

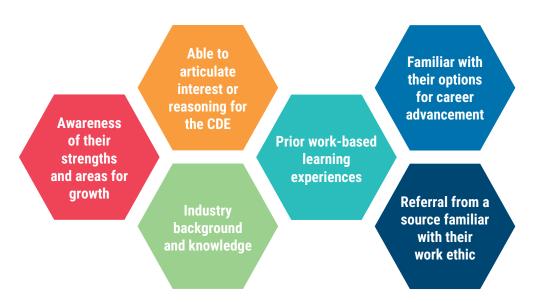
ONBOARDING FOR PARTICIPANTS

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DEMONSTRATING READINESS

To ensure a successful experience for both participants and hosts, it is important to assess participants' preparedness for a career development experience (CDE). Participants should be capable of taking advantage of the learning opportunities in a workplace and conduct themselves appropriately in a professional setting.

Participants can demonstrate readiness in several ways, including:





Definitions for the terms "participant," "managing organization," and "host" are given in the Introduction.

PRE-PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS

As your managing organization is determining participants who are prepared and ready for placement, it can be helpful to collect information on how participants currently assess themselves and the careers that they are most interested in. This is also an opportunity to gather information about the unique needs and interests of participants that may inform their CDE placement. This information can begin the groundwork for building and organizing CDE participant records. The following information about participants should be gathered before they are placed in a CDE:

- Schedule availability that includes reasonable participation accommodation
- Attendance history (provided from a school counselor or other reliable provider)
- Careers or industry areas they are considering for the future
- Post-program plans (part/full-time work, postsecondary education, military service, trade school, etc.)
- Self-assessment of strengths and areas for development as it relates to essential employability and technical competencies
- Previous work-based learning experiences or employment
- Extracurricular activities they are involved in (sports, activities, volunteering, etc.)

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

A participant's previous attendance records can provide information about their ability to remain committed to a CDE. A record of poor attendance does not mean a participant is not qualified for a CDE, but there should be an intentional conversation with them to understand and address any obstacles and/or determine resources to best meet their needs to ensure they are able to regularly attend their CDE. The best way for participants to make a good impression with their host is to consistently arrive on time and on the days as scheduled for their CDE.

DEMONSTRATING READINESS

A best practice for understanding participant needs is through one-on-one participant interviews, which can build trust between your managing organization and participants. A deeper understanding of participants will allow you to be more intentional in their CDE placement and ensure a successful experience.

CDE PLACEMENT

Along with considering the career interests of participants, it is also important to consider the type of environment and supports that best match a participant's characteristics and needs. Matching participants to the ideal placement may require some flexibility – in some cases, hosts outside of the participant's career interest area may be a better fit. Ultimately, what is most important is that the host is able to provide an authentic learning experience in which the participant develops the essential employability and technical competencies necessary for their career.

COMMITMENT & PERMISSION FORMS

Once a participant has been deemed ready and you have identified the best fitting CDE host site, you may begin to formalize the participant's commitment to the CDE. The agreement to participate should reflect the previously communicated expectations to both hosts and participants.

In addition to the participant's signed agreement, parents/guardians must be informed of the participant's agreement to participate in a CDE and made aware of the expectations and level of commitment as well. To obtain formal parental/guardian permission, it is recommended to provide the necessary materials in both email and paper form to ensure that participants and their families can access them easily.



One of the keys to a successful CDE program is building strong relationships with participant's parents/guardians and families. The Parent Engagement Tip Sheet from Youth CareerConnect provides practical tips and additional resources for engaging parents/guardians and families in your CDE program. It is important that parents/guardians and families understand the expectations of the program and ways they can stay informed and communicate with your managing organization.

PREPARING FOR THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

SETTING EXPECTATIONS OF THE CDE PROGRAM

As it pertains to a CDE, participants should have a clear understanding of the expectations of your organization. Your managing organization might consider developing a document similar to that of a class syllabus outlining the expectations of your CDE program. Before communicating expectations to participants, make sure the CDE materials have been widely reviewed and validated by organizational staff. At a minimum, your managing organization should clearly articulate the following information for participants:

· Mission of your organization and outline of CDE program **Program** Description · Participant commitment: required events and activities · Employability and technical competencies that will be reinforced **Objectives** · Intended learning outcomes of the CDE · Academic credit and/or financial compensation provided Grading policies (as applicable) Information on any pre-assessments/training required **Placement** How host sites are determined for participants Verification process for completed CDE hours **Attendance** · Policies and procedures for being late or absent · Verification process for completed CDE hours **Professionalism** · Policies and procedures for being late or absent · Tool(s) to be used to assess competency development **Assessment** On-site supervision and feedback process

PARTICIPANT-MANAGING ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIPS

Along with understanding expectations for their performance, participants should also know what they can expect from your managing organization and staff. Establishing a trusting relationship in which both participants and organizational staff feel they can discuss and grapple with sometimes difficult topics can avoid any drawbacks during the CDE as much as possible. Participants should know what supports are in place for them and how you will work together with them to successfully complete their CDE.

PREPARING FOR THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

PRE-CDE TRAINING

Before a participant begins their CDE, it is important that they are introduced to the general etiquette of professional environments and are prepared to start off on the right foot on their first day. These trainings can take a variety of forms depending on the context and needs of your participants and your organization. Common practices include in-person workshops, online tutorials, and one-on-one coaching sessions.

Regardless of delivery format, it is important that participants have a basic understanding of common host expectations for professional behavior:

First Impressions

- Introductions and greetings
- 30 second elevator pitch
- Background knowledge of the host

Appropriate Attire

- Business casual vs. business professional
- · General dos and don'ts of clothing
- Resources for professional wear

Reliability and Accountability

- Timeliness
- Communicating when late or absent
- Following through

Professional Communication

- Writing an email
- · Asking for help/clarification
- · Customer service skills

Teamwork and Conflict Resolution

- Building on strengths of others
- Being a productive team member
- How to manage issues and frustrations



Participants need to know the different roles your managing organization plays compared to that of the host, particularly regarding challenges or personal issues your participants might face. Your organization should be the primary point of contact in the event that something is happening within or outside of the CDE that affects a participant's ability to be successful in the program, such as financial or safety concerns.

Participant safety is of utmost importance, and they should know how to report any sexual or otherwise discriminatory harassment occurring at either your managing organization or the host site. To ensure participant safety, establish and clearly communicate the process by which participants can address these challenges with a trusted adult within your organization, regardless if the harassment is coming from an adult or a fellow participant.

CAPITALIZING ON FORMER CDE PARTICIPANTS

Previous CDE participants can serve as valuable guides by sharing their experiences with an incoming group of participants. The ability to hear from their peers can help address more directly any questions or concerns they are having as they prepare for their CDE placement. Prepare questions for former participants to discuss common helpful items and have conversations with them about providing honest responses while also remaining professional in their statements.

PREPARING FOR THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE



COMMUNITY EXAMPLES OF PRE-CDE TRAINING



Through their Career Center for Discovery, District 214 developed digital modules on their Learning Management System for students to complete prior to participation in a CDE. In-person workshop sessions are available for those participants in need of more direct guidance



Vermilion County Works (VCW) operates several special training programs for youth ages 16–24. VCW contracts with youth-serving agencies to provide preemployment skills training prior to youth being placed in work experiences, limited internships, or employment with local employers.



REACH has career readiness workshops in partner schools for interested applicants to the internship program. Students are able to participate in resume writing, interview prep, and networking events to strengthen their readiness for the work world.

PWR ACT: ESSENTIAL EMPLOYABILITY AND TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Refer to the <u>Essential Employability and Technical Competencies</u> as outlined in the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act to enhance your participant preparation activites. These competencies serve as quality indicators of an individual's readiness to enter an industry or to pursue further education in that field. These competencies were developed in consultation with state agencies and key industry experts including hiring professionals, education and training professionals, and industry associations.

FIRST DAY NEEDS & CONSIDERATIONS

GETTING PARTICIPANTS READY

Before participants start at their host site, they should complete the following activities:

Host Research

Learn some general background about their host, through desk research and/or host information submitted to your managing organization.

Getting to the CDE

Plan for the logistics of getting to/from their CDE, mapping out their route.

Practice their commute before their first day to proactively address any confusion regarding their route.

CDE Placement Requirements

Participate in any required background or screening processes.

Identify any challenges that might impact the start date.

Certain industries may have more extensive onboarding requirements before a participant is able to begin work. As you are determining participant placements, make sure that you are having open and honest conversations with them about any of the required onboarding needs. If a participant expresses concern about passing any of the onboarding processes (background checks, drug tests), consider whether they are still eligible for a CDE and can be placed at a different site that does not have the same requirements.

Some of the onboarding requirements can be costly. Typically, hosts will take on this cost, but this is not guaranteed. Work within your managing organization and among community partners to determine affordable means for participants to complete onboarding needs if the host is unable or unwilling to pay. Examples of industry-specific onboarding requirements include:

Health Care

- Health and drug screening (Physical, TB test)
- HIPAA training

Finance & Business

- Name-based background check
- Fingerprinting background check

Human and Public Services

- Background check
- Drug test

"ABOUT ME" PROFILES

One way to ensure the host is ready to welcome participants is to have participants prepare a profile with some background information and a photo of themselves. Hosts can then send this information to their team before a participant's start date so their staff is aware of who the participant is and is able to welcome and support them on their first day. This information can include:

- Career goals and interests
- Fun facts like favorite food, movie, or book
- What they are most excited to learn during their CDE

ONBOARDING

DURING

GETTING A GOVERNMENT ISSUED ID

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Hosts might require that individuals check in through security with a government issued ID. There may be flexibility for participants to use a school photo ID, but it is helpful as participants are entering the professional space to have a government issued ID. Work closely with your participants to collect the required materials and direct them to the appropriate locations in your region to get their ID.

If a participant is unable to provide or obtain a government issued ID based on theirs or their family's legal status, it is important to speak one-on-one with them to determine their options to complete a CDE.

PAYING PARTICIPANTS

If participants are receiving any earnings for their CDE, they should have a bank account set up before their first paycheck. If participants do not currently have a bank account, work with them to open harm-free checking accounts to avoid any penalties or late fees.

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Generally, it is important to help participants build a professional portfolio to showcase their competencies and experiences. These materials may be developed before the start of their CDE but should be refreshed and edited throughout and after their CDE to incorporate their experience.

A few suggestions are:



Building a LinkedIn Profile

Participants should upload some general information about their education and work experience to start connecting with hosts. At the end of their CDE, if agreeable, have hosts write a reference!



Resume & Cover Letter

Participants may already have some form of both or one of these, but as they are beginning to be more active onsite with hosts, these materials should be more robust and detailed to reflect their experiences.



Business Cards

Having a business card is a great confidence booster for participants and encourages them to network with others. Consider creating business cards with your managing organization's logo and participant information.



The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's Money Smart education program has been developed for people of all ages to enhance their financial skills and create positive banking relationships. Tools and strategies can be used to teach others, or for independent use.



Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor's **Employment and Training** Administration, the GetMyFuture website connects youth to career, education, and job search resources.

GETTING STARTED

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

HOST OUTREACH

ONBOARDING

CDE ONLINE TOOLKIT RESOURCES [2]

DEMONSTRATING READINESS

TEMPLATE | Participant Profile: PDF // Word

TEMPLATE | Pre-Assessment Participant Interview: PDF // Word

TEMPLATE | Participant Placement Email/Letter: PDF // Word

TEMPLATE | Participant Self-Assessment of Essential Employability Competencies: PDF // Word

RESOURCE | Career Guide from Illinois State Board of Education

RESOURCE | Parent Engagement Tip Sheet from Youth CareerConnect

RESOURCE | Skill & Interest Surveys from Illinois workNet

PREPARING FOR THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

TEMPLATE | Participants Program Outline & Expectations: PDF // Word

RESOURCE | Pre-assessment/Career Surveys from Illinois workNet

RESOURCE | Skills to Pay the Bills: Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability **Employment Policy**

RESOURCE | Supporting In-School and Out-of-School Youth Experiencing Homelessness Through Education and Workforce Partnership from the National Center for Homeless Education

RESOURCE | Employment 101 from Illinois workNet

TEMPLATE | Participant Orientation at Host Site: PDF // Word

TEMPLATE | Participant Host Site Background Research: PDF // Word

TEMPLATE | Participant "About Me" Profile: PDF // Word

EXEMPLAR | Teen Volunteer Application from Cancer Treatment Centers of America

RESOURCE | State-by-State Non-Drive Identification Requirements from National Network for Youth

RESOURCE | Money Smart: Youth Employment Resource Center from FDIC

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

TEMPLATE | Participant Business Card

RESOURCE | GetMyFuture Website from CareerOneStop

RESOURCE | Job Skills Guides from Illinois workNet

RESOURCE | Employment 101 from Illinois workNet



ONBOARDING FOR HOSTS

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CLARIFYING EXPECTATIONS

REVIEWING THE CDE PROGRAM PLAN

While host expectations for your CDE program were communicated during your initial outreach, onboarding is an important time to review and reiterate. There might be a new host contact you are working with, and it is always helpful to review your expectations to ensure that your managing organization and hosts are on the same page. The more informed your hosts are, the more equipped they will be to provide mentorship and an authentic learning experience for participants.

Most importantly, you should review the following:

- · Schedule of CDE events and required activities
- Checklist of the essential employability and technical skills participants should work on
- Start date and location for participants to report to
- Any onboarding needs before participant starts
- · Confirming assigned host staff that will work directly with participant

FORMALIZING THEIR PARTICIPATION

Similar to the agreement participants had to complete to meet the expectations of your CDE program, hosts should complete an agreement form. This form should have already been completed when a host officially signed on to provide a CDE, but it is helpful to review during onboarding. It is also a best practice to send a confirmation email 2–4 weeks before a participant starts to address any confusion or onboarding needs to ensure participants can start on time.

WELCOME LETTER

Hosts should be continuously encouraged about the role they play in supporting participants in their professional growth. Along with confirming the agreement and logistics of the CDE, it is helpful to send a welcome letter from your managing organization's leadership describing the CDE program and expressing the value of host involvement in the experience.

ENGAGING OTHER HOST STAFF

Regardless of whether host staff will be working directly with participants, the host point of contact should proactively communicate with their staff to set the expectations around the CDE and the participant's experience. Encourage hosts to share the participant's "About Me" profile with their staff (more information on this in the "Onboarding for Participants" section of the toolkit).



Definitions for the terms "participant," "managing organization," and "host" are given in the <u>Introduction</u>.



As you are working with a host to determine who will be the main point of contact for the participant at a CDE site have an intentional conversation about the host staff's role as a mentor for participants. This person should be responsible for the assigning and training of tasks, with an understanding they are also a coach for a developing young professional. It might be best to have two different assigned staff for participants: one who assigns and trains on the tasks and another who can serve as a mentor removed from the daily work to chat through how things are going.

ORIENTATION

REVIEWING THE CDE PROGRAM PLAN

Before the first day of the CDE, managing organizations should set aside time to meet with hosts either in-person or remotely. Along with discussing the expectations previously mentioned in this section, you will also need to get into specific details about what the CDE will look like on a day-to-day basis and the supports provided by the managing organization.

If you have multiple hosts starting at the same time, consider hosting a webinar or similar group setting where they can all dial-in or attend in-person. Being able to speak to multiple hosts at once ensures that a consistent message is being communicated. If you are speaking to hosts one-on-one, make sure that your organizational staff are trained and prepared to deliver a uniform message.

CDE GUIDEBOOK FOR HOSTS

A CDE agreement outlines the general expectations and schedule of events for hosts, but there should be an additional resource that goes into more detail about the day-to-day work with a participant. A CDE guidebook for hosts should be a resource that hosts refer to independently throughout the CDE experience. At minimum, the guidebook should include:

- CDE program overview and timeline of events and activities
- Characteristics of a strong host partner
- Role of and supports provided by your managing organization
- Any applicable policies and procedures
- Liability, travel and other concerns addressed
- Orienting the participant to their CDE placement site
- · Participant assessments and supplemental resources

DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR PARTICIPANTS

Along with providing clear expectations and information about your CDE, collaborate with your hosts to determine a plan for working with participants. Consider:

CDE Program Basics

- · Participants' day-to-day tasks or projects
- Participants' learning objectives, goals, and related employability and technical competencies

Internal Leadership

- Departments that are in need of utilizing and managing a participant
- Assigned host staff to provide ongoing supervision and support for participant



It is important that your managing organization engages in a discussion with hosts early in the onboarding process to identify any accommodations needed to establish a quality CDE. Accommodations should be individualized and based on the expressed and/or documented needs of participants rather than based on any assumptions.

Accommodations may include:

- Allowing for a flexibleschedule or hours
- Providing modified equipment or assistive technology
- Giving written and recorded instructions

ORIENTATION

Communications

- The flow of communication within a host to contact your organization as needed
- · Directives for participants if they are working in multiple departments/staff

SUPERVISING HOST STAFF

Host staff who will work primarily with participants should understand their responsibility as more than an on-the-job supervisor. Throughout the CDE, they will play a crucial role in the personal and professional development of participants. While they will be assigning tasks to participants, they should also make intentional efforts to incorporate participants into the host culture and guide them through the successes and challenges of this professional learning experience. Managing organizations should communicate the resources and coaching they provide to host staff through their role as a supervisor for participants.

Encourage supervising host staff to provide opportunities for participants to both reflect and provide feedback on the experience. Through these open conversations, both participants and host staff can gain a better understanding of themselves in a professional space. One of the most valuable resources a participant can leave a CDE with is a professional relationship they are able to use for future networking and guidance in their career pathway.



MANDATED REPORTING

As an organization who works directly with youth, you are familiar with your role as a mandated reporter if a participant expresses any form of abuse or neglect.

Make it clear to hosts that they should contact you as soon as possible if a participant shares any concerning information and that you will work directly with participants to navigate the situation. Some hosts will want to be heavily involved in this process, while others will want to be completely removed, but it is important that you clarify upfront your direct role in handling any personal participant issues.

FIRST DAY NEEDS & CONSIDERATIONS

WELCOMING PARTICIPANTS

Encourage hosts to proactively welcome CDE participants, as this might be the first time a participant is going to work in a professional space. Participants may have previous work-based learning experiences or visited a workplace, but the newness of the host site and the responsibilities they will have as CDE participants can be daunting during their first days. Participants will likely be anxious, especially if they do not see themselves reflected in that space.

Encourage hosts to welcome participants through a staff meeting, introduction email, or another intentional manner. If hosts expect participants to perform at the same standards as their employees, then it is important that participants feel valued and respected in the host environment.

ORIENTING PARTICIPANTS TO THE WORKPLACE

Help hosts develop a plan to introduce participants to their work site and establish guidelines and expectations. Participants should have also received similar information during their onboarding process with your managing organization, but this is the time for them to see it in action and learn from their host firsthand.

A host's orientation plan should include:

Welcome and Introductions

- A tour of the space and any materials and equipment the participant might use
- Introduction of participants to staff and explanation of department roles
- Basic information and background of the host

Plan for Participant

- Description of tasks to be completed daily, weekly, and overall, including any deadlines
- Process for professional skills assessments
- Schedule checkins and determine preferred modes of communication

Expectations of Behavior

- Any applicable safety rules and emergency procedures
- Any nondisclosure/ confidentiality
- Quirks of the culture and unwritten rules of the workplace that may affect participant



Regular check-ins between a participant and their direct supervisor at the host ensure that questions and concerns can be addressed in a timely fashion. Regular check-ins provide an opportunity for continuous feedback for both participants and hosts as well as an opportunity for relationship building by providing a space for participants who may still be hesitant to ask questions. These meetings can be brief (15 minutes or less) as long as they have an intentional structure and are productive.

GETTING STARTED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE HOST OUTREACH ONBOARDING

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

CREATING A YOUTH FRIENDLY WORKPLACE

There will be a spectrum of willingness by hosts in terms of how they might modify tasks to suit youth as they develop their essential employability and technical competencies. Some hosts will modify tasks significantly at the outset of the program, while others will expect participants to be ready to jump in without adjusting the tasks. Encourage the host's role in the talent development of the future workforce, taking into account the capability and willingness of a host to modify the workplace to fit the needs of youth as developing professionals. With this understanding in mind, consider the best practices for creating a youth friendly environment a host can incorporate and provide support for implementation. Creating a youth-friendly workplace should not be left entirely to the host, but it should be a collaborative responsibility between the host and managing organization.

COMPONENTS OF CREATING A YOUTH-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE INCLUDE



Emotional and Physical Safety

- Participant's basic needs are met
- Participants feel trusted and respected by host staff



Youth Participation

- Participants are given opportunities to have a voice and choices
- Participants are provided opportunities to demonstrate leadership



Engaging in Skill Building

- Participants engage in activities to strengthen their career interests
- Participants build new capacities through authentic learning experiences



Caring Relationships

- Participants have at least one adult who listens and provides guidance
- Participants have positive relationships with their peers



Community Involvement

- Participants understand the local and global impact of their work
- Participants are provided opportunities to engage with the community



WRAPPING UP

DURING

If participants are not clear about what projects or tasks they might be able to undertake if they finish their assigned tasks, they might not feel comfortable beginning other work. In this scenario, the host might feel as though the participant is not taking initiative. To avoid these challenges, suggest to hosts that they mix short and longterm projects when delegating tasks to participants. This allows a participant to be aware of any long-term projects they can continuously circle back to and work on to show initiative.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

If a host has agreed to support participants for a CDE, they may be interested in understanding best practices to support youth development. They may rely on your managing organization to provide resources and training for them to continue to grow in their capacity to provide a positive CDE experience for your participants in a youth development model. There are a variety of readings and online resources for hosts, but it will be more effective if your organization finds intentional ways to offer opportunities that bring hosts together to discuss supporting youth in their environment.

Suggestions for professional development resources and training for your managing organization to provide include:

Setting Expectations

- Balancing the needs of the host with participant skillbuilding
- Ensuring that the participant is able to thrive in the host company culture

Providing Feedback

- Tools for strengthsbased conversations regarding areas of improvement for participants
- Supporting the host to navigate when a participant is not meeting expectations

Mentoring

- Practices and resources to support and advise on participant's career pathway
- Suggestions for opening up space to develop a supportive and collaborative relationship



As an organization who works directly with youth, you are familiar with your role as a mandated reporter if a participant expresses any form of abuse or neglect.

Make it clear to hosts that they should contact you as soon as possible if a participant shares any concerning information and that you will work directly with participants to navigate the situation. Some hosts will want to be heavily involved in this process, while others will want to be completely removed, but it is important that you clarify upfront your direct role in handling any personal participant issues.

CDE ONLINE TOOLKIT RESOURCES 🗹

CLARIFYING EXPECTATIONS

TEMPLATE | Host Confirmation and Participant Introduction Email/Letter: PDF // Word

TEMPLATE | Participant "About Me" Profile: PDF // Word

ORIENTATION

TEMPLATE | Host Orientation Presentation: PowerPoint

TEMPLATE | Guidebook for Hosts: PDF // Word

RESOURCE | Participant Tasks Examples by Pathway Endorsement Area

RESOURCE | Questions for Experienced Hosts

RESOURCE | Workplace Accommodation Toolkit from the Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

RESOURCE | Inclusive Internship Programs: A How-to Guide for Employers from the U.S. Department of Labor

FIRST DAY NEEDS & CONSIDERATIONS

TEMPLATE | Participant Orientation at Host Site: PDF // Word

RESOURCE | Host & Participant Check-In Meetings

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

RESOURCE | A Mentor's Guide to Youth Development from the U.S. Department of Education

RESOURCE | Ladder of Young People's Participation by Roger Hart

RESOURCE | Creating a Youth-Friendly Workplace: An Employer's Guide to Building a Quality Internship from the Sacramento Employment and Training Agency

RESOURCE | Social, and Emotional Learning Framework from CASEL