

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 225 018

CE 034 971

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TITLE Student/Employer Follow-Up. Local Leader Guide II. Locally-Directed Evaluation Handbook. Second Edition.
INSTITUTION Illinois State Board of Education, Springfield. Dept. of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education.
PUB DATE Oct 82
NOTE 33p.; For related documents, see ED 204 541 and CE 034 969-981.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; Adult Vocational Education; *Educational Assessment; *Employer Attitudes; Evaluation Criteria; *Evaluation Methods; Evaluation Needs; Followup Studies; Guidelines; Leaders Guides; Outcomes of Education; Postsecondary Education; Program Development; *Program Evaluation; Program Implementation; *School Districts; Secondary Education; Technical Education; Vocational Education; *Vocational Followup
IDENTIFIERS Illinois

ABSTRACT

This document, one of 12 guides that have been developed to facilitate evaluation by and for local education agency (LEA) personnel in Illinois, covers student follow-up and employer follow-up surveys--activities designed to collect data for use in decisions regarding nearly every aspect of the program. State guidelines for the locally-developed questionnaires for the follow-up surveys are included in the guide. The follow-up information can be used to assess program objectives, to revise courses and programs, and to improve counseling and student services. The guide has been designed to aid the person who has responsibility for leading this particular activity. It includes three sections. The first section on preliminary considerations contains a brief explanation of this evaluation activity and the necessary steps to prepare for the evaluation undertaking. Suggestions are included for holding a staff meeting to discuss the activity. The second section of the guide is a procedure/task breakdown, which outlines suggested tasks for conducting this evaluation activity. The third section of this guide contains supporting documents, including information handouts, example documents, and references. (KC)

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Student/Employer Follow-up

Local Leader Guide II

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

This Local Leader Guide is one of twelve guides that constitute the Locally-Directed Evaluation Handbook. These guides are designed to assist local education agency personnel in conducting internal or self evaluations.

CE 034971

Locally-Directed Evaluation Handbook

Second Edition

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October, 1982

Introduction

This is one of twelve guides that have been developed to facilitate evaluation by and for local education agency (LEA) personnel. This guide has been designed to aid the individual who has assumed responsibility for leading this particular activity. It includes three sections: 1) Preliminary Considerations; 2) Procedure/Task Breakdown; and 3) Supporting Documents. All parts of this document are suggested, the local staff is encouraged to adapt or change any procedures and instruments to meet the needs of its agency.

The first section of this Local Leader Guide entitled "Preliminary Considerations" contains a brief explanation of this evaluation activity and the necessary steps to prepare for the evaluation undertaking. Suggestions are included for holding a staff meeting to discuss this activity.

The second section of this guide is the "Procedure/Task Breakdown." This breakdown outlines suggested tasks for conducting this evaluation activity. The tasks have been followed in the field tests. However, these tasks are flexible and should be adapted in each LEA.

The third section of this guide contains "Supporting Documents." These documents include: 1) information handouts, 2) example documents, and 3) references. Information handouts contain valuable information which will assist in conducting this activity. Example documents are forms which can be utilized with this evaluation activity. References include bibliographies and sources of information for additional assistance. These supporting documents have been developed and used in other LEAs. However, they can be adapted and revised to fit your specific needs. The local leader may wish to duplicate and distribute these supporting documents and work on this activity.

The value of this evaluation effort is dependent upon a team effort in obtaining and utilizing results. By combining these results with those of other activities of an evaluation system, the improvement of educational programs and services can begin.

Preliminary Considerations

The student follow-up and employer follow-up surveys are activities designed to collect data for use (along with other data) in decisions regarding nearly every aspect of your program. Student and employer follow-up information is extremely valuable in determining the extent to which your program has met its ultimate objective of preparing students for a place in society. The follow-up surveys will require locally developed questionnaires or rating scales. State guidelines are included in the Documents section. Adaptation to the peculiarities of the LEA and, perhaps, specific programs and courses is essential.

The major uses of student follow-up information have been

- assessment of program objectives
- revision of courses, programs, etc
- improvement of counseling and student services

The student follow-up survey is especially beneficial to instruction if it is viewed from the perspective of a total program—and is combined with an employer follow-up survey or other pertinent evaluation activities.

A good starting point might be to assess what has been done in recent years regarding follow-up within your local education agency. Investigate what has been done in the past by talking with heads of departments and administrators. Then, look at what other schools have done. Look at the Example Documents contained in this booklet. These instruments may be appropriate. Try to collect other sample instruments that might fit the needs of your institution. Also, try to find out what attitudes are held by your current staff regarding follow-up surveys. You may have to do some extra work to dispel misconceptions that have arisen from unsuccessful follow-up surveys conducted in the past. A better understanding of your staff's attitudes will help you avoid the same pitfalls and will insure that your follow-up survey will be successful.

Staff Meeting

The following guidelines for conducting an orientation meeting are flexible. It is good to involve faculty and administrators in the orientation meeting. This will avoid any misunderstandings and should keep you on the right track from the beginning. Make this as complete and mutual an effort as possible.

1. Discuss briefly the recent history of student and employer follow-up surveys in the LEA. Spotlight successes. Introduce your rationale for choosing this evaluation activity by listing several needs it will help to meet.
2. Provide for discussion, clarification, and opinion sharing.
3. Discuss and determine the desired outcome of your survey. What is it you want to find out?

4. Work toward agreement on the scope of the survey, if this has not already been determined. You may wish to follow-up only the graduates of one particular program or one category of employers. Your follow-up may be school-wide or district-wide. Do you want to follow-up students who graduated during the last year, the last three years, or the last five years?
5. Formulate, as a group, several key questions that will reflect your reasons, purposes, and scope for the student and/or employer follow-up survey (e.g., where do graduates of our Electronics Technician Program end up? "Who hires them?").

Have your group list general, school-wide objectives along with objectives for their courses or programs. It will save you time and effort to list these objectives in plain view of all participants (utilize an overhead projector, if possible). Then, encourage the group to submit key questions that relate to these objectives.

6. Discuss and choose a method for conducting the survey (e.g., personal interview, telephone interview, or mail questionnaire). Remind the group of the advantages and disadvantages of each method.
7. Present and briefly discuss the four major tasks that remain.
 - a) Develop and test the instrument
 - b) Prepare for and administer the instrument
 - c) Summarize and present the results
 - d) Obtain recommendations and suggestions based upon the results.
8. Solicit volunteers or assign staff to each of these activities. You will most likely assume the supervision of these groups. However, it may be necessary to have a leader for each group. This step will depend on your particular situation. It may be that one group does everything. The most important thing is to insure that when a number of groups is utilized, there is complete communication among groups.

The activities included in this booklet are compatible with the student and employer follow-up surveys required by the Illinois State Board of Education/ Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education as part of the State's Evaluation System. Example Documents 2-16 and 2-17 and task breakdown C1 relates directly to the State Board's requirements without duplication of effort.

Procedure/Task Breakdown

Task A. Choose the Follow-up Team Members

- 1 One of the first things to do is to determine who should work on the survey. Experience has shown that the team approach is one of the most efficient approaches. It is important to involve individuals who will not only contribute to the conduct of the survey, but who will also carry through and utilize the results.
- 2 Decide on the size of the team. The scope of the evaluation and the number of volunteers will determine the size of the team.
- 3 Ask instructors, guidance counselors, administrators, employers, and advisory committee members to serve on the team. It's also best to include staff members who are knowledgeable about the courses, areas, or programs that are being evaluated.

Task B. Make a Schedule and Assign Tasks.

- 1 Prepare a tentative schedule for conducting the follow-up survey. For example:

Develop instrument	4 weeks
Pilot test instrument	2 weeks
Revise instrument	2 weeks
Duplicate instrument	1 week
Obtain names of respondents	1 week
Code instruments	1 week
If mail survey, mail instruments	1 week
If interview survey, orient interviewers to techniques	1 week
Record returns	as received
Follow-up nonrespondents	2 weeks
Summarize and present results	2 weeks
Prepare report	2 weeks
Finalize report	1 week

Task C. Develop and Test the Instrument.

- 1 Develop a number of criterion questions from key questions that were formulated in step 5 of the Preliminary Considerations. Answers to these criterion questions should help you to answer the key question(s). First, review the development of criterion questions by using Example Document 2-1. Then, submit one of your own to serve as an example to the group.
- 2 Formulate questions to be asked of former students and/or employers. Duplicate and distribute Example Documents 2-2, 2-3, 2-14 and 2-15. The questionnaire or interview items should help you to answer the criterion questions developed. You may wish to refer to the attached example documents for guidance in constructing items. It may be advantageous to refer to *Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating Career Preparation Programs*, by Borgen and Davis, for additional aid in instrument development.

- 3 Assemble selected or developed items into an instrument. Items should be grouped according to type of rating scale and, when possible, according to the key question to which they relate. This will allow for easier tallying later on and may allow respondents to answer more quickly.
- 4 Develop directions for the instrument. Two types of directions are necessary. Overall directions should be presented at the beginning of the instrument. These should state the purpose of the survey and, if mailed, the desired return date for the instrument. Individual directions should be placed within the instrument at those points where item format changes. These should orient the respondent to answering procedures.
- 5 Evaluate the instrument. The instrument should be reviewed by staff and student representatives, and suggestions for improving it should be solicited. Also, the instrument should be reviewed by advisory committee members.
- 6 Revise the instrument, basing revisions on input gained from the staff, students, and advisory committee.
- 7 Duplicate the instrument. The instrument should be printed in quantity for use in interviewing or mailing. If mailed, the instrument should be clearly printed on colored paper. The use of colored paper has been shown to produce a greater percentage of response. Items should be readable without requiring the respondent to turn the questionnaire sideways. If printing is to be very small, avoid the use of serif types. Many other problems can be avoided if the evaluator simply imagines his own reaction to a messy, unreadable, and dull questionnaire.

Task C1. Conduct the Illinois State Board of Education Completer/Follow-up Study.

This task should be performed if your local education agency is required to complete the State Board completer/follow-up process at this time. Normally this study is conducted during the spring prior to your onsite visitation. If you are pursuing this LDE activity for program improvement purposes only, go directly to Task D.

- 1 Review *Schematic of Steps to Follow in Completing Task C1* page 8.
- 2 Determine the program completers to be contacted based upon enrollments recorded on the LEA Vocational Education Data System Report, Part IV.
- 3 Complete an Illinois State Board of Education Student Processing Unit Record (SPUR) form (Example Document 2-16) for each student identified. The LEA should start by completing the biographical data section of this form. Data to complete this section should be readily available on the former student's school records.
- 4 Survey the completers and administer a second or third follow-up as necessary to improve response rate (Example Document 2-12).
- 5 Record the information gathered through the follow-up for each former student responding to the survey. Responses should be recorded on the Student Survey Data section of the SPUR form.
- 6 Review each of the SPUR forms for accuracy and complete the Follow-up Transmittal Sheet.

Schematic of Steps to Follow in Completing

Task C1

<p>Step 1</p> <p>Determine completers to be contacted</p> <p>Complete the biographical data sections of the SPUR form</p> <p>Prepare the Student Follow-up Survey for distribution</p>	<p>Step 2</p> <p>Survey the completers identified in Step 1; follow-up as necessary</p> <p>Record completer data on the Student Survey Data Section of the SPUR form</p>	<p>Step 3</p> <p>Review each SPUR form for accuracy and complete the follow-up transmittal sheet</p> <p>Forward all SPUR forms by July 15 to: Evaluation Research Center, University of Illinois, 51 East Armory, Champaign, IL 61820</p>
<p>March</p>	<p>April-May 15</p>	<p>July 1</p>

7. Forward all SPUR forms and the transmittal sheet to Evaluation Research Center Follow-up Processing University of Illinois 51 East Armory Champaign, IL 61820
- Two separate forms have been designed to aid in managing the follow-up process. The names of individual students remain the confidential record of the LEA. Each of the forms has been designed to gather very specific information required by the federal government. The two basic forms used in the follow-up process are:
- (a) *The SPUR Form* (ISBE 15-87, Example Document 2-16) must be used to record all of the follow-up information on a former student. This information includes: a completer/follow-up number, biographical data, and responses to the survey. The LEA should forward one form for each student identified as a vocational program completer.
- (b) *The Student Follow-up Survey* (Example Document 2-17) is designed to be mailed to the completers who must be contacted. The responses received to this survey will be recorded on the SPUR form. LEAs will not forward the original surveys for processing.

- If the mail method is used...
- 2 Address envelopes
 - 3 Code instruments with a number corresponding to a list of students. This number will be used to determine who has responded to the survey.
 4. Develop a cover letter that explains the purpose of the survey. In some instances, it has been found helpful to mail the instrument under the signature of a counselor or teacher who was known to have rapport with the former student. For an example of letters used by other schools for their own follow-up surveys, see Example Documents 2-5 to 2-10.
- If an interview method is used...
- 5 Develop a standard introduction to be given by the interviewer. This introduction should indicate the survey purpose and should establish rapport between the interviewer and the respondent.
 6. Orient interview personnel to the use of the survey instrument and the introduction. The interview method poses special problems. It may prove necessary for you as local leader to orient staff members to proper and effective procedures for interviewing. If inexperienced personnel are used as interviewers, instruction in questioning, probing, and response recording should be provided. An example of principles of interviewing is provided in the example documents section (Example Document 2-11) and may help you orient these individuals to the task of interviewing.
 7. Mail instruments or begin interviewing.
 8. Record returned questionnaires as they arrive. Since, in most cases, it is wise to assure the students'/employers' anonymity in filling out a follow-up questionnaire, instruments should be coded and returned questionnaires should be registered in code.
 9. Follow-up nonrespondents. Two weeks after the requested return date, a second attempt should be made to obtain a response. This can be accomplished by mailing a reminder card or letter along with another instrument or by telephoning those who have not com-

Task D. Administer the Instrument.

1. Obtain the names of former students who will be surveyed. Records concerning the whereabouts of students are often kept by the counseling and placement offices. It is suggested that a pre-graduation form be filled out by each student to provide some basic information as well as information that may aid in locating the individual following graduation. (See Example Document 2-4.) If this has not been done, counseling and placement records may still prove useful, although a telephone call to the former student's parents may be necessary to determine his/her current address.

plied and urging them to complete and return the instrument. Example Document 2-6 is an example of an effective follow-up letter.

Task E. Summarize and Present Results.

1 Once a satisfactory portion of the instruments has been received, summarize the results. You may choose either to tally the responses manually or to utilize the computer for summarization. If a very small survey (less than one hundred students) is being conducted, then a hand tally of the results is likely to be the most efficient means of summarization. In this case, the group must decide who is to do the hand tallying. Often, this can be done by a single clerical worker or in some cases, business education students have helped in this task.

Summarization may be done by computer if a large survey is being conducted (e.g., the entire occupational student body for one year). Of course, the availability of computer or other data processing facilities may influence this decision, and an informal cost-benefit type of analysis should be made.

2 Present the summarized results in a report. This report should be prepared in an easily understood format. The report should begin with a statement of how the data was collected and for what purposes. Then response summaries can be presented in the form of tallies, percentages, histograms, or averages. (See example following this task.) The group should be urged to keep the audience of this report in mind. Will it be the instructional staff, the advisory committee, employers, the administration, parents, students, or all of these? The report should also indicate what these results mean to the evaluation team. This will help later when and if changes are implemented as a result of the evaluation conclusions.

PRESENTING THE RESULTS

- tallies

Initiative	low	average	high
	HHH	HHH	HHH
	III	HHH	HHH
		I	HHH
			HHH
			HHH
			II

PRESENTING THE RESULTS

- tallies
- percentages
- histograms

Initiative	low	average	high
male			
female			

PRESENTING THE RESULTS

- tallies
- percentages

Initiative	low	average	high
	20%	40%	40%

PRESENTING THE RESULTS

- tallies
- percentages
- histograms
- averages

Initiative	1 low	2 average	3 high

$$\bar{X} = 2.3$$

Task F. Obtain Recommendations and Suggestions.

1. Present the report to the program staff both verbally and in print. The staff should have the opportunity to review and discuss the findings. Then, a structured attempt should be made to elicit recommendations for overcoming some of the identified weaknesses. You might provide staff members with an evaluation report sheet (Example Document 2-13) upon which to record their conclusions, recommendations and suggested solutions. Additions or corrections should be incorporated into the final report.
2. Present the report to the advisory committee. Recommendations should be solicited from advisory committee members following their review and discussion of the results.

The probable schedule of events for this evaluation activity is:

1. Local leader prepares for an orientation meeting with all teachers, selected administrators, etc.
2. Orientation meeting of teachers.
3. Follow-up committee defines scope and goals of the evaluation activity in groups or as individuals
4. Selected staff develops instruments (or selects pre-existing instruments).
5. Selected staff pilot tests instruments.
6. Instrument is revised based upon pilot tests
7. Instruments are administered.
8. Data is compiled by one of several means.
9. Follow-up committee drafts a report containing conclusions, recommendations, and suggested solutions.
10. Follow-up committee revises and agrees upon content of the report.
11. Report is submitted to staff (general).
12. Report is submitted to advisory committee.
13. Final report is discussed (along with advisory committee and staff conclusions, recommendations, and suggested solutions).
14. Teachers and administrators follow through to implement suggested solutions.

Example Documents

No.		Page Number
2-1.	Criterion Question Development	12
2-2.	Three-Year Follow-up Survey	13-14
2-3.	Student Survey	15-16
2-4.	Pre-Graduation Follow-up Questionnaire	17-18
2-5.	Student Letter—First Mailing	19
2-6.	Student Letter—Second Mailing	20
2-7.	Student "Thank You" Letter	21
2-8.	Employer Letter—First Mailing	22
2-9.	Employer Letter—Second Mailing	23
2-10.	Employer "Thank You" Letter	24
2-11.	Principles of Interviewing	25
2-12.	Increasing the Survey Response	26
2-13.	Evaluation Report Sheet	27
2-14.	Employer Evaluation of Program Graduate	28-29
2-15.	Evaluation of Employee's High School Preparation for Employment (General)	30-31
2-16.	Student Processing Unit Record (ISBE)	32
2-17.	Student Follow-up Survey (ISBE)	Inside Back Cover

Example Document 2-1

Criterion Question Development

Specific Criterion questions can come from key questions.

A *key question* may be:

To what extent have our former students developed occupational competencies?

Examples of Criterion questions resulting from this key question include:

- Do program completers obtain, hold and advance in jobs related to their preparation?
- Do program completers feel that their preparation has been relevant to their employment needs?
- Do program completers feel satisfied with their jobs?

Instrument items then emanate from the criterion questions.

THREE-YEAR FOLLOW-UP SURVEY*

Name _____

Date _____

Address _____

Phone _____

1.

- in school full time (If checked go to question 3)
- in school part time (If checked go to question 3)
- in military service (If checked go to question 4)
- housewife (If checked answer question 5 only)
- unemployed (If checked answer question 5 only)
- employed part time (If checked go to question 2)
- employed full time (If checked go to question 2)

2. For those employed:

A. Employed by _____
 (name of company) street city state zip

B. Date employed by present company _____

C. Present job description _____

D. Name of immediate supervisor _____

E. In general, how much help was your high school occupational training in the following areas:

	none	little	some	much
a. Knowing how to use tools & equipment.	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Knowing what one does in this kind of job.	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Using time and energy productively.	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Finding needed job related information.	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. Being able to talk to the boss about job problems.	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. Getting along with the customer, being patient, and so on.	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. Getting along with other workers.	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. Understanding union membership.	_____	_____	_____	_____
i. Handling new or unpleasant situations.	_____	_____	_____	_____
j. Applying for a job.	_____	_____	_____	_____
k. Interviewing for a job.	_____	_____	_____	_____

*Adopted from follow-up survey developed by Hoopston-East Lynn Senior High School, District 11, Hoopston, Illinois.

3. For those continuing their education:

A. Name of school _____

Address _____ Date entered _____

B. Area of study _____

C. Name of teacher in major area _____

D. Please rank the following instructional activities in terms of how you learned the best in high school : 1(most effective)--7(least effective)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrations | <input type="checkbox"/> Homework |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work Book Assignments | <input type="checkbox"/> Term papers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Project activities | |

4. For those in the service:

A. Which branch are you in _____

Enlisted when _____

B. Present job title _____

C. Name of immediate supervisor _____

5. For everyone:

A. How would you rate the value of the help which you received from the counselors in choosing a career?

- High - They helped me as much as I needed
 Average - They helped me some
 Low - They didn't help me at all

B. Was adequate academic education available? Yes ___ No ___

If no, what should be added: _____

C. Was adequate vocational training available? Yes ___ No ___

If no, what should be added: _____

D. Hoopston-East Lynn High School has my permission to obtain data regarding my performance on the job or in the classroom from my immediate supervisor or academic instructor.

Signature of graduate

STUDENT SURVEY*

Where are you employed at the present time? _____

Type of work _____

Name of Supervisor _____ Company Address _____

If you do not have a job, please check the reason why--

- I'm married and do not want a job.
- My spouse does not want me to take a job.
- I'm in the military service.
- I'm in school.
- I have not been able to get a job.
- I do not have enough training.
- I dislike the work for which I was trained.
- I can't earn enough money to make it worth working.
- Other (Specify) _____

Who helped you get your present job? Parent or Guardian Coordinator
 Teacher Friend Employment Bureau or Placement Bureau Other

Specify _____

If you are not working in the field for which you were trained in high school, check the blank which best identifies the reason why.

- The training was not a good choice, I didn't know enough about my interests and abilities.
- I didn't know enough about the kinds of occupation in which I might get a job.
- I didn't know what the job was really like.
- Few jobs available in this field.
- I needed more training and couldn't get it.
- I couldn't earn enough money.
- Other (Specify) _____

How do you feel about this job?

- It's awful.
- Not what I'd hoped to have.
- It's OK.
- I like it.
- I like it very much.

What was the hardest thing you had to learn in your job? _____

*Adopted from follow-up survey developed by Decatur High School, District 61, Decatur, Illinois.

Are there any courses you wish you had taken in high school? _____ If so, please list _____

Are there any courses you wish you had not taken in high school? _____ If so, please list _____

Find the subjects you took in high school and indicate what content and instructional methods were most valuable.

	Very Helpful	Helpful	No Value	Does not apply
Theory				
Brief Forms				
High frequency word drills				
Reading from homework				
Dictation practice				
Dictation speed tests				
Spelling, punctuation				
Transcribing drills at the typewriter				
Mailable letters				

SHORTHAND

	Very Helpful	Helpful	No Value	Does not apply
Teacher dictation				
Tapes/records				
Chalkboard drill				
Overhead Projector drill				
Reading from Homework				
Writing homework				
Workbook				
Other _____				

TYPING

	Very Helpful	Helpful	No Value	Does not apply
Numbers/symbols drill				
Personal/business letters				
Tables (Columns)				
Timed writings				
Filing in forms				
Manuscripts				
Rough draft				
English skills				
Care of typewriter				
Composing at typewriter				
Speed and accuracy drills				

	Very Helpful	Helpful	No Value	Does not apply
Teacher demonstrations				
Pacing--setting goals for 1/2 & 1 minute				
Progressive speed drills				
Daily conditioning practices				
Typing from dictation				
Setting up problems not in text				
Students' speed records posted				
Independent work				

Note: Only two subjects are listed here; however, many other subjects may be added.

Example Document 2-4

PRE-GRADUATION FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE*

As a graduating senior you can help evaluate the job Hoopeton-East Lynn High School has done in preparing you for the world of work or continuing education.

This is a questionnaire which is very important. In future years, we will want to maintain a contact with you through follow-up studies, so please be accurate in writing the information requested.

Try to give your honest opinion on all the questions. You will not be reprimanded for sincere criticism. This is a chance for you to help improve your high school.

1. Name _____
2. Parents' Names _____ Phone _____
3. Parents' Address _____
4. Name of relative that can be contacted in Hoopeton, if you move:
Name _____
Address _____ Phone _____
5. List Vocational Courses that you have taken during high school:
A. _____ E. _____
B. _____ F. _____
C. _____ G. _____
D. _____ H. _____
6. Were you in the D.O. Program Yes ___ No ___
If Yes, where did you work, and nature of work?
7. Do you plan to continue your formal education this summer or next fall?
___ Yes _____ Full-time
___ No _____ Part-time
If answered yes, Name of School _____
Type of School _____
Area of Specialization _____

*Adopted from follow-up questionnaire developed by Hoopeton-East Lynn Senior High School, District 11, Hoopeton, Illinois.

8. Have you accepted employment for this summer or next fall?

Yes Full-time

No Part-time

If answered yes, Name of firm _____

Address of firm _____

Title of position _____

If answered no, do you plan to seek employment for this summer or next fall?

Yes Full-time

No Part-time

If answered yes, type of position desired _____

9. Which high school courses or experiences have been most valuable to you?

10. What suggestion do you have for improving our school?

Example Document 2-5

* Student Letter - First Mailing

(SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Dear Former Student:

Greetings from (school name)! We are having another successful year. (A comment about the football/basketball team might be appropriate.) I am also pleased to report that we are in the process of expanding/revising our vocational education programs.

We want to maintain a contact with our former students. We can do this best through periodic follow-up surveys. As a former student of (school name) you are in the best position to provide information which will contribute to planning and evaluating vocational education programs.

Enclosed you will find a follow-up questionnaire to be completed and returned in the self-addressed envelope. All information you provide will be considered confidential. May I request that you complete and return the questionnaire by (date). With your help we will be able to continue to improve the school program and services.

Within a few weeks we will be sending your employer a questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to evaluate the vocational training and keep our programs relevant to the needs of students. We will contact the person you indicate in Section C of the follow-up questionnaire.

Your participation in this important activity is appreciated. Please let us know if the school can assist you in any way.

Sincerely,

(person responsible for follow-up)

enclosure

**NOTE: A friendly, handwritten "P.S." on the bottom of the letter helps increase response. A teacher's signature with whom the student can identify is also very effective.

Example Document 2-6

Student Letter - Second Mailing

(SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Dear Former Student:

Did we miss you? About two weeks ago we mailed a follow-up questionnaire to members of (*school name*) who were enrolled in a vocational education program last year. Perhaps you did not receive the questionnaire, have not had time to fill it out or it is already in the mail.

To insure your participation in this important activity, I am enclosing another copy of the questionnaire. Please try to complete it today and return it in the enclosed envelope.

Within a few weeks we will be sending your employer a questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to evaluate the vocational training and keep our programs relevant to the needs of students. We will contact the person you indicate in Section C of the follow-up questionnaire.

Your support of (*school name*) is appreciated.

Sincerely,

(person responsible for follow-up)

enclosure

Example Document 2-7

Student "Thank you" Letter

(SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Dear Former Student:

Thank you for returning the follow-up questionnaire which we recently sent to you. You have aided us in our attempt to evaluate and improve the vocational education program.

Within a few weeks we will be sending your employer a follow-up questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to evaluate the vocational training you received at (school name). We need this information to keep our programs relevant to the needs of students. We will contact the person you indicated as your supervisor.

If you have any questions about this follow-up, please call me.

Sincerely,

(person responsible for follow-up)

** NOTE: *Use only paragraph one above for completers/leavers employed in unrelated occupations.*

Employer Letter - First Mailing

(SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Dear Employer:

As an employer of one of (school name) graduates, you can help us determine how well our vocational education training programs are preparing students for employment. We are trying to train graduates to meet your needs.

(Student's name) has indicated that he/she is employed by your firm in an occupation directly related to the vocational training received at (school name). Please refer the accompanying questionnaire to the immediate supervisor of this former student.

Supervisor's responses can help us to identify strengths and limitations of our vocational training programs. These responses will be held in confidence and will be reported only in a summary report. The employee is aware that we will be contacting you to help us with the follow-up study. You should also inform the employee that you are responding to the survey.

The completed questionnaire can be returned directly to me in the enclosed envelope. Your support for (school name) is appreciated.

Sincerely,

(person responsible for follow-up)

enclosures

Example Document 2-9

Employer Letter - Second Mailing

(SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Dear Employer:

Did we miss you? About two weeks ago we mailed a follow-up questionnaire to selected employers who hired our vocational education graduates. Perhaps you did not receive the questionnaire, have not had time to fill it out or have already put it in the mail.

To insure your participation in this important activity, I am enclosing a return envelope and an additional copy of the questionnaire for your use. Your evaluation of the vocational training received by *(student's name)* is important to us. Your response will be held in strict confidence. The employee is aware that we will be contacting you to help in conducting this follow-up study. You should also inform the employee that you will be responding to the survey.

Your support for vocational education at *(school name)* is appreciated.

Sincerely,

(person responsible for follow-up)

enclosures

Employer "Thank You" Letter

(SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Dear Employer:

Thank you for returning the follow-up questionnaire which we sent to you recently. You have aided us in our attempt to evaluate and improve our vocational education programs and services.

Your continued interest in support of (school name) is appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can assist you in any way.

Sincerely,

(person responsible for follow-up)

Example Document 2-11

Principles of Interviewing

Interviewing is a basic method—a machine—of the Three Phase Evaluation System. An interview then, is not just a conversation, it is, rather, a carefully thought out technique for finding out from respondents (the people we interview) how things are and how people feel and think. The interview itself is not intended to change or influence the respondent. The interviewer, therefore, must be an understanding person, capable of accepting what the respondent says without judging or rejecting him.

We know that in order to understand a person we must know what some of his needs are. A respondent in an interview situation has needs which the interviewer must understand and try to meet:

- the respondent needs to see the interviewer as someone who is not a threat to his immediate or future well-being, nor to his self-esteem,
- he needs to see the Evaluation itself as not posing a threat;
- he needs to understand, even in a limited way, the purpose of the evaluation, the reason he was selected and why his cooperation is required,
- he needs to see the interview situation as a pleasant way of spending some time;
- he needs to feel, after the interview is completed, that he has had a real opportunity to express himself freely on the subject.

To meet these needs of the respondent, the interviewer must be very conscious of what he is doing and how he is doing it. Certain techniques should be followed to help insure a good interviewing relationship, as well as to obtain an accurate, unbiased interview. Let us now turn to a discussion of some of those techniques and procedures.

Establishing and Maintaining Good Interviewing Relations

A good interviewing relationship requires that the respondent feel relaxed and at ease with the interviewer—to the point where he feels free to say what he *really* thinks or feels about a given subject, without fear of criticism or disapproval. To maintain an atmosphere of this kind, the interviewer must have a sympathetic interest in people and the ability to recognize and understand their feelings. He must respond in both an encouraging, reassuring or supportive way. But support should not influence or bias the content of what they say. Assuming you have the basic conviction and sincerity necessary to good interviewing, you will rapidly become sensitive to the moments in an interview where encouragement or reassurance is needed, but some standard professional procedure will help you both to minimize the need and to deal with it when it arises.

Generally, keep the following points in mind while conducting an interview:

- a. Be *friendly and informal* but, at the same time, *professional* in your manner. Remember that you are a stranger, and everything you say or do should help to gain the respondent's confidence in you as well as in himself.
- b. Be a *sympathetic, interested and attentive* listener. Encouraging nods, "uh-huh's," "I know how you feel," and similar gestures will convey to the respondent that he is understood and that his opinions are valued and appreciated. But don't overdo it! There is nothing quite so distracting to the average person as the listener who keeps up a running-stream of "uh-huh," "is that so," when it's not needed. A nod of the head is usually a much more articulate way of showing your interest than a constant clucking in the background, which many respondents will feel is a camouflage for a lack of genuine interest in them and their problems.
- c. Be *neutral* with respect to the subject matter. Do not express your own opinions either on the subjects being discussed by the respondent or on the respondent's ideas about those subjects. You must never betray feelings of shock, surprise, indignation or disapproval at what the respondent is saying either by word or involuntary gesture. Your job is to understand and accept what he is saying, not to approve or disapprove of it, nor to agree or disagree with it.
- d. Be *observant*. Be alert to the way in which the respondent expresses himself and to the gestures he uses. These signs may serve as cues that the respondent is becoming uncomfortable and ill-at-ease or that he is not expressing what he really feels.
- e. Last but not least, be *at ease yourself*, in the interview situation. If you feel hesitant, embarrassed, hurried, or awkward, the respondent will soon sense this feeling and behave accordingly.

Beyond these standard points applicable to all interviews, there are some respondents or situations that require encouragement or reassurance either in getting the interview started or during its course. The cardinal principle in all of these cases is to put the respondent at his ease and to get him interested in the interview, so frequently you will know what to do simply by putting yourself in the respondent's position, and asking yourself how you would be feeling under those circumstances.

Example Document 2-12

Increasing the Survey Response

1. Use short and uncomplicated instruments, asking only necessary and relevant questions.
2. Enclose a postage stamped rather than a metered reply envelope.
3. Avoid personal information as much as possible.
4. On the follow-up instrument, place difficult questions last.
5. Offer to mail out an address list and a few words about classmates to all who respond.
6. Send a newspaper clipping about the study along with the questionnaire.
7. Use color or unusual types of cover letters to attract attention. Research data shows a better response rate using "green" letters/instruments.
8. Use a personalized cover letter signed by a former teacher or counselor.
9. Follow-up instruments should be mailed so that the former student or employer receives it during the early part of the week.
10. Letterheads and return addresses with which the former student can easily identify should be used.
11. If possible, send a card or letter to the former student or employer prior to mailing the follow-up instrument.
12. After a second follow-up mailing, try to reach the former student or employer by telephone for a personalized appeal.
13. Utilize the assistance and talent of the local advisory council/committee in conducting and analyzing the follow-up study as well as initially in contacting employers.
14. Balance the load of staff responsible for conducting the follow-up study. To the extent possible, involve vocational faculty in follow-up efforts.
15. For former students no longer living in the community, send Student Follow-up Surveys to parents or grandparents and ask them to forward the questionnaire.

Example Document 2-13

Evaluation Report Sheet

Conclusions	Recommendations	Suggested Solutions

Example Document 2-15

EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEE'S HIGH SCHOOL
PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT (GENERAL)*

To the Employer or Supervisor of:

Employee's Name _____

1. In what capacity are you related to the employee named above? (Check the box)

1 Employer 2 Supervisor 3 Other _____ (Write in)

2. What is the title of the job for which this employee is hired?

_____ (Job Title)

3. In the following aspects of employment, how well prepared was the employee named above for the job for which hired? (Circle the number below the answer.)

	Not at all	Poorly	Somewhat	Well	Does not Apply
1. Job know-how, application of technical knowledge and skill	1	2	3	4	5
2. Use of tools and equipment	1	2	3	4	5
3. Selection and care of space, materials, and supplies	1	2	3	4	5
4. Quality of work, ability to meet quality demands	1	2	3	4	5
5. Quantity of work output of satisfactory amount	1	2	3	4	5
6. Cooperativeness, ability to work with others	1	2	3	4	5
7. Accepting advice and supervision	1	2	3	4	5

4. How would you rate the suitability of the employee previously named for the kind of job held? (Check the box that applies.)

- 1 Exceptionally able
- 2 Well
- 3 Acceptable
- 4 Poorly
- 5 Not at all

5. Below is a list of personal qualities and job skills. Check the box before the three you consider most important for a person entering the job held by the previously named employee.

- 1 Ability to get along with others--other workers, customers, patients
- 2 Initiative
- 3 Positive attitude toward work
- 4 Appearance and grooming
- 5 Judgment--ability to make decisions, ability to plan and organize
- 6 Competency in using job tools, machines, and materials
- 7 Dependability
- 8 Accuracy, quality, and thoroughness
- 9 Attendance and punctuality
- 10 Work quantity
- 11 Other _____

	Not at all	Poorly	Somewhat	Well	Does not Apply
8. Dependability, thorough completion of a job without supervision	1	2	3	4	5
9. Initiative, doing jobs that need doing	1	2	3	4	5
10. Attendance, reporting for work regularly	1	2	3	4	5
11. Appearance, presenting a business image	1	2	3	4	5
12. Adaptable to new situations	1	2	3	4	5
13. Being able to talk to the boss about job related problems	1	2	3	4	5
14. Serving the public, patient, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Safety habits, minimizing chance for accidents	1	2	3	4	5

Use the back of this sheet for other suggestions concerning high school occupational training.

* Adopted from Career Education Follow-up Study, Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Illinois 61920.



**STUDENT PROCESSING
UNIT RECORD (SPUR)**

(See Appendix E)

I. LEA I.D. Number (1-6)

II. Survey Number (7-10)

III. Student's 6-Digit OE Program Code (See Appendix B) (11-16)

IV. Student's Sex (17)
1 - Female 2 - Male

V. Student's Racial/Ethnic Designation (18)
1 - White, not of Hispanic Origin 2 - Black, not of Hispanic Origin 3 - Hispanic
4 - American Indian/Alaskan Native 5 - Asian American/Pacific Islander

VI. Student's Program Level (19)
1 - 11th and 12th Grade 2 - Post-Secondary 3 - Adult

VII. Student's Status (20)
1 - Completer 2 - Deceased

VIII. Student Special Needs Classification (21)
1 - Not Special Needs Student 2 - Handicapped Only 3 - Handicapped and Disadvantaged
4 - Limited English Proficiency Only 5 - Disadvantaged Only 6 - Handicapped and LEP

IX. Student on Cooperative Job Assignment During 80-81 School Year? (22)
1 - Yes 2 - No

STUDENT SURVEY DATA

X. Student's Reply to Follow-up Survey (23)
1 - Follow-up Not Required 2 - Reply Received 3 - No Reply Received

XI. Student's Response to Questions on Survey (24)
Question A (School Status) (See page 12)

Question B (Work Status) (See page 13) (25)

Question C (Title) _____
(Work Description) _____

Question D (Work Related to Training) (See page 13) (26)

Question E (Hours Worked Per Week) (27-28)

Question F (Hourly Wage) (29-32)

Example Document 2-17

STUDENT FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

Survey Number _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer the following questions and return this form in the enclosed pre-addressed stamped envelope.

A. School Status (check only one box)

1. I am not in school.

2. I am in school taking classes to become a _____.

B. Work Status (check only one box)

1. I have a job and I am not in the full-time military

2. I am in the full-time military

3. I am unemployed and looking for a job.

4. I am unemployed and not looking for a job.

NOTE: If you have a job, please answer the following questions. If you are unemployed or in the full-time military, stop here and return this follow-up form in the enclosed envelope.

C. Please provide the following information.

JOB TITLE OR NAME OF JOB
DESCRIBE THE WORK THAT YOU DO
NAME OF COMPANY OR ORGANIZATION WHERE YOU WORK

D. Is the work that you do related to the vocational classes you had in school?

1. Yes, I am using my vocational training.

2. No, I am not using my vocational training.

How many hours do you work each week? (Do not include overtime) _____ hours per week

F. How much do you make per hour? (Include commission, but do not include overtime pay) ... \$ _____ per hour

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US. PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE.



**Illinois
State Board of
Education**

100 North First Street
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