

FOUR EASY WAYS TO ENGAGE GIRLS (AND BOYS) IN ENGINEERING

1. Talk about engineering.

Most kids don't know any engineers or technicians and they don't really know what engineers do. This leads them to make interesting assumptions—like engineers sit in a cubicle doing math problems all day.

Share what you do! Be sure to tell them about the creative, problem-solving aspects of your work. Check yourself for engineering jargon. Tip: think about how you'd tell a 3rd grader what you do.

2. Do hands-on activities.

Activities that feature the engineering design process and an authentic, real-world challenge are a great way to engage students. They provide you with an opportunity to share how engineers approach a problem, give students an open-ended challenge that allows for an iterative development process, and allows you the chance to make connections to your work.

3. Focus on engineering outputs.

A lot of kids (and their parents) think engineers have to be straight A students to be a successful engineer. Rather than talk about what course requirements students need, talk about the rewards of being an engineer. Tell them how engineers dream up creative practical solutions and work with other smart, inspiring people to invent, design, and create things that matter.

4. Connect engineering to helping people.

Research shows when engineers share how their work makes a difference in people's lives, girls (and boys) are more interested in the field. When you describe your work, share more than what you do (e.g., I design satellites). Talk about how your work benefits people or society in general (e.g., I design satellites that help detect draught or are used to predict the weather).

Putting It All Together

Now that you know what to say, it's time to set up a visit to classroom or afterschool. Check with your employer or engineering society to see if they have a relationship with girl-serving organizations. If not, use our guide on [setting up a visit](#).

Want More?

- Take our self-guided tutorial on [Effective Ways to Talk to Kids about Engineering](#).
- Visit DiscoverE's robust [library of engineering activities](#).