



Talking Points for interacting with GENERAL AUDIENCES

NOTE TO PRESENTER: These talking points can be used for PowerPoint presentations, speeches, reports, news releases, letters and other communications to help General Audiences (taxpayers, service clubs, parents, community groups, etc.) gain a better understanding of the value proposition for CTE—and how CTE is “Learning that works for America.”

The talking points in each section are meant to build on each other, so it is preferable that you use them in the order presented herein, rather than pick and choose randomly.

These talking points are about where CTE is—and where CTE is headed. At the same time, these points are designed to help overcome the preconceived notions attached to “vocational education”—and to build understanding, support and advocacy for CTE programs.

Thank you for your participation in talking with others about CTE!

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What is CTE (Career Technical Education)?

- **CTE is learning that works for America.**
- CTE (Career Technical Education) is helping our nation meet the very real and immediate challenges of economic development, student achievement and global competitiveness.
- Some 13 million students are enrolled in CTE programs—encompassing every state—in nearly 1,300 public high schools and nearly 1,700 two-year colleges. *National Center for Education Statistics* **NOTE: May be applicable to add information specific to your state here.**
- CTE programs in secondary and postsecondary institutions are developing America's most valuable resource—its people; helping them gain the skills, technical knowledge, academic foundation and real-world experience they need to prepare for high-skill, high-demand, high-wage careers—and keep America working—in every sense of the word.

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CTE: Learning that works for America. CTE is positioned to address key concerns facing our nation.

Americans are worried about:

- Jobs and the economy: Creating—and filling—the demand for high-skill, high-paying jobs in all sectors.
- The future: Barely one-third of adults believe that the next generation will be better off than the current one. *Pew Research Center*
- Developing a sustainable workforce with the technical skill, core academic knowledge, innovation and workplace behaviors needed to keep America's businesses successful.
- Student achievement in high school and college; dropout and college-going rates; and the costs of postsecondary education.
- The effectiveness of our schools: Providing a more engaging and empowering environment for students—and getting a greater return on our investment in education.
- America's leadership and competitiveness in a global economy.
- **CTE is a significant part of the solution—with a proven track record of success!**

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CTE works for American business and industry.

CTE is providing a sustained, skilled workforce.

- The baby boomers are leaving America's workforce—with 10,000 turning 65 every day for the next 19 years. *Pew Research Center*
- CTE is preparing a highly-skilled, sustainable workforce with the technical expertise, work ethic and employability skills that American business and industry need to remain globally competitive. **NOTE: This may be a place to add information on industry-specific segments in your state that are expected to grow and demand high-skill workers.**
- Internships, apprenticeships, teacher externships, work-based learning opportunities, and cooperative education programs are putting students and potential employers together—and driving innovation and world-class performance. **NOTE: This is a good place to add specific information about collaboration with business and industry in your state.**

CTE works for America's economy.

CTE is developing a productive workforce ready for the careers of tomorrow.

- CTE is generating higher personal income through lifelong education and preparation for high-skill, high-demand and high-paying positions. It all adds up to a better education, better paid workforce—and that means a more robust economy across the entire nation.
- CTE is generating higher personal income through lifelong education and preparation for high-skill, high-demand and high-paying positions.
- It all adds up to a better-educated, better paid workforce—and that means a more robust economy across the entire nation. **NOTE: You may want to consider including some information on your state or local economy here.**

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CTE works for student achievement.

CTE is learning that works for America's schools—and America's students.

- Students in CTE programs have a higher-than-average high school graduation rate. The average high school graduation rate for students concentrating in CTE programs is 90.18% compared to an average national freshman graduation rate of 74.9%. *U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education* **NOTE: State-specific information may be appropriate here. Be sure to cite the source of your data.**
- CTE students outperform their peers in reading and math—at both the secondary and postsecondary level. Secondary CTE students outperform their peers in reading and math performance levels—exceeding target levels in both areas, while the aggregate of all students failed to reach target levels. *Perkins Consolidated Annual Reports, 2009-2010.* **NOTE: State-specific information may be appropriate here. Be sure to cite the source of your data.**
- CTE students surpassed state target performance levels in secondary reading/language arts, secondary mathematics, and in both secondary and postsecondary technical skill attainment. *Perkins Consolidated Annual Reports, 2009-2010.* **NOTE: State-specific information may be appropriate here. Be sure to cite the source of your data.**
- High-risk students in CTE programs are 8 to 10 times less likely to drop out of high school in 11th or 12th grades. *Kulik, James, Curriculum Tracks and High School Vocational Studies (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1998)* **NOTE: State-specific information may be appropriate here. Be sure to cite the source of your data.**
- CTE courses help students understand the relevance and value of their core academic courses in math, science, English and social studies—and apply them to solve real-world problems.
- Making this connection leads to better academic performance and a more engaging and meaningful educational experience.
- Through Career Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs), students learn to collaborate, cooperate, communicate and compete—important skill sets to be successful in the workforce. **NOTE: State or local information on CTSO activity may be appropriate here. Student success stories are important—and effective!**

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CTE works for career and college readiness.

Students concentrating in secondary CTE programs are more likely to attend college and stay there to graduate.

- Students concentrating on CTE programs in high school are more likely to attend college and stay there to graduate. 79% of CTE concentrators enrolled in postsecondary education within two years of high school graduation. *U.S. Department of Education* **NOTE: State-specific information may be appropriate here. Be sure to cite the source of your data.**
- 70% of students concentrating in CTE stayed in postsecondary education or transferred to a 4-year degree program (compared to overall average state target of 58%)—and transitioned to postsecondary education or employment by December of the year of graduation from high school. *U.S. Department of Education* **NOTE: State-specific information may be appropriate here. Be sure to cite the source of your data.**
- As CTE students attain degrees and credentials, we are preparing a highly educated workforce ready for the high demand, high skill jobs that will keep America at the forefront of the global economy. **NOTE: This would be a good place to talk about the types of industries and careers that are expected to grow in your state or community.**
- Comprehensive career guidance and counseling, including the use of personalized learning plans, is an important component of CTE. CTE students are more informed and more focused when they enter postsecondary education. That can help save tuition money and accelerate entry into the workforce.
- Career Clusters™ is a national framework that helps secondary students identify career areas that match their interests and talents—and the educational pathways in high school and college needed to achieve their goals. **NOTE: Information on your state's implementation of Career Clusters™ might work here.**
- As a result, students better appreciate the value of a postsecondary education—and can plan their curriculum in high school and college most effectively and efficiently.

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CTE works for America's schools and colleges.

CTE improves college attendance and career success.

- Leadership and innovation in CTE is changing the way programs are delivered in America's schools and colleges.
- Using Career Clusters™ as the national framework, CTE programs are being transformed to drive American competitiveness and innovation.
- From dual-credit courses to career academies, CTE programs are finding new, exciting ways to enhance student experiences and further integrate secondary and postsecondary education to create a strong pipeline that leads to success. **NOTE: Information on your state's implementation of Career Clusters™ might work here.**
- CTE programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels are improving the rates of college attendance and increased attainment of degrees and credentials.
- Accelerated learning opportunities, such as dual credit, give high school students confidence that they can succeed at the college level—and many times save money on tuition.
- Theme-based high schools may concentrate on a specific career area, giving students a head start on their future college classmates.
- CTE helps secondary students understand if their career choice is a good match before they invest time and money in college. **NOTE: Examples of innovation and effective CTE in your state or school would work well here.**

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CTE works for America's communities.

CTE improves the return investment in education.

- CTE is developing our next generation of skilled workers, technology innovators, entrepreneurs and community leaders in America's rural, suburban and urban communities.
- Through CTE, students become more aware of the many career options available to them, including starting their own enterprises. ***NOTE: If you have examples of successful entrepreneurial CTE students, note them here!***
- CTE improves the return on our investment in education at the local, state and federal levels—developing a more highly-educated workforce with better skills, technical expertise and great ideas.
- CTE provides the “know how” and the “how to” for America's future—from coast to coast, from border to border.

For more information—including data sheets, white papers, and examples of high performance CTE programs—visit our website: www.careertech.org

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