



JOB SHADOW

A job shadow is a career exploration activity in which students observe the workday of a professional, interact with clients or customers, and attend meetings and other appointments. Job shadows are designed to help students explore a field of interest while developing research skills and building occupational knowledge. A job shadow is conducted at the workplace and should include a tour of the workplace and the opportunity for students to ask questions of the worker being shadowed throughout the day.

Job shadows are designed to promote:

- Exploration of a field of interest;
- Exposure to careers and jobs; and
- Awareness of the academic, technical and personal skills required in particular jobs.

Success Factors

- Conduct orientations for the student and workplace partners.
- Prior to the job shadow, have the student research the occupation, develop questions and establish learning objectives and goals.
- Arrange for students to have exposure to all aspects of the industry.
- Identify the education or training required and the skills needed for various occupations.
- Provide reflection opportunities after the job shadow.

Key Legal, Safety & Health Issues

- School-sponsored job shadows are usually considered field trips. School district policies regarding transportation and liability insurance apply. See the *Transportation for Work-Based Learning* fact-sheet in this toolkit for specific information.
- Students and teachers participating in workplace tours should receive relevant safety instruction and gear (e.g., eye goggles, hard hat, gloves).
- Students participating in job shadowing activities can participate in mock situations, shadow employees or even participate in the operations of the workplace as long as the person typically responsible for the duty is observing the students' actions. (US DOL Fact Sheet No. 013, Employment Relationship Under the Fair Labor Standards Act).