

Name

Date

Job Shadows

Job shadows are very useful when learning about careers. Instead of just relying upon information from a book and second-hand information from someone else, consider doing a job shadow. A job shadow is when you observe an actual employee in a workplace doing the job you are considering. A job shadow allows you to watch the job duties required and see the workplace setting where the tasks are performed. It also gives you an opportunity to ask the employee you are observing specific questions about the job.

To organize a job shadow, identify a career you are interested in observing and learning more about. Next, identify an employer or a specific person who is currently involved in the career. Think about all the people you know, and see if any of them are currently involved in the career. If you know someone who could help you, call the person and ask if you could job shadow him or her. If you don't know anyone currently involved in the career, consult the Yellow Pages or ask a career guidance counselor if he or she knows an employer who could be of assistance to you. After you identify an employer, make the call to ask about becoming a job shadow. Remember, when you job shadow you are not only representing yourself, you are also representing your school. Make sure your clothing (attire) and behavior make a good first impression on the employer. When you enter a place of business to job shadow, you need to follow the business's dress code and behavior expectations.

When organizing a job shadow, remember the following:

- You should be the one who makes the phone call.
- Use proper phone etiquette.
- Identify who you are (your name and your school's name).
- Tell the person the purpose of your call (you want to arrange a job shadow because you are interested in learning more about the career).
- Inform the person why you want to do a job shadow (to do career research for a specific class or project).
- Ask the person if he or she would be willing to let you job shadow (for safety and security reasons, some employers cannot allow this).

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- If he or she is unable or unwilling to help you, simply say thank you.
- If he or she agrees to let you job shadow, arrange a date and time (before you call, know approximately how long you are available for the job shadow and the dates you are available).
- Find out who you will be job shadowing and where you should meet him or her.
- Find out if there is a specific dress code and if you need to bring any materials with you.
- Write this information down so that you don't forget anything.

Review the following questions to ask when job shadowing or interviewing someone on the job:

- What is a typical day at work like?
- What hours do you normally work?
- What made you enter this field?
- What type of training do you need to enter this field?
- How long have you been involved in this career?
- What is the job outlook for this career?
- Where can you find employment in this field?
- Do you enjoy your job?
- What is the most difficult thing about your job?
- How can you advance in your career?
- How can someone succeed in this career?