

# Let's Get to Work Grant: Amazing Race to Employment

Teachers supporting students with transition goals aren't always sure where to start when it comes to working with employers. The 'Amazing Race to Employment' is one example of how Let's Get to Work schools overcame that challenge. The 'Amazing Race' can be a fun and effective way to connect with employers while building student confidence and communication skills. At the end of the 'Amazing Race,' school staff will have accumulated dozens of potential employment contacts!

**Purpose of the Activity:** To expose students with and without disabilities to local businesses where they might seek employment, while also exposing as many businesses as possible to students who want to work.

**Objective of the 'Game:'** You can make the Amazing Race to Employment a fun activity by creating a game-like atmosphere, where small groups of students are competing with one another to approach the most employers and gather the most business cards and job applications. Each employer, business card and job application counts as 1 point. The team with the most points at the end of the activity wins the game!

**Who is Involved:** Small groups of students with and without disabilities (3-4 students in each group make a team) and adult chaperones for each group.

**Materials:** Clipboards with a checklist of different businesses for each student group, writing utensils, school brochures about student employment (with contact information for the Transition Coordinator), nametags, iPads for pictures/video, envelopes for business cards and applications, transportation.

## Before the Event:

- ⊙ Seek parental permission for all of the students
- ⊙ Develop a set of 3-5 possible question cards for students to use with the employer:
  - *What are 3 skills a good employee should have?*
  - *What is something we wouldn't know about your business?*
  - *How does your business advertise job openings?*
  - *What kinds of positions do you typically hire for?*
  - *How does one apply for a job here?*
- ⊙ Contact local TV stations for coverage of the event. Example of news coverage:  
[www.news8000.com/news/holmen-high-school-students-race-to-find-jobs/22051822](http://www.news8000.com/news/holmen-high-school-students-race-to-find-jobs/22051822)  
[www.wxow.com/story/23489775/2013/09/20/special-needs-students-practice-job-hunting](http://www.wxow.com/story/23489775/2013/09/20/special-needs-students-practice-job-hunting)

## Sample Plan for the Day:

- 7:40am**
- Give students an overview and instructions for the day
  - Go into local businesses and ask for the manager
  - Give a strong handshake
  - Tell the manager about the activity
  - Have the manager answer a question about employment or their business.
  - Ask for a business card and/or application
  - Give the employer the school employment brochure.
  - Ask if it is okay for a teacher to contact them about employment opportunities for students (If agreed to, teacher takes down the contact information by the business name on the clip board)
  - Thank them for their time

- 7:50am** Practice the script with teammates and adult chaperones
- 8:10am** Practice the script and the questions with the Career and Business Communications Class (Students from class role play as business managers)
- 8:40am** Have an exciting “send-off” for the Amazing Race student teams (At Holmen High School, the Principal fired off the track starting gun and Career and Business Communication students created human tunnel for the Amazing Race teams to go through as they ran to the school vans to start the event!)
- 8:55am** Teams travel to all of the local businesses listed on their sheets
- Each team has a unique list of about 10-15 businesses from the local area (restaurants, retail, pet stores, etc.)
  - Points awarded to teams for getting business cards and applications
  - Students take turns speaking (for introductions, questions, etc.)
- 12:15pm** All groups meet for lunch (at a local park or somewhere off campus) to talk about the day, and tally points to see which team won the race. Discussion points about the day to use with students include:
- Which was your favorite/ideal place to work? Why?
  - What parts did you feel you did really well at?
  - What was your biggest challenge of the day?
  - Review some of the managers’ answers to the Amazing Race Questions.



**Example Script:**

“Hello. Can I please speak to a manager?”

*Manager Approaches - Handshake and Smile*

“Hi. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and we are a group of students with all kinds of abilities from Holmen High School. We are doing the Amazing Race to Employment to learn more about the businesses where we would like to work. We have one question for you to learn more about your business. Please pick a card, and answer the question on the back.”

**\*\*Ask Question\*\***

“Would it be okay for my teacher, \_\_\_\_\_, to contact you about jobs for \_\_\_\_\_ High School students?” “Do you have a business card or application we could have?”

“Thank you! Have a great day!” *Handshake and Smile*

