



Oregon Middle School Career Awareness and Exploration Modules

Bringing Career Connected Learning and CTE to Life



Equity Lens



The Equity Imperative

Career awareness and exploration is especially for students from underrepresented communities. When all students see a wide range of possibilities—not just the careers in their immediate community, but across our entire state—we help close opportunity gaps.

These modules were designed for equitable access and to ensure participation by all student populations and to increase all students' exposure to CTE in Oregon.

Why Career Awareness & Exploration in Middle School

These career awareness and exploration modules are intended to provide:

- Authentic engagement: Students are more motivated when learning feels relevant.
- Academic motivation: They see the “why” behind their work.
- Informed-decision-making: Students make better choices about high school courses and beyond.

Oregon's CCL Framework



Why These Modules Matter for High School CTE

For high school CTE teachers and regional leaders, these modules can help:



Build earlier awareness of pathways



Support better course and program decisions



Increase interest before high school



Strengthen the feeder pipeline into CTE

In short:

These modules help students arrive with more exposure, more curiosity, and a clearer sense of possibility. Bringing an important component of the district's Career Education plan to life.

Designed Backward from the Outcome

These modules were built to help every student connect:

- What they are learning now
- Who they might become
- Which pathways can help them get where they want to go

Integrated by design:

- Oregon Academic Standards
- CTE Skill Sets
- Employability Skills
- Transformative Social and Emotional Learning (TSEL)



Result: Career awareness and exploration becomes part of academic learning, not an add-on. This aligns with the project's goals to increase engagement, inform student choices, and strengthen future CTE participation.

Intentional by Design - Flexible in Use

These modules were designed to work across Oregon's varied classrooms without asking teachers to abandon what already works.

Modular



Each career area has three modules and three standalone lessons per module.

Flexible



Modules work across settings, schedules, and resources.

Teacher-Controlled



Teachers control what fits and adapt to local contexts and communities.

Oregon Middle School Career Awareness and Exploration Modules

Subject	Industrial & Engineering Services	Arts, Information, & Communications	Human Resources	Business & Management	Health Sciences	Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources Systems
Math	Building Oregon	Coding for Oregon		Behind the Scenes		
ELA		Bringing Narratives to Life	Teach the Future	Pitch Perfect Exploring Hospitality	Voices for Wellness	Advocating for Agriculture
Social Studies	Oregon Innovators		Law and Order			Stewards of the Land
Science	Manufacturing Materials in Oregon	Modeling and Engineering Solutions	Oregon's Natural Hazards		Body in Balance Solving Problems with Science	The Living Soil

Each Lesson is Designed to Deliver Three Things



Materials include an instructor guide, student learning materials, activities, and assessments.

Inside the Learning Experience

Example module: [*Pitch Perfect: Persuasive Communication in Marketing and Sales*](#)

Driving Question: How do marketing professionals use persuasive communication to influence decisions?

Students engage in real work:

- Evaluate authentic advertisements from Oregon companies and examine strategies to engage different audiences
- Build critical reading skills while gaining exposure to business and marketing careers in Oregon

Performance Task: Step into the role of marketing professionals to create and present an original campaign pitch for a local Oregon product, service, or cause.

Module Title:
Pitch Perfect: Persuasive Communication in Marketing and Sales

Module Driving Question:
How do marketing professionals use persuasive communication to influence decisions and promote products or ideas?

Module Overview:
Students will analyze, craft, and present persuasive marketing campaigns and pitches, focusing on the communication strategies used by marketing professionals in Oregon's leading industries. The module integrates core ELA standards with authentic marketing CTE skill sets, and exposes students to the real-world thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration found in Oregon's marketing sector. The culminating project is an original campaign pitch for a local product, service, or nonprofit, modeled after real-world marketing practices.

Lesson 1: What Makes a Pitch Persuasive?
In this lesson, Oregon middle school students engage in hands-on, project-based exploration of persuasive communication as used by marketing professionals. Anchored in core English Language Arts standards, students analyze and critique authentic advertisements from leading Oregon companies such as Nike, Dutch Bros, and Travel Oregon, examining the strategies used to engage different audiences and achieve business goals. Through interactive activities—including ad gallery walks, group discussions, video analysis, and career profile spotlights—students not only build critical reading and argument analysis skills but also gain direct exposure to high-wage, high-demand marketing careers in Oregon. The lesson is designed for academic teachers with no CTE background, offering clear supports, accessible resources, and opportunities for all students to reflect on their learning and curate a portfolio connecting classroom literacy with real-world business and career pathways.

Lesson 2: Crafting Your Campaign
In Lesson 2, students take on the role of Oregon marketing professionals to develop a mini-campaign for a local product or nonprofit. Working in teams, they research and analyze audience needs, write persuasive scripts and taglines, and design visual branding elements, such as logos or posters. The lesson is anchored in core ELA writing and communication standards, but all activities are experienced through the authentic lens of marketing, with explicit connections

 

What's in it for School and/or Districts

- Standards-aligned to Oregon's Academic Content Standards and CTE Skill Sets—no extra alignment work. (Additional alignment with TSEL & OES)
- Ready-to-use materials—Teacher Guides, student handouts, rubrics, and slide decks provided
- Flexible & Adaptable—pick the lessons that fit your classroom needs or adjust lessons to fit your class & community
- Relevant—students see authentic applications of academic content and explore Oregon careers
- Interdistrict connection to build career connected learning pipelines from a 6-12 perspective

What's in it for Students

- Engaging, hands-on projects that feel relevant to their lives
- Exposure to careers they may not have considered—especially important for underrepresented groups
- Employability Skills that transfer: collaboration, problem-solving, digital literacy, and communication
- Connections to Oregon's workforce—examples of real employers, real pathways, real possibilities
- Exposure to Career and Technical Education in Oregon and potential pathways for students to explore as they continue their educational journeys after middle school.
- Students leave middle school with a broader sense of what's possible in high school and beyond.

What's Your Role

Middle School Teacher

- Review modules to identify content standards and relevant teaching resources
- Examine curriculum to consider supplementing or adapting with MS Career Exploration Modules
- Identify relevant CTE programs of study and teachers at district high schools
- Connect with **administrators**
- Connect with counselor to tie with comprehensive education plans

High School CTE Teacher

- Share & partner w/ **administrators**
- Recruit & identify middle school core academic teaching partners
- Provide guidance around career connected learning & relevant high school CTE pathways
- Supplement additional resources or curriculum
- Invite middle school students to visit or tour CTE programs of study
- Bring in counseling team to partner with support and communication around 6-12 pipeline

How to Access

Interested teachers should:

- Visit the [Oregon Open Learning Hub](#).
- Review [module options](#) and select lessons that fit their curriculum.
- Contact Jeff Rhoades or Johnie Ferro (jeff.rhoades@ode.oregon.gov) (johnie.ferro@ode.oregon.gov) to express interest, provide feedback, or ask questions.



Career Connected Learning Free & Open Access Resources



Curriculum & Lessons

CJV Career Journey Videos, Lessons & Classroom Activities

OES Oregon Employability Skills - Workforce Skills Curriculum & Resources



Career Exploration

CCO Career Connect Oregon - Career Connected Learning Resources

SASSY the Career Explorer - AI Powered Career Exploration Guide



Career Planning

Oregon CIS Career Assessments & Exploration Tools

Career Journey Maps

Visual Maps outlining steps to careers for multiple industries



Support & Resources

CCL Implementation Guide
Strategies for implementing Career Connected Learning in schools.

Equitable Use of Aptitude Assessments in Public Schools

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/learning-options/CTE/careerareas/Pages/Career-Awareness-and-Exploration.aspx>



Thank you!

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