

10 ways to cultivate and involve your advisory committee

1. **Relationship, relationship, relationship** – To partner implies a relationship. Advisory members are key partners of all CTE programs. Make sure you introduce yourself to each member of your advisory committee, and personally say hello at each meeting. Remember that face to face contact builds relationships, not paper or e-mail.
2. **Introduction** – A new advisory member may not have been in school for 10-15 years or more. Introduce yourself to a new member, give them an overview of your program, describe how your committee works and make sure they know how to contact you if they have questions. Ask yourself, when you have a party, how do you welcome your guests?
3. **Be ready** – Show up on time for meetings, respect the discussion at hand and come prepared.
4. **Involve** – Don't be afraid to ask your advisory committee to help you. Some ideas of ways to ask for help are: to speak about careers, to evaluate student work, to participate in a career fair, to practice interviewing with students, etc.
5. **Advanced notice** – Give your advisory committee members at least two weeks notice of your needs or of your invitation for them to participate.
6. **Be specific** – Volunteers want to help, but they need to be asked for specific things. When you ask for help, be detailed about what you need. i.e. I need four community members to do mock interviews with students in two of my classes. Interview will be in three weeks, from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Park in the visitor area and check in at the office when you arrive. Include your contact information in case of an emergency.
7. **A resource** - Your advisory committee is your resource, call them and ask questions, invite them to your classroom, ask them who else they know that may be able to help you.
8. **Jargon alert** – Remember in your meetings that the jargon you use every day is not the same jargon that is used in the workplace of your advisory members. Anytime you use an acronym or educational phrase that could be misunderstood take a moment to explain what you meant. i.e., “frameworks” – in CTE, a framework is a guide for each program to ensure that students will meet the standards according to Washington state law.
9. **Advisory input** – We have invited the community to serve as advisory members, so we must remember to ask their advice. During your meeting make sure that each member has had an opportunity to provide input.
10. **Praise** – Say thank you to your advisory committee members sincerely and often.