar program, not just blue collar."
Problematic Quotes

"A teenager would be far better off abandoning the college preparatory, general education track in high school and, instead . . . preparing for trade school after graduation.”
"With society's heavy emphasis on higher education, vocational and technical education is too often undervalued."
Audience Participation

Speak to your neighbor for 3 minutes about the perception issues in your program.

- What is your most challenging audience?
- What is their perception of CTE?
What does the research say?

- PDK Poll
- Advance CTE/Siemens Foundation Survey
- Strada Education Group/Gallup
PDK Poll

Career-related courses in public high schools

National totals, 2017

82% Should offer 13% Should not offer
Job or career skill classes

86% Should offer 11% Should not offer
Certificate or license programs

pdkpoll.org
PDK Poll

Expectations for oldest child after high school

Public school parents, 2017

Type of college

- College full time: 61%
- Job full time: 7%
- Both part time: 22%
- Four-year: 47%
- Two-year: 7%
- Vocational: 4%

pdkpoll.org
PDK Poll

Expectations for college and desire for more CTE courses

Public school parents, 2017

52%
Parents who expect their child to attend college full time respond that schools should offer more job/career skills courses

62%
Parents who expect their child to work part or full time respond that schools should offer more job/career skills courses

pdkpoll.org
PDK Poll

Attitudes About CTE
Percentage who think public high schools should offer more job or career skills classes, 2017

- Whites: 50%
- Blacks: 60%
- Hispanics: 49%

- <$100K: 54%
- $100K+: 44%

- 18-64: 53%
- 65+: 42%

- Boys: 64%
- Girls: 49%
PDK Poll

The Value of Career Skills Development

National totals, 2017

More than half of parents surveyed say public high schools in their community **should provide more career skills classes than they do now.** Less than 5% say schools should offer fewer such classes.

- **82%** support job or career skills classes even if that means students might spend less time in academic classes.
- **86%** say schools in their community should offer certificate or licensing programs that qualify students for employment in a given field.
- **80%** see technology and engineering classes as an Extremely Important or Very Important element of school quality.
- **82%** say schools in their community should offer certificate or licensing programs that qualify students for employment in a given field.
PDK Poll

Views on Career & Technical Education

National totals, 2016

- **Prepare students to be good citizens**: 26%
- **Prepare students academically**: 45%
- **Prepare students for work**: 25%

- 74% in this group prefer more career-technical or skills-based classes
- 59% in this group prefer more career-technical or skills-based classes
- 84% in this group prefer more career-technical or skills-based classes

pdkpoll.org

Connecting Education and Careers

www.acteonline.org
Advance CTE/Siemens Survey

How Satisfied Are You With Your/Your child’s Overall School Experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CTE Parents &amp; Students</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTE Parents</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTE Students</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospective Parents &amp; Students</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospective Parents</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospective Students</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Advance CTE/Siemens Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree Strongly/ Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Current CTE Parents</th>
<th>Prospective Parents</th>
<th>Current CTE Students</th>
<th>Prospective Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding a career that I feel/ my child feels passionate about is important to me</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The more job experience I gain/ my child gains increases chances of success</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s important to me that I have/ my child has a job that pays well</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Today’s job market is much more competitive</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wish I/my child could get more real world knowledge and skills during high school</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting a college degree is important</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have/ My child already has a specific career path in mind</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CTE Awareness is Moderate

Just 47% of prospective parents and students have heard of “Career Technical Education” compared to...

- 68% Vocational Education
- 54% Career Center
- 45% Career Education
- 30% Career Academy

Advance CTE/Siemens Survey

Key Words and Phrases to Use with Parents and Students

- “Real world skills”
- “Hands-on experiences”
- “Explore career options and what you are passionate about”
- “Fulfilling, rewarding careers”
- “Career” and “career-focused”
- “Extra advantage for both college and careers”
- “Leadership” and “confidence”
- “Enhanced high school experience”

Advance CTE/Siemens Survey

• Finding a career passion was the most important critical selling point for parents and students (over 90 percent)
• The vast majority of parents and students (85 percent) continue to value college as the post-high school aspiration
• Across the board, CTE programs are most valued for their ability to provide real-world skills within the education system
• Findings consistent across all socio-economic groups
• Counselors, teachers and CTE students and alumni are among the most trusted sources of information for students/parents

Relevance Matters!

Only 26% of working U.S. adults with college experience strongly agree that their education is relevant to their work and day-to-day life.

Relevance to work and relevance to day-to-day life go hand in hand.

stradaeducation.gallup.com
Completion Matters

Highest Relevance Scores by Level of Education

% Strongly agree to both items

- Some college, no degree: 14%
- Two-year degree: 29%
- Four-year degree: 21%
- Postgrad work/degree: 43%

stradaeducation.gallup.com
Highest Relevance Scores by Field of Study

% Strongly agree to both items

- STEM: 38%
- Business: 25%
- Liberal Arts: 22%
- Public Service: 25%

stradaeducation.gallup.com
Relevance of Field of Study

Highest Relevance Scores by Field of Study
% Strongly agree to both items

- Two-year degree:
  - Business: 25%
  - Liberal Arts: 21%
  - Public Service: 23%
  - STEM: 39%

- Four-year degree:
  - Business: 21%
  - Liberal Arts: 20%
  - Public Service: 25%
  - STEM: 23%

- Postgrad work/degree:
  - Business: 31%
  - Liberal Arts: 46%
  - Public Service: 39%
  - STEM: 51%

stradaeducation.gallup.com
Connecting Education and Careers www.acteonline.org
Relevance of Field of Study

Work and Day-to-Day Relevance by Education and Field of Study

Day-to-Day Relevance

Mean Score

2.5  3.0  3.5  4.0  4.5  5.0

Work Relevance

2.5  3.0  3.5  4.0  4.5  5.0

Public Service - PG

Liberal Arts - PG

STEM - PG

Business - PG

STEM - 4 yr

Business - 4 yr

Public Service - 4 yr

Public Service - 2 yr

Business - 2 yr

Liberal Arts - 2 yr

Liberal Arts - 4 yr

PG = postgraduate

stradaeducation.gallup.com

Connecting Education and Careers

www.acteonline.org
Discussion Questions

• What, if any, myths or stigmas still exist around CTE in your community?
• Have you engaged in any unique or creative activities to raise awareness about your programs in your community?
• Do you find that your messaging to prospective CTE students is different than your messaging to prospective CTE parents? If so, how and why?
• If you were giving someone a 20-second “elevator pitch” about today’s CTE and the programs your district/school has to offer, what keywords/buzzwords would you use to describe CTE?
5 Questions to Ask

• What is the Problem We’re Seeking to Solve?
• Who is the Audience?
• What is the Message?
• What Are the Best Ways to Promote the Message?
• Who is the Messenger?
## Effective CTE Messengers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who Trust for Information on CTE?</th>
<th>Prospective Parents</th>
<th>Prospective Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Counselor</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher(s)</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTE students or alumni</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College partners</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer partners</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Department of Education</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finding a **career passion** was the most important critical selling point for parents and students.

The majority of parents and students continue to **value college** as the post-high school aspiration;

CTE programs are most valued for their ability to provide **real-world skills** within the education system.

https://careertech.org/recruitmentstrategies
https://bit.ly/2IF1MBS  Advance CTE Video Here
New School Counselor workshops

• Via Advance CTE and in partnership with American School Counselor Association
• Free full-day workshop to address CTE image
• CareerTech VISION workshop sold out but additional dates to be announced soon
ACTE Infographics Help Tell Your CTE Story

http://www.careertechvision.com/careerpavilion.cfm
ACTE Fact Sheets

CTE TODAY!

What is Career and Technical Education?
- Encompasses at least 6 percent of high school graduates and 8.8 million individuals earning postsecondary certificates and associate degrees in CTE fields.
- Preparatory high school, non-credit coursework.
- Career centers, career academies, community colleges, technical institutes, and secondary schools.
- Prepares students for a range of career options.
- Includes CTE Occupations and the CTE Pathways.

Today’s cutting-edge, rigorous and relevant career and technical education (CTE) prepares youth and adults for high-wage, high-skill, high-demand careers in established and emerging industries.

CTE Works for High School Students

High school students involved in CTE are more engaged, graduate at higher rates, and are more likely to pursue postsecondary education.
- Taking one CTE class for every two academic classes increases the likelihood of students dropping out of high school.
- The average high school graduation rate for students completing in CTE programs is 90 percent compared to an average national graduation rate of 85 percent.
- 91 percent of high school graduates who earned 2-3 CTE credits graduated in 2017.

CTE Works for College Students and Adults

Professional CTE prepares students for in-demand careers and allows them to take on less debt.
- Students can attend public community and technical colleges for a fraction of the cost of tuition at other institutions. (3, 5, 120, on average, in 2014-2015.
- According to research in Texas, Colorado, and Virginia, students with technical or applied science associate degrees earn bachelor’s degree holders by $2,000 to $11,000.
- 27 percent of people with less than an associate degree, including licenses and certificates, earn more than the average bachelor’s degree recipients.

CTE Works for Business

CTE addresses the needs of industries and helps close the STEM gap.
- Not all STEM jobs call for workers with less than a bachelor’s degree.
- Health care occupations are projected to grow 18 percent by 2026, adding more than 2 million new jobs.
- More than 70 percent of new positions will be needed for the nation’s infrastructure in the next decade, including design, building, and maintaining transportation, housing, utilities and telecommunications.
- Almost half of the energy workforce may need to be replaced by 2040, and demand for solar and wind energy technicians.
- More than 80 percent of manufacturers report that talent shortages will impact their ability to meet customer demand.

CTE Works for the Economy

Investing in CTE yields big returns for state economies.
- In Wisconsin, taxpayers receive $12.20 in benefits for every dollar invested in the technical college system.
- Oklahoma’s economy means a net benefit of $13.5 billion annually from graduates of the CareerTech System.
- Colorado Community College System alumni in the workforce contribute $5.1 billion annually to the state economy.

CTE Works for High School Students

- The more students participate in career and technical student organizations, the higher their academic motivation, academic engagement, grades, career self-efficacy, college aspirations and employability skills. (Albert et al., Linking High School to the Black Box: The Value Added by Career and Technical Student Organizations to Student High School Experience, National Research Center for CTE, 2007)
- Students attending CTE high schools have demonstrated higher rates of on-time graduation and credit accumulation and a greater likelihood of successfully finishing a college preparatory mathematics sequence. (American et al., The Academic Impacts of Career and Technical Schools: A Case Study of a Large Urban School District, 2013)
- Eight percent of students taking a college preparatory academic curriculum with rigorous CTE and college and career readiness goals, compared to only 2 percent of students taking the same academic core who did not experience rigorous CTE. (Southern Regional Education Board, High Schools That Work 2013 Assessment)
- CTE students were significantly more likely than their non-CTE counterparts to report developing problem-solving, project completion, research, math, college applications, work-related, communications, time management, and critical-thinking skills during high school. (Society for Human Resource Management [SHRM] of the Employer Demand for Many of These Skills. (Cohen et al., CTE Pathways Progress, Academic Performance, and the Transition to College and Career, National Research Center for CTE, 2009)
- The average high school graduation rate in 2017 for CTE concentrators was 95 percent, compared to the national adjusted cohort graduation rate of 80 percent. (Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education Data, CTE: Entrepreneurial Skills, NASA’s Great Natives Project and Challenge in Ending the High School Dropout Epidemic: Annual Update 2018)
- Work-based learning helps students apply and extend classroom learning, gain motivation and understanding, explore careers and develop critical understanding of the work environment. (Amstutz et al., Work-Based Learning Opportunities for High School: Students, National Research Center for CTE, 2015)
- Students who take advanced CTE courses in high school for higher earnings, including a 1.2 percent wage increase for CTE concentration. (Kinnaman and Stange, Vocational and Technical Education in American High Schools: The Value of Deep Over Breadth, National Bureau of Economic Research, 2017)

CTE Works for Postsecondary Students and Adults

- Students in programs that blend technical and academic training are more likely to find that similar adult students to improve basic skills and earn college-level credits. (Jenkins et al., Educational

https://www.acteonline.org/why-cte/what-is-cte/basic-facts/
Sector Sheets and MicroDocs

www.acteonline.org/why-cte/economic-impacts/sector-sheets/
Use Existing Campaigns...or create one
New Messaging Campaigns: Engagement

"As a parent you just want your kids to be happy. I don't particularly care if they get a...bachelor's degree. I want them to do something they like."

-Bill Phillips, parent of a 2016 high school career-technical graduate

"There is a new worst case scenario in America. If you go to college and you rack up debt and you leave without a degree, that's a disaster."

-Tom Vander Ark, author & CEO at Getting Smart
Tools to Use

• Community Discussion Guide
• Downloadable Videos
• 10 ‘Starter’ Segments
• 26:00 Documentary
Change perceptions and captivate audiences.

Events, career fair days, and open houses provide a great way for you to connect with your community and celebrate CTE. The turnkey CTE STRONG event kit equips you with everything you need to promote an upcoming event, host an engaging stage presentation, spark conversations with students, reach parents, and receive metrics on the impact of your event!
Most Effective Message: Preparation for the Real World

• CTE gives purpose to learning by emphasizing real-world skills and practical knowledge.
• Students receive hands-on training, mentoring, and internships from employers in their community. They also learn how to develop a resume and interview for a job.
• These additional tools and experiences make school more relevant, and ensure students are ready for the real world.
Insights & Recommendations

- Be **consistent** in your messages
- Communicate the success of your program through current and past **student success stories**
- **Localize** your examples, and make it relevant. Don’t forget the details
- Emphasize that CTE is a pathway towards **college and a career**
- Share **tangible benefits** of CTE – networking, internships, college credit, certifications, etc.
- Engage educators, counselors and the business community as your **messengers**.
- Keep it **positive**!
Audience Participation

1. Take a few minutes to develop an elevator speech
2. Turn to your neighbor to share your elevator speech
3. Have neighbor critique your elevator speech
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