

# **KLA Class of 2000**



## **Project Proud: Job Shadowing for Career Exploration**

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Job Shadowing programs are being utilized across the country and around the world to give young people an opportunity for career exploration. The focus is on student-initiated and guided observation. Students closely observe the various functions performed and roles played on a job through an interactive shadowing experience. These programs, which serve as a powerful way for the student to experience the workplace first hand, also give businesses and their employees the ability to have a positive influence on the future of a child. The experience, which is meant to be clearly exploratory only...not work, can serve as further solidification of a student's desire to pursue a career in a select field or may also provide awareness that can change the student's mind about a possible career interest.

Job shadowing provides an opportunity for strengthening partnerships between schools and businesses that often result in:

- “Real life” experiences for the student
- Heightened motivation by the students to expand and meet their educational career goals
- Improved working relationships between teachers and local businesses
- Proactive workforce development by local businesses
- Opportunities for students to see relationships between their educational experience and career choices

Most often job shadowing programs are a school-sponsored activity in which the student makes contact with a local business that has agreed to participate in the program. Upon making contact, the student should express the field in which he/she is interested in shadowing. It is then up to the business to decide whether they have the ability to provide the student with an appropriate shadowing experience. In certain cases, the business may not have a position to shadow in that field and/or may decide that the environment is too dangerous to offer such an experience. Provided that there is a match and the business is in favor of providing a shadowing opportunity, the student should schedule a date and time for the shadowing to take place and obtain any other details considered appropriate (i.e. way to dress, required permission forms, length of shadowing experience). These details, as well as many others related to the Student's Role, are covered in a student

brochure (**Career Exploration through Job Shadowing**) included as Exhibit A to this document.

The job shadowing experience should be planned to provide the student with the opportunity to experience all facets within the field of his/her desire. It is also beneficial for the student to have an opportunity to explore all aspects of the particular business or industry in which they are shadowing. The length of the student's shadowing experience can vary, but will often be determined by the employer or established by the school. Students may practice or try hands-on tasks associated with the job, but they may NOT perform productive work that benefits the employer. At the point at which the student becomes productive, it has become a work experience, and the student is entitled to being paid.

## **Employer Guidelines**

There are several factors that will determine whether the student will have a successful shadowing experience, including the school's participation, student's desire, parent's support, and the business's involvement. While all these factors are important, the employer's role likely could have the most significant impact on the student's future career choice. With this in mind, the objective of the employer or business is to provide the student with an opportunity to learn as much as possible from a person working at a job that she or he has expressed interest in. By "shadowing" a person at their job, the student will get a firsthand perspective of what adults do in the world of work. Additionally, the student will better understand steps that can be taken for future career exploration.

## **Preparation before the Student Visits the Site**

### **Plan the Activity**

- Specify a contact person to coordinate the experience at the worksite
- Sign and return any forms to school
- Plan your job shadow. Review the "Questions to Ask" section of the student brochure (**Career Exploration through Job Shadowing**) as

you prepare. Obtain any available introductory information about the student and his/her interests.

- What aspects of your job will the student observe?
- How will the student spend his/her time?
- What is the length of the visit?
- Will the student be accompanying you on a tour of your organization?
- Will other personnel be included?
- What safety and other relevant policies or regulations at the worksite need to be addressed while the student is on-site?
- When you have been notified that your job shadow has been scheduled, review the information to be sure that you have pertinent information such as the name of the student, the school contact, etc.
- When the student calls you, confirm the date and time of the job shadow with them. Tell them where to park and where you will meet them.

### **Make Arrangements**

- Provide a map, directions, and parking instructions if needed.
- Announce the activity to other employees, and possibly put an article in your organizations' newsletter.
- Make lunch arrangements, if appropriate.
- Arrange student parking, if needed.

### **Gather Information**

- Collect copies of your job description, the organization's brochure or other information to distribute to the student.
- Identify desired skills and competencies for various jobs at your worksite.
- Have your organization's safety, non-disclosure, and other relevant documents available to inform students of policies and procedures.

### **During the Job Shadowing Day**

- Now it's time for you to share your expertise. Remember, the student is thankful to have some of your time. Enjoy yourself!
- The job shadowing day should begin with a welcome session, including a brief overview of the company, safety rules, introduction of personnel, and information about the schedule for the day.

- Host employers are encouraged to perform normal work activities with a willingness to talk to students about their work and its significance in the organization. Students will sometimes have unrealistic expectations about the workplace, so offer them a glimpse of what it's really like.
- Explain the important aspects of your job and how you relate to others in the organization.
- Share your educational background.
- Students might feel uncomfortable asking questions, so please explain your actions and give reasons for your statements. Students have a prepared list of questions they would like addressed.
- It is best to actively involve or engage the students in hands-on activities including demonstrations, problem solving, and questions.

### **Providing a Job Shadowing Experience**

Employers can get involved in providing job shadowing experiences for students by enrolling in Career CONNECTIONS using Pathfinder. To enroll, contact the Warsaw/Kosciusko Chamber of Commerce.

Exhibit A: Student brochure – **Career Exploration through Job Shadowing**

## Questions to Ask While You Shadow

1. What is your occupation and job title?
2. How did you become interested in this type of work?
3. Why did you choose this career?
4. How did you get your job with this company?
5. What type of education and/or training was required for this job?
6. What classes did you take in high school that prepared you for your job?
7. Are there continuing education or training requirements for this job?
8. Did you have to interview, take any tests, complete an internship, or apprenticeship for this position?
9. What kind of experience was required for this job?
10. What basic skills and knowledge are needed for this job and how are they used (i.e. reading, writing, math, listening, speaking, etc.)?
11. Describe the activities and responsibilities required for this job.
12. What personality traits are important for this job?
13. What kind of technical knowledge is required for this job (i.e. using computers, operating equipment, etc.)?
14. How many hours do you work in a typical week?
15. Are certain times of the month or year busier than others?

16. Are you required to supervise other employees as part of your job?
17. What interpersonal ("people") skills are needed and how are they used?
  - Serving customers
  - Participating as a team member
  - Supervisory
  - Teaching
  - Leading
  - Resolving conflict
18. Which of the following problem-solving skills are needed and how are they applied?
  - Organizing and planning
  - Interpreting & communicating info
  - Thinking creatively
  - Making decisions
  - Analyzing problems
19. Do you work a shift? What choices do you have in making your work schedule?
20. What are the salary ranges for the different levels in this field?
21. What types of fringe benefits are offered to you for your job?
22. What is a typical "raise" and how are they earned?
23. What is the opportunity for advancement in this area?
24. What do you like best about your job?
25. What don't you like about your job?
26. How does your job affect your time away from work?
27. What advice would you give a student interested in this career?
28. What changes do you see in this area within the next 5-10 years?

## Job Shadowing For Career Exploration



## **Kosciusko County Job Shadowing Student Guidelines**

As you prepare for your future, one of the best steps you take is to explore possible career choices. "Job Shadowing" is the opportunity to watch and participate in a job you have an interest in. Most job shadows last only a few hours, but provide a great opportunity to expose yourself to the career.

It is important to prepare for the job shadow. This guideline pamphlet is designed to assist you.

Begin by thinking about some professions that genuinely interest you. Ask yourself some questions. Why am I interested in a career in this field? Am I seeking experience for another career? Do I have the physical requirements for this job?

Your next step is to contact a local business in this related career. You will need to telephone the business to make arrangements to participate in the job shadow. The next page outlines how to make the contact when you telephone the business. It is important to be prepared prior to your telephone call.

## **Making Contact with the Business**

When you first call, identify yourself with your first and last name. Be courteous and pleasant. Ask to speak to someone in the human resources department. If the business doesn't have a human resources department, ask to speak to someone about job shadowing. It is possible with smaller companies that they don't have specialized departments. Explain to the person that you are interested in a possible career similar to what this business or company offers. Ask if they have job shadowing available. You may need to explain what job shadowing is.

Ask the following questions, and write down the information as it is given to you:

1. What day is the job shadow?
2. What time should I arrive?
3. Who should I ask for when I arrive?
4. What is the appropriate way to dress (casual, business, etc.)?
5. Are there any special forms or permissions I need?
6. How long will the job shadow last?

## **The Day of The Job Shadow**

Actually, you start preparing the night before. Get a good night's rest. You want to arrive feeling good so you get the most out of the experience. Arrive a few minutes before you are expected. If you know you're going to be late, telephone the contact person, and inform them. It is very important to make a good impression. You may one day be asking this very person to hire you!

Write a few questions down that you'd like ask about the career. A few questions are listed on the back of this page to assist you.

It is important that you understand you are a guest at this business. You should conduct yourself accordingly. Remain attentive. Ask questions.

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