

GUIDELINES FOR COMPANY VISITS

FIRST-YEAR GLOBAL EXPERIENCES AND GLOBAL SEMINARS

Company visits are at the core of the academic trips associated with both the First-Year Global Experience Program and Global Seminars. The most rewarding and successful visits tend to be those arranged by someone within the organization who is either a contact of the faculty member or of the Leeds School External Relations Office. That is, these contacts are friends of the Leeds School who want to provide a solid learning experience to our students. Visits that are scheduled by academic travel providers are sometimes only marginally more informative than a tourist tour, so personalized visits hosted by our friends are critical to the success of our programs. A successful visit often includes the following elements:

1. Executive Welcome. The group is welcomed by someone at a reasonably high level of the organization. It is understood that expectations must be adjusted by the size of the company and the availability of top-level management. However, a proper welcome sets a positive tone for the entire visit.
2. Introductory Presentation. An introductory presentation that gives a high-level view of the organization is very important. This doesn't have to be long or include too many details, but it should provide enough information to complement what the students have read about the company prior to their visit.
3. Detailed Discussion. A substantial discussion of an aspect of the organization that has been identified as the focus of the visit is the highlight of the experience. For instance, in a seminar on international operations, a discussion of the company's supply chain becomes very relevant. This can be driven by student questions and learning objectives (see below).
4. Tour of the Facility. When appropriate, the group is given the opportunity to tour the facility. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a good tour is worth a thousand pictures. Some visits are to offices where there is not much to see. Other visits would not make much sense without a tour of the facility. It is understood that facility tours must allow for flexibility. A visit could be a "regular" tour or one that is enhanced with additional details. We also understand there are situations in which executives will want to limit what the group can see due to customer privacy, competitive, or security concerns.
5. Back-up Plan. When speakers/hosts are high-level executives, a back-up plan is highly desirable. Since the schedules of top personnel often change at the last minute, having a back-up presenter or host is much preferred to canceling a visit.

Faculty members set specific learning objectives for company visits. These goals and/or questions generated by students will be shared with the company ahead of time in order to achieve a certain level of customization for the visit. This takes the burden off the company to develop a presentation while figuring out what the group wants to learn. Finally, faculty members and students will follow up with thank you notes and will bring an appropriate gift for their hosts. We are most appreciative of the hospitality of our many friends in the global business community.