**Suggested Talking Points for Welcome Speaker**

Thank you for agreeing to share your experiences as the welcome speaker for the [COMMUNITY OR SCHOOL] Career Hunt! Here are some suggestions that might help you prepare your remarks to kick off this fun day of career exploration.

1. **Share your own story to connect with your audience.** Think back to when you were the age of the students at your event. (12? 13? 14?) What things were you into at that time? What did you want to be when you grew up? Had you had any kind of job yet at this point in your life? How did you get on the path that eventually took you to the career you’re in now?
2. **Share your career journey.** What did you intend to do after high school graduation? Did anything happen that interfered with that path? Where did you go next? Did you like your post-secondary choice, or did life throw you a curveball, making you change your path mid-journey?
3. **What did you do after you finished your education?** Talk about your internship, first job or your job hunt. What did you learn you hadn’t learned in high school or college? Who was your mentor? What did it feel like to get your first real paycheck? How did your opinion of your career path change once you were in the workforce? What did you feel after you were a few years in?
4. **What happened to you in the early part of your career?** What did you think about your first job? Did you go back to school or to training classes at any point to gain more skills? Did you find yourself taking a big risk? Quit and decide to try something else? Get a promotion? Move to a new part of the country? Get married, have kids, start your own business?
5. **What did you learn about yourself through this journey that today’s young people might benefit from hearing now?** Don’t be afraid to be a little vulnerable and open up to your audience. Be authentic and real, and show the audience how you grew as you matured into your profession.You might consider summing up your life lessons in a list of three or five things you’d like to pass along to them as they get ready to start their own journey.

**Other Suggestions:**

* **Make the point that very few people have a straight career trajectory.** Most people’s paths twist and turn with life changes, economic ups and downs, new opportunities and unexpected developments. All we can do is hedge our bets, work hard, keep growing and focus on gaining skills that are in demand.
* **Today is not about making decisions or locking yourself into any one path.** Today is about exploring, trying things out, trying things on and discovering what excites you and what seems boring.
* **You’re going to meet several adults who gave their time to help YOU figure out what you might want to do after high school.** That means they want to share their own journey and give you free advice that might help you avoid some challenges or pitfalls. Listen to them! Be polite and respectful, and be sure to ask questions.
* **Take time to reflect on what you learn today and grow from it.** Whether you share about this experience with your parents, friends or siblings, write about it in a journal, post photos on Instagram or simply fill out a worksheet your teacher gives you, take a few minutes to process what you learned. What fields would you like to explore more? What could you possibly do next to learn more about those? Are there opportunities for you to take related classes or participate in clubs in high school that could build on this experience?