

# CLIENT CONNECTED PROJECTS

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I've had a chance to witness students participate in work experiences that are shaping their high school experience. I personally know how much these matter in helping students to think about the variety of career possibilities that are available to them.”

Crystal Everett  
Kansas City Public Schools

Client-connected projects are authentic problems which students solve in collaboration with professionals from industry, not-for-profit, or community-based organizations.

They provide students with access to industry professionals, real world problems, and essential skills. They are also one of the key work experiences that may be recognized as a Market Value Asset\*.

## Examples of client-connected projects are:

- Cyber Security class built a website for Buckner Chamber of Commerce
- Summer students created a youth-centered product for CommunityAmerica Credit Union
- Class provided focus group data for an energy drink for VML
- Health students took vitals and conducted intake survey for a heart clinic at St. Lukes
- See the [RWL CCP Menu & Project Examples](#) PDF for more!



## Client-Connected Projects provide value for:

CLIENT/EMPLOYER	STUDENTS	EDUCATORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access to emerging talent</li><li>• Increased awareness of client organization</li><li>• Leadership development for the client liaison</li><li>• Increased bandwidth for important but non-urgent project completion</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Authentic project work</li><li>• Increase in professional network</li><li>• School credit in real-world setting</li><li>• Potential stepping stone for future internship</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Authentic project prompts/problems</li><li>• Exposure to industry trends and expectations</li><li>• Students are more engaged in topic with real-world context.</li></ul>

\*a Market Value Asset is an industry valued and recognized skill that creates a seamless transition post-high school.



## Who is Involved?

In Real World Learning, **the student is at the center**, but their success depends on supportive adults that guide, support, facilitate, and mentor them along their path. When creating Client-Connected Projects, consider these roles.

CLIENT-CONNECTED PROJECT ROLES			
<b>Client Liason</b> 	<b>School District Real World Learning Lead</b> 	<b>Lead Teacher/Educator</b> 	<b>Subject Matter Expert(s)</b> 
A representative from the client organization	A representative from the school district that helps facilitate RWL experiences	A teacher supervising student groups	An industry-based professional interested in helping students along the way

## How to Get Started

It's recommended to create a project plan on the front-end of the experience (See project template [here](#)).

**Project Prompt |** Identify a project or problem from your to-do list that a high school student (or team of students) could help tackle or solve.

**Project Description |** Develop a plan that includes deliverables and a timeframe for completion.

**Client Liaison |** Determine who would connect with the educator and students to lay out the project, give feedback on progress, and evaluate final output. **Hint:** Think about individuals who are earlier in their career and interested in helping others learn and grow. Total time commitment expected – at least four hours (students will receive consistent, regular support from other adults behind the scenes).

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What's a problem you need to solve? And more importantly, what do you want to learn? Because something that a student says will change the way you think about your business, and that's what I've seen every single time.”

Anita Newton  
CommunityAmerica Credit Union

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The energy just shifts a little bit. You get a student that's excited about learning and you get a welder that's been welding for 10 years. And the welder sees how enthused and excited they are. And he's like, 'Oh, I get to teach this.' And then all of a sudden they're reinvigorated. There's just tons of unexpected benefits.”

Dennis Kleyh  
WEBCO Manufacturing



## Considerations for Planning

To plan the work of the project, the Facilitator/Coach and the Client Liaison should work hand-in-hand while considering the following:

### Evaluate Work

- What work is available?
- Is work appropriate for student involvement?
- Which work optimizes student and organizational needs?
- Who would be most appropriate to serve as the primary client contact?

### Set Goals

- What would make this experience a success for the employer?
- Which essential skills can be developed?
  - Communication
  - Collaboration
  - Critical Thinking
  - Interpersonal
  - Proactivity
  - Executive Function

### Set Expectations

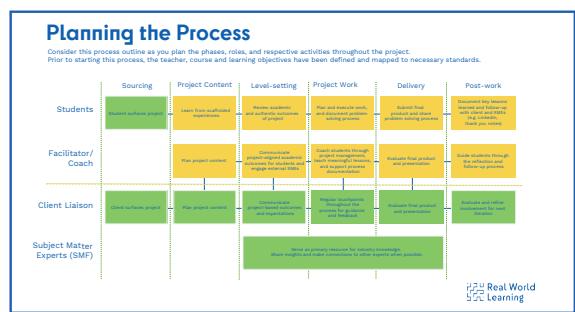
- Establish project parameters to help students understand the project and plan execution
  - Problem Statement
  - Student Goals
  - Engagement with SMEs
  - Feedback & Reflection Cycle
  - Documentation of Approach
  - Finished Product

### Create Timeline

- Establish key milestones for students
- Ideate back-up plans for any surprises

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## Get Involved | Contact Us

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