

WHAT IS A JOB SHADOW?

The goal of a Job Shadow is to get more perspective about a field you are interested in.

A Job Shadow involves spending time with an employee at their worksite:

- Observing daily activities
- Asking questions about the job and industry
- Performing hands-on tasks (when appropriate)

A job shadow gives a student a meaningful introduction to the world of work and provides a context for understanding the connection between school learning and career application.

More specifically, job shadows can help people:

- Learn if a career interest is really appropriate for them
- Understand what a day-in-the life of a particular job is like
- Develop and apply communications skills by interacting with and interviewing workers
- Realize that different jobs are characterized by different work cultures
- Determine if a working environment is compatible with who they are
- Gain awareness of the academic, technical, and personal skills required by particular jobs
- Begin to understand the connection between school, work, and achieving goals
- Generate leads for additional opportunities including more job shadows, informational interviews, volunteer opportunities, internships, or paid work.

A job shadow can last for a full day or be just a few hours. Students can be paired with one host or move around an organization to see different aspects. Before the job shadow we will work out the following so the student is properly prepared:

- Student arrival and departure time
- Transportation to and from the job shadow
- Appropriate dress for both culture of job and safety (i.e. no open toed shoes, no jeans, etc.)
- Lunch accommodations
- Other preparedness considerations identified by employer

JOB SHADOW HOSTS: TALKING ABOUT YOUR WORK

Job shadow hosts often ask, “What do I have to offer?” The answer: THE WISDOM OF EXPERIENCE. If you’ve ever said, “If I had only known then what I know now...” this is your opportunity to share those gems of wisdom.

Tell students what you personally get from your job and why you chose your line of work.

Talk about the other people you work with and how your job relates to the community, who depends on your work and why. Mention other people in the community who do similar kinds of work. Here are some examples of things students may ask you about.

JOB ENTRY

- How you got started in this job
- Other jobs you have held
- Skills you already had that you use now; how you acquired them

WHAT YOU DO

- Job description:
- Major tasks, sub tasks
- Equipment or tools you use
- Description of your typical day
- What you like and dislike about the job
- What you would change if you could

WHAT YOUR WORK IS LIKE

- Working hours, Salary range, fringe benefits
- Communication skills you use—reading, writing, and speaking
- Kinds of thinking you do (critical thinking, problem solving, decision making)
- History of this kind of work
- Why you chose this type of work
- Underlying attitudes and values important to your job
- Interpersonal skills you find most important and why

HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR PERSONAL LIFE

- Family time
- Leisure time
- Job-related skills you use
- Related Jobs/products/industries
- Where else in the community your kind of work is done
- Government regulations affecting your work

THE FUTURE IN YOUR FIELD

- Opportunities for advancement
- Employment projections; effects of technology and new knowledge on your work
- Effects of the country’s economic condition on your job
- Other jobs you could do with the same skills