

Introduction

The site visit is the first experience the participants will have of the Challenge. It is also the point in time when they first receive the briefing about the Challenge. To bring the event to life and make the Challenge 'look and feel' more like a construction project than a coursework assessment, we suggest the briefing is delivered by one of the company's staff. After all, setting the tone of a project is often crucial to the way participants approach it.

Before the day, the group will receive a 'Participant Site Visit Worksheet', which they will need to complete during and after the site visit. This is designed to ensure they take away the key messages they will need to complete the Challenge.

There are two possible versions of the site visit: one to a sustainable housing development, and the other to a sustainable construction project.

A site visit to a housing development should highlight:

- The overall site plan and the mix of the dwellings (number of bedrooms, overall size, price range) being built on site.
- The way the development is laid out (and the thought process behind this layout).
- How Critical Path Analysis/Gantt Charts are used, without getting into the technicalities of particular techniques. As part of the Challenge, we will provide a simplified version of Critical Path Analysis for the participants to use; it would be really helpful if you show them a real example or commercial application that your company has been involved in. Alternatively, a generic version is available.
- How sustainable technologies are used on site and incorporated into the homes – this should include:
 - How incorporating these techniques changes the order of construction activities
 - The way in which sustainably produced materials are sourced
 - The different construction techniques involved in each project
 - How insulating/heat retaining/water efficient materials and devices are used within each home.

A site visit to a sustainable non-housing development should highlight:

- How Critical Path Analysis/Gantt Charts are used, without getting into the technicalities of particular techniques. As part of the Challenge, we will provide a simplified version of Critical Path Analysis for the participants to use – it would be really helpful if you show them a real example or commercial application that your company has been involved in. Alternatively, a generic version is available.
- The way the development is laid out (and the thought process behind this layout).
- How sustainable technologies are used on site and incorporated into the building(s) – this should include:
 - How incorporating these techniques changes the order of construction activities
 - The way in which sustainably produced materials are sourced
 - The different construction techniques involved in each project
 - How insulating/heat retaining/water efficient materials and devices are used within each structure.

At the end of the visit, it's a good idea to discuss the following:

- The practical issues of planning a housing development.
- How the site being visited is similar to typical housing developments, or how it differs.

As the participants who will be taking part in this project will be largely unfamiliar with the world of work and construction, there are some basic, key skills messages we also need to deliver throughout the visit. These include:

- Safety is a major priority for all construction activities.
- Knowing about materials and techniques requires research, which takes time and requires patience.
- Before any construction project begins, even the most knowledgeable professionals must spend many months researching the available options.
- Writing and reading are critical to all areas of construction and staying safe on site is impossible without these basic skills. We also recommend that you emphasise how different areas of construction require clear writing skills. For example, gaining permission to build requires mountains of paperwork, selling houses requires different writing skills, and contracting requires writing lengthy documents.

Before the site visit, we recommend that you:

- Talk to the activity leads to find out about the participants and what you can expect.
- If possible, agree the level of support you are willing to provide after the site visit, so you and the activity leads can plan your commitments.
- Provide a risk assessment.
- Plan the visit to make sure participants get the information they need and brief all the staff involved.
- Ensure everyone working on site is aware that the visit will be taking place, and knows what they need to do to keep the site and the visiting party safe.

During the site visit:

- Ensure all the safety protocols are clearly outlined to the participants and activity leads at the beginning of the visit.
- Ensure participants and activity leads understand what is required for the Challenge.
- Please bear in mind that the participants and activity leads may have no prior knowledge of the construction industry. So wherever possible, try and use plain, simple language. If you do use technical or business terms, please give your visitors a simple definition of what you mean.
- Deliver the presentation on site directly before, or after, the site tour*. It's entirely down to you when you deliver this presentation, but you may also wish to speak to the activity lead for their advice. Please see 'Employer PowerPoint Presentation' and 'Employer Guide to CREST PowerPoint Slides' for further details. Participants will also receive a printed version of the Challenge instructions when they begin their studies.
- Invite and answer questions.
- At the end of the visit, take a moment to introduce the activity outlined on the 'Participants Site Visit Worksheet', which explores the wide variety of careers available in the construction industry and the different skills each role requires.

*If for any reason this is not possible, please agree with the activity lead how you, or they, will achieve this. It's worth remembering that participants often get more from Challenges that take place outside of normal coursework.

Following the site visit:

- Provide the agreed support.
- Evaluate the visit with the activity leads, and explore other ways you can work together.
- Consider repeating the exercise with another group.