

TIPS FOR JOB SHADOW HOSTS



GOAL AND PURPOSE OF JOB SHADOWING

- Provide students with a meaningful introduction to work
- Connect current education to work experiences
- Give students a context for making decisions about higher education
- Fostering relationships between, students/schools and employers



KEYS FOR JOB SHADOW HOSTS

- Keep in mind the age of your shadow (this might be their first time in a professional setting)
- Students want to be actively engaged. Try to provide opportunities for them to work on live projects or something hands-on
- Ask them what they know about your company and what they would like to know
- Emphasize the positive in your conversations but always be honest and straightforward



THINGS TO PREPARE IN ADVANCE

- Choose a day when you have some interesting things going on
- Propose a manageable amount of time (full day vs. half day)
- Find out some information about your student visitor (grade level, interests, etc.) from the school in advance, so you can plan your comments and activities accordingly

- Involve your colleagues to provide different experiences and perspectives
- Give instructions on dress code, directions to your office, parking info, and what he or she should bring (a computer, lunch, etc) ahead of time.

IDEAS FOR STRUCTURING YOUR DAY:



INTRODUCTIONS

- Tell the student about yourself and ask them some questions as well
- Talk about: your professional background, interests/hobbies, what you do for fun
- Describe your “typical” day and be prepared to field questions regarding salaries, promotions, schooling, etc.
- Talk about the career and why you chose to pursue it
- Ask about the student's strengths, interests, favorite classes
- Ask about at least one thing each student would like to learn or see during the visit
- Anything you can do to “break the ice” and make the student feel welcome and at ease with you and your colleagues – this way they are more likely to ask questions.

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GIVE A TOUR

- Give the student a tour of your office or business and explain the roles of each person to which they are introduced
- Interact with your co-workers on all levels to give the student an overview of how your company runs
- Talk about what your business does and how it affects the community



OTHER IDEAS

- Walk the student through one of your primary responsibilities
- Plan to allow the student to do some limited, hands-on tasks (closely supervise)
- Show off the technology you use and let the student try it out
- Give the students a case study or do a brainstorming session related to a current issue your organization is dealing with
- Attend a meeting. Have students listen in on a sales/client call or information request
- Stress the importance of promptness, attendance, appropriate personal appearance and attire and a positive work ethic
- Ask your shadow what they learned from the experience, what misconceptions they had, what they liked and what they were not so enthusiastic about, and if there are any questions.



CONVERSATION TOPICS

- Explain how your work relates to classes they might be taking in school
- Share examples of your daily routine that incorporates skills they are learning such as communication, technology, math or writing
- Tell the student about yourself, where you went to school, some work and college experiences (internships, your first job, etc.) and why you chose this career
- Explain what you like about your job as well as some of the disadvantages to your career
- Share obstacles you encountered and overcame, interesting turns and life situations you've encountered
- Share any helpful advice you wish you learned or things you had done in school to be more prepared for your career