

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 students 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 him or her 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 s/he learned from the experience, what misconceptions s/he had, what s/he liked and what s/he wasn't 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