

Teacher Tip Sheet

Job Shadowing

A tip sheet for teachers on how to help students get the most out of a Job Shadowing program. Job Shadowing presents a unique opportunity to support and augment the curriculum and get students more deeply engaged in their learning. If you are coordinating a Job Shadowing activity, have a look at the Coordinator Tip Sheet in the WBL Toolkit.

Job Shadowing

Job Shadowing is a Career Exploration activity in which a student is paired with an employee, observes the workday of that employee, interacts with clients or customers and attends meetings and other appointments with the person they are shadowing. Job Shadows are designed to help students explore a field of interest while developing research skills and building occupational knowledge. A Job Shadow is conducted at the workplace and provides the opportunity for the student to ask questions of the person being shadowed throughout the day. While most Job Shadows are conducted over the bulk of the work day, variations exist, including allowing a student to rotate through a number of different departments over a number of days.

Job Shadowing experiences are designed to promote:

- Exploration of a field of interest
- Exposure to careers and jobs
- Awareness of the academic, technical and personal skills required in particular jobs.
- The opportunity to practice communication and other professional skills

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Job Shadowing Success Factors

When planning and implementing a Job Shadow, keep the following success factors in mind.

Before the Job Shadow

- Meet with your P-TECH coordinator.
 - ✓ Provide as much information as you can about students who are seeking and ready for Job Shadows. Let the coordinator know how many will be ready for Job Shadows by a certain date and help match them to appropriate employers.
 - ✓ Review the Job Shadow Activity Guide.
 - ✓ Help the employer understand where students are in their development and what their interests and career aspirations are, and how they might link the experience to the classroom.
- Recruit students.
 - ✓ Identify interested and qualified students.
 - ✓ Select Job Shadow placements for qualified students based on their career interests and relevant personal factors.
- Prepare students for the Job Shadow.
 - ✓ Share and review the Student Tip Sheet.
 - ✓ Meet with students and discuss behavioral expectations for the experience.
 - ✓ Make sure students learn about workplace safety and workplace norms.
 - ✓ Work with students to develop specific learning objectives for the Job Shadow,

- including personal, academic, career and work-readiness related objectives.
Document learning objectives and share with the employer in advance.
- Prepare employer for the Job Shadow.
 - ✓ Suggest that students observe and interact with employees at different levels of responsibility in the organization.
 - ✓ Support employers in effective interactions by developing strategies to “keep it real” and making sure students are attentive, polite and engaged.
- Make the classroom connection.
 - ✓ Build excitement for the Job Shadow by connecting the experience to the real world.
 - ✓ Help students hone the learning objectives they have developed for their Job Shadows and share with others.

After the Job Shadow

- Reflect on learning.
 - ✓ Provide opportunities for directed reflection through discussions, presentations, and/or projects.
 - ✓ Support students in determining other workplaces they would like to visit and their next steps in learning about careers of interest.
- Make the classroom connection.
 - ✓ Provide opportunities for students to showcase their Job Shadow through presentations or expositions of their learning.
 - ✓ Provide classroom experiences that help them connect the Job Shadow to their next steps.
- Work with your P-TECH coordinator to:
 - ✓ Complete and review assessments of student learning outcomes.
 - ✓ Assess the effectiveness of the Job Shadow and make recommendations for future adjustments.
- Document student learning and record the experience.
- Have students write thank-you notes to the Job Shadow host.
- Have students identify other people they would like to shadow.

Go Deeper

Here are some activities to deepen the impact of a Job Shadow.

- Make it part of a project and have students prepare and deliver a presentation to others at your school about the company/workplace experience.
- Take pictures from the Job Shadow and provide them to the company for their website or newsletter.
- Publicize the Job Shadow and the business by placing a story in the local newspaper or posting on the company’s webpage. (Make sure you clear this with the employer partner first.)