



## CAREER EXPLORATION | JOB SHADOW STUDENT HANDBOOK

Job shadowing can provide experiences as unique as every person who participates. Job shadowing is a privilege and an opportunity to help prepare you to join the workforce. ***It's not every day you have an opportunity to look into your own future!***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Host: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Shadow: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

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### ***Attachments***

Appendix A: Personal Statement/Cover Letter Example

Appendix B: Mock Interview Questions

Appendix C: Participant Questions

Appendix D: Reflection

Appendix E: Participant Survey

Appendix F: Thank You to Business

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A Job Shadow is a worksite experience during which an individual spends time with an employee observing daily activities and asking questions about the job and industry. Individual's participate before, during, and after the Job Shadow to help them understand and reflect on what is learned at the worksite. The Job Shadow allows the individual to determine career compatibility and responsibilities.

Specifically, a Job Shadow helps an individual:

- Begin to identify career interests.
- Observe the daily routine of staff.
- Gain awareness of the academic, technical and personal skills required for career/industry.
- Develop and apply communication skills by interacting with and interviewing staff.
- Understand different jobs have different work environments.
- Begin to understand the connection between school, career paths, life experiences, and achieving goals.
- Make contact with potential future employers.

### ***Considerations for the Student***

- What information do I already know about the career and the organization?
- What do I want to know about the career?
- What specific tasks do I want to see?
- Are there specific organization policies I need to be aware of (such as a dress code)?
- Is there paperwork I need to fill out for the organization or the Career Advisor?

### **Students Must**

- Keep confidentiality always.
- Contact the host as soon as possible if unavailable.
- Learn more about the career you are interested in prior to the Job Shadow (the job description, education requirements, and daily tasks, etc...).
- Take notes during the Job Shadow experience to maximize learning.

Disclose any disability requirements with your host in advance so the host can adjust if necessary

## **JOB SHADOW RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Prior to Job Shadow**

Identify 3-5 locations for a Job Shadow. Locations selected based on:

- Interest inventory
- Appropriate vocational/aptitude assessments
- Labor market information specific to participants desired place of residence
- One on one interaction/conversation

To arrange a Job Shadow:

1. The Student will fill out a Job Shadow Application and submit to the Career Advisor. They may need to fill out an additional form for the business.
2. The Career Advisor will contact three to five potential Job Shadow sites and choose the most appropriate two or three locations. The Career Advisor will make initial contact and obtain Job Shadow details and require participants to obtain Job Shadow details (Refer to the Job Shadow Checklist and Participant Job Shadow Handbook)
3. The Student will draft location specific Personal Statement Cover Letter. [See Appendix A.](#)
4. Arrange Job Shadow mock interview as time allows. [See Appendix B](#)
  - Date
  - Time
  - Location
  - Interviewer

Job Shadow Details to be discussed with student:

- Date
- Time and length of Job Shadow
- Location
- Contact person for participant and business
- Appropriate attire for business worksite

### **After Job Shadow**

The Career Advisor will:

1. Collect Participant Questions ([Appendix C](#)), Reflection ([Appendix D](#)), and the Participant Survey ([Appendix E](#)) from participant.
2. Provide materials for thank you note to host (see [Appendix F](#)).
3. Discuss Job Shadow experience with participant and next steps.

## JOB SHADOW CHECKLIST

### Prior to Job Shadow

### Due Date

### Initials

*Career Advisor to Indicate  
Task Completed*

- |  |       |       |
|--|-------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> List 3-5 Job Shadow sites you are interested in | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Master Application                              | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain Job Shadow details                       | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career Exploration Justification                | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Create list of questions to ask Job Shadow host | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mock interview                                  | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with Career Advisor                        | _____ | _____ |

### After Job Shadow

- |   |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turn in Participant Questions with responses | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turn in Job Shadow Reflection                | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Send thank you to host                       | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Share job experience with Career Advisor     | _____ | _____ |

## JOB SHADOW HOSTS

Job shadowing has numerous benefits for both the business and the individual. Benefits to the employer/host:

- It is an excellent networking tool.
- Free marketing by exposing future labor force to your company.
- Provides an opportunity for self-development of the student and often, the host.
- Share your experience with others.
- Reflect on your professional development.
- Develop mentoring skills.
- Impact youth.
- Increase morale.

### Considerations for the Host

- When would it be the best time for a student to shadow?
- What information do I want to share with the student prior to the shadow?
- Does anyone need to be informed of the Job Shadow?
- What do I need to know about the student?
- Do I or the student need to complete any health & safety requirements prior to the visit?
- Is there any paperwork they need to fill out such as confidentiality notice?

- Keep shadows at a 3:1 ratio or less of students to employee to have the most successful experience
- Make sure there is a designed location for the student to meet you. It may be obvious to you where the main door is, that may not be the case for the student
- Provide a tour of the worksite, if time allows, introduce the student to employees when you encounter them and have them share what they do
- If possible, have students perform a hands-on activity or view a process that will help them better understand the organization's operations
- Provide appropriate notice and reasons if shadowing needs to be rescheduled or cancelled

## **TIPS FOR SUCCEEDING IN THE WORKPLACE**

Whether you are participating in a Job Shadow or you are a permanent employee, appropriate behavior is important in the workplace. The following tips will help you transition into having a successful career:

1. Be punctual.
2. Address personal hygiene: cleanliness, fresh breath, etc.
3. Dress for success.
4. Have a positive attitude. Smiling is contagious.
5. Honesty is the best policy.
6. Be reliable and prompt.
7. If you do not understand something, ASK questions or ASK for help.
8. Take initiative.
9. Put forth your best effort at all times.
10. Challenge yourself.
11. Be dependable.
12. Be self-disciplined.
13. Welcome constructive criticism.

On the day of your shadow be sure to bring:

- ✓ Questions for host
- ✓ Contact Information (host name, address of business, phone number)
- ✓ Host sign form

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK HOST**

- What education and/or training does the host have?
- What do you suggest I do to start gaining experience?
- What are the key factors you look for when hiring for this position?
- How can I learn more about this career?
- What personal characteristics does someone need to be successful in this role?
- Why did you choose this career?
- What is your favorite and most challenging parts of your job?
- What are additional typical duties I did not observe?
- What advancement opportunities are available to you in this career?
- Do you spend most of you time working alone or as a team?
- What level of independence do you have in your job?
- Can you tell me more about what your company does?

- What are your roles and responsibilities?
- What is the burnout like for someone in this position?
- What advice would you give to someone like me who is aspiring to have a job in the future like yours?

## References

### Federal IT Job Shadow Tool Kit

[https://cio.gov/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/09/Toolkit\\_Web.pdf](https://cio.gov/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/09/Toolkit_Web.pdf)

### Education Planner

<http://www.educationplanner.org/counselors/job-shadowing.shtml>

**Sophomore Job Shadow Handbook** [http://www.mdihs.u98.k12.me.us/0910/studentlinks/documents/jobshadow\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.mdihs.u98.k12.me.us/0910/studentlinks/documents/jobshadow_handbook.pdf)

Shadowing: Learning For Life <http://www.sdstate.edu/sdces/cd/upload/job-shadow-guide.pdf>

**Marion High School Handbook** <http://marianhighschool.net/Post/sections/49/Files/Job%20Shadow%20Packet%201314.pdf>

### SHRM

[http://www.shrm.org/templatestools/samples/policies/pages/cms\\_005022.aspx](http://www.shrm.org/templatestools/samples/policies/pages/cms_005022.aspx)

### Job Shadow: How Business Can Help Attack the Dropout Crisis in America

[https://www.juniorachievement.org/documents/20009/36541/2010\\_Job\\_Shadow\\_White\\_Paper.pdf/809a15f9-84be487c-8f73-078124b3a944](https://www.juniorachievement.org/documents/20009/36541/2010_Job_Shadow_White_Paper.pdf/809a15f9-84be487c-8f73-078124b3a944)

South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation provides equal employment opportunities. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. State and federal laws require the Department of Labor and Regulation to provide services to all qualified persons without regard to race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, ancestry, political affiliation or belief, national origin, or disability.

# APPENDIX A

## LETTER OF INTEREST

Jane Doe  
2330 N Maple Ave. #1 Rapid City, SD 57701  
Cell Phone: 605-555-2326  
Email: [example@yahoo.com](mailto:example@yahoo.com)

Dear Mr. Labor,

I recently took a career insight assessment, which told me I had an underlying interest for becoming an auto mechanic. I have always had passion for helping people which would make specializing in maintenance for one of the most relied upon daily necessities extremely rewarding.

I am exceptionally reliable and possess an infinite willingness to learn. Although I may not have a deep background in auto mechanics, I have the aptitude and perseverance to have a bright future in the industry.

I look forward to the Job Shadow opportunity with your business and learning all about what this occupation has to offer.

Sincerely,  
Jane Doe

# APPENDIX B

## JOB SHADOW MOCK INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What employer are you hoping to shadow?
2. Why is this particular Job Shadow of interest to you?
3. What do you know about this industry?
4. What do you hope to learn from this Job Shadow?
5. Tell me why you are qualified to spend a day with your employer of choice.
6. What attracted you to this specific employer/company?
7. What motivates you?
8. What can you offer that someone else cannot?
9. What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have?

# APPENDIX C

## JOB SHADOW PARTICIPANT QUESTIONS

Please develop 7 questions to ask your worksite host.  
Examples listed on page 4.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

*Additional questions optional.*

## APPENDIX D

### JOB SHADOW REFLECTION

After completing the Job Shadow, please take the time to reflect on your experience.

1. Describe the job site you visited.
2. What type of work activities did you observe during your experience?
3. What did you like best about your experience?
4. What did you like least about your experience?
5. Did you encounter any challenges?
6. What surprised you most about what you observed or learned?
7. Would you consider a career in the industry in which you shadowed? Why or why not.
8. Did the Job Shadowing experience influence your career choice or goals? How?
9. If you wanted to have the job you shadowed, what might you do to prepare for the opportunity?

# APPENDIX E

## JOB SHADOW PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Thank you for participating in the Job Shadow program. Please help us evaluate the experience by responding to the following items. The information will be helpful in improving our program. (Low=Strongly Disagree, Fair=Somewhat Agree, High=Strongly Agree)

	<b>Low</b>		<b>Fair</b>		<b>High</b>
Able to observe occupation that interested you	1	2	3	4	5
Had enough time to ask appropriate questions	1	2	3	4	5
The entire worksite was toured	1	2	3	4	5
Able to assist with some of the work	1	2	3	4	5
Job shadowing experience was helpful	1	2	3	4	5
How would you rate your experience	1	2	3	4	5
Basic understanding of qualifications for industry	1	2	3	4	5
Host was welcoming and helpful	1	2	3	4	5
I would recommend other participate in this program	1	2	3	4	5

Additional Comments:

# APPENDIX F

## THANK YOU TO BUSINESS

After you complete the Job Shadow, please show your appreciation by writing a thank you card to the business.

Your street address or PO Box

Town, State, Zip Code

Date (Month, Day, Year)

Host name, Title

Name of Business

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,  
(Name of Host)

Paragraph 1: Thank your host for the opportunity to do the shadow.

Paragraph 2: Describe some of the things you learned as a result of the shadow experience.

Paragraph 3: Add any additional comments you have.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Your Name)