



Created in 2001 by Skillpoint Alliance’s Technology & Education Executive Council, Velocity Prep gives high school students relevant work experience and exposure to career paths in Central Texas. Velocity Prep is an often life-changing four-week summer program that engages 15 to 20 high school students in 160 hours of professional activity working as a consulting company. A Skillpoint industry or community partner serves as the Velocity Prep client, employing the consulting company to tackle an issue of importance to the client.

Working with the client and other relevant experts – and led by a college student project director – the Velocity Prep consulting company researches, plans, develops, and presents specific project deliverables to address the client’s problem. Velocity Prep reflects the real business environment and enables participants to:

- work with business and community leaders
- learn to communicate and work effectively in teams
- create project criteria and boundaries
- tour Central Texas companies
- research real-world topics
- complete a final product
- present their work to their client
- receive a stipend, with possible bonuses

Velocity Prep Participants

The **Client** will identify a problem that exposes students to industry-related issues and gives students a sense of what it is like to work in a professional environment. As much as possible, Velocity Prep reflects the authentic relationship between client and consultant, with the client identifying a project that results in actionable items drawn from consultant-generated findings and recommendations.

Client Responsibilities

- Identify a real problem in need of a solution
- Prior to beginning the program, work with Skillpoint Alliance staff and the College Student Project Director to outline the nature of the problem and help shape the project
- Select a Client Mentor to serve as the main contact for students throughout the project
- Allow additional Client staff to interact with and provide information to students, as appropriate
- Host the initial consultation as well as the final student presentation, preferably at the Client’s worksite

Skillpoint Alliance is responsible for the overall management and delivery of Velocity Prep.

Skillpoint Responsibilities

- Secure funding, including in-kind support
- Secure the participation of the Client and identify the College Student Project Director
- Work with the Client Mentor and College Project Director to identify and shape the project, ensuring that project goals are reasonable and achievable
- Support the College Project Director in all aspects of Velocity Prep delivery
- Ensure that evaluation, financial administration and reporting processes are in place and executed

Students will gain direct knowledge about their client’s industry and acquire the values, skills and work habits demanded by employers and necessary for success in the workplace. Students will learn to effectively work in teams to accomplish identified objectives and produce specific deliverables, including setting reasonable goals and timelines. Students will earn a stipend – and the opportunity for bonuses – to ensure they do not have to choose between participating in Velocity Prep and obtaining summer jobs.

Student Responsibilities

- Develop and monitor a detailed work plan to include activities, deliverables, due dates, and person(s) responsible
- Work with the Client Mentor and other appropriate experts to acquire information and/or skills necessary to meet project goals, including industry site visits and hands-on learning opportunities
- Conduct a formal presentation of findings and recommendations to the client (family, school personnel and other supporters will be invited to attend)

The **College Student Project Director** serves the critical roles of acting as a positive role model, facilitating the work of the Velocity Prep consulting company and serving as the link between Skillpoint, the Client Mentor, and the Project Liaison(s). The Project Director will gain valuable experience by working directly with an industry client, leading the project and preparing a project summary report.

College Student Project Director Responsibilities

- Prior to beginning the program, work with Skillpoint staff and the Client Mentor to outline the nature of the problem and help shape the project, including identifying additional experts
- Collaborate with the Client Mentor as necessary to define the students' work plan
- Work with the Project Liaison(s) on facility and transportation logistics and scheduling
- Facilitate student workflow by ensuring that students' expectations remain reasonable and appropriate to the project, keeping students on schedule and accountable, acting as a sounding board to focus students' ideas and tasks, and addressing student motivation and performance issues
- Model a positive attitude, effective relationships and productive work habits
- Work with Skillpoint staff to identify desired outcomes, implement evaluation procedures and create criteria for awarding student bonuses
- Prepare a summary report describing project goals, accomplishments, student outcomes, expenditures, and suggestions for improvement

The **Project Liaison**, typically campus or school district staff member(s), works with Skillpoint staff and the College Student Project Director to handle the logistics necessary for effective delivery of the project.

Project Liaison Responsibilities

- Recruit and match students to the project
- Assist the College Project Director in coordinating and scheduling student engagement with industry leaders, including transportation
- Work with the College Project Director to ensure that school facilities and necessary equipment are available
- Be available to assist the College Project Director with any last-minute logistical issues
- Maintain student and logistical documentation for the project's summary report

Work Plan and Activities

Week 1 – Client Needs Assessment
Week 2 – Information Gathering

Week 3 – Preparation of Final Deliverables
Week 4 – Finalize Deliverables, including Presentation to Client

Velocity Prep Budget Template

Most of the costs for delivering Velocity Prep are dedicated to stipends for high school and college students. A tax-deductible contribution through a flexible payment schedule can be made to Skillpoint for any portion or all of the program's \$30,200 costs:

- Skillpoint Program Management – \$8000
- College Student Mentor – \$3000
- Student Stipends/Bonuses – \$17000
((\$800 stipend/student + \$1000 for bonuses)
- Transportation for Industry Site Visits – \$1000
- Equipment/Supplies – \$700
- Refreshments – \$500