

Introduction to Job Shadow

The **BIG** Idea

- What can I learn from a job shadow and how do I make it happen?

AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up: Workplace Experiences & Discussion (10 minutes)
- II. Job Shadow: What It Is and How It Works (10 minutes)
- III. Setting Up a Job Shadow (20 minutes)
- IV. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

MATERIALS

STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:

- Student Handbook page 91, Workplace Observations
- Student Handbook page 92, Benefits of a Job Shadow
- Student Handbook page 93, Job Shadow Checklist
- Student Handbook page 94, Tips for Setting Up the Job Shadow
- Student Handbook pages 95-96, Job Shadow Phone Call Script
- Student Handbook pages 97-98, Job Shadow Phone Call Responses

FACILITATOR PAGES:

- Facilitator Resource 1, Calendar
- List of Participating Employers (optional)
- Overhead projector
- Chart paper and markers
- Parent Permission Form, provided by your school (see **Preparation**)

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Identify benefits of a job shadow.
- Understand preparations required for a job shadow.
- Practice setting up a job shadow with an employer.

OVERVIEW

This lesson begins with students considering workplaces they are familiar with – either from first-hand experience or observation – and discussing questions they can answer by visiting a workplace. After establishing what a job shadow is, including how it works and the benefits of participation, students use a script to practice setting up a job shadow. Then students review a checklist of tasks they will complete before, during, and after the job shadow. The lesson concludes with students modeling their job shadow set-up phone calls with the class.

PREPARATION

- Discuss the job shadow project with your school administrator, including possible business partners, parents who might be willing to assist, transportation, and parent permission, including school district forms. (See **BACKGROUND** for details.)
- The following handouts need to be made into overhead transparencies or copied onto chart paper:
 - **Student Handbook page 91, Workplace Observations**
 - **Facilitator Resource 1, Calendar** (both pages)
- List the day's **BIG IDEA** and activities on the board.
- Write the day's vocabulary word and definition on the board.
- Determine the deadlines for each task on **Student Handbook page 93, Job Shadow Checklist**. Transfer these dates to the overhead transparencies of **Facilitator Resource 1, Calendar** during **Activity II, Job Shadow: What It Is and How It Works?**
- Write the months and dates on **Facilitator Resource 1, Calendar** (both pages). Make copies of both pages of this calendar (one per student).
- As the end of the unit approaches, remind students to call their job shadow contacts (the person they spoke to when setting up their job shadow) to confirm their appointment, and to use this call to gather information regarding directions, parking, dress, etc.

- ☐ Make copies of parent permission forms as required by your school.

NOTE: Due dates should be established at your discretion, in a way that makes sense with your school's calendar. Students should set up the job shadow and return permission slips no later than two weeks before the scheduled job shadow date.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The *School-to-Work Glossary of Terms*, published by the National School-to-Work Office, defines job shadowing as part of career exploration activities in which a student “follows an employee at a firm for one or more days to learn about a particular occupation or industry.” Among its many benefits, a job shadow provides students the opportunity to observe first-hand the work environment, gauge their employability, see occupational skills in practice, and consider potential employment options in a career of interest. Additionally, the job shadow experience increases career awareness, helps model behavior through examples, and reinforces in students the link between classroom learning and work requirements. Almost any workplace can serve as a potential job shadowing site.

Resources:

- <http://www.state.nj.us/education/cte/sle/JobShadowingHandbook.pdf>
- Paris, K., & Mason, S. (1995). *Planning and Implementing Youth Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, Center on Education and Work

In 11th grade, Roads to Success students are expected to participate in a job shadow experience, which requires each student to set up a half- or full-day visit with a local employer. The purpose of the visit is to introduce students to the behind-the-scenes operation of the workplace, ideally in their fields of interest.

It is recommended that job shadow visits take place during a designated period (perhaps a week or two) so that students can prepare and debrief together. In some situations, all students visit the workplace on a designated day.

Standard Job Shadow Experience

Students are responsible for the following:

- Making an initial call to set up the visit.
- Making a follow-up call to confirm the visit.
- Obtaining written parent permission prior to the visit.
- Arranging transportation to and from the workplace.
- Notifying teachers of absence and making up missed work.
- Securing a written evaluation from the employer, to be mailed to the RTS facilitator with a signature across the sealed flap of the envelope. Alternatively, schools may choose to accept company letterhead or a business card as evidence of a visit, along with a student-delivered evaluation from the employer.

Companies are responsible for the following:

- Providing a liaison who will direct the student's activities while in the workplace and complete the written evaluation at the end of the visit.
- Providing a safe environment for the student's visit.
- Communicating problems to the RTS facilitator in a timely manner.
- Providing appropriate access to work activities, planning meetings, etc.
- Allowing time (at least 15 minutes) for the student to conduct an informational interview with one of the company employees, preferably the person assigned as the liaison.

The school is responsible for:

- Creating inducements for students to participate, for example, making the job shadow visit a course requirement.
- Offering the missed time as an "excused absence" where appropriate documentation is provided.
- With the RTS facilitator, cultivating relationships with local employers that enable students to connect with appropriate workplaces. For maximum effectiveness, this process should begin when the RTS program is instituted in Grade 9.

The RTS facilitator is responsible for:

- Tracking permission slips and employer evaluations.
- Providing instruction re: contacting employers and setting up job shadow opportunities.
- Describing workplace expectations.
- Assisting students in planning informational interviews

Alternate Job Shadow Experience

In areas with few job opportunities, or where lack of transportation presents a hurdle, schools may choose to take multiple students to visit a single workplace. For example, a visit to a local hospital could include opportunities for small groups of students to shadow a variety of jobs in the medical field (nurse, doctor, radiologist, etc.) and in fields represented by other departments as well (accountant, lawyer, hospital administrator, chef, social worker, security, etc.).

Advantage:

- Visits aren't dependent on individual student initiative

Requirements:

- School relationships with local employers
- Employers willing and able to host large numbers of students. (Many may limit the number of visitors to 20 or fewer.)
- Advance planning re: field trip permissions, transportation arrangements, chaperones, etc.

Disadvantages:

- Fewer opportunities for individual employer/student interaction
- Less freedom to choose fields of interest
- Disruptions to other classroom activities

VOCABULARY

Job Shadow: A work experience in which students learn about a career of interest by following or “shadowing” a worker for a day.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

DO NOW:

If you prefer, you may choose to use **Student Handbook page 91, Workplace Observations** as a DO NOW. Give the students five minutes to complete it. Once they complete the page, continue with the Warm Up discussion.

If you think it is too early to distribute the permission slips during this lesson, you may choose to hand them out at a time you feel is more appropriate. You should still show students your school's **Parent Permission Form** and explain its importance.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. WARM UP: Workplace Experiences & Discussion (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** At the end of this unit, you are going to participate in a **job shadow**, an experience in which you will visit a company and follow, or “shadow,” a worker for a half or full day to learn more about a career that interests you. Today’s lesson is about preparing for and setting up your job shadow.
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Open to **Student Handbook page 91, Workplace Observations**. Think about workplaces you have visited, worked at, or seen on TV. For each place, list at least two observations about what it would be like to work there. One example has been done for you.
3. Allow students five minutes to complete **Student Handbook page 91, Workplace Observations**.
4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Last year, you had an opportunity to visit a college, and find out first-hand what it is like to be a student there. How did that visit help you learn about college in a way that catalogs and websites alone could not? [Allow students to respond.]

How might visiting a worker in his or her place of employment be like visiting a student at college? [You can find out first-hand what a job is like by following a worker as he or she goes about his day-to-day tasks.]

5. Encourage discussion by having students share the workplaces and observations they noted on their handout, and identify what new information they might learn, or questions they may find answers to, by visiting one of the workplaces on their list. Jot down their ideas on chart paper or the board.

II. Job Shadow: What It Is and How It Works (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** What other benefits might come out of a job shadow? Let’s take a look at **Student Handbook page 92, Benefits of a Job Shadow** and find out.

[Invite volunteers to read aloud each of the benefits on the handout.]

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** As you can see, a job shadow can be a great way to learn about the workplace. In order for the experience to be a successful one, you need to

do some groundwork and planning over the next few weeks. Let's review together what these responsibilities and tasks include.

3. Project **Student Handbook page 93, Job Shadow Checklist** and **Facilitator Resource 1, Calendar** on the LCD panel or overhead projector. Give each student a copy of these pages and have them follow along. Note that you will need two calendar pages to fit in dates for all of the checklist items.
4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** A successful job shadow requires some advance planning. In order to find a workplace you're interested in, each of you will be responsible for setting up your own visit. The first tasks in the checklist involve setting up and confirming your job shadow. You will learn how to do this in today's lesson. You should plan to contact someone and set up your job shadow by **[fill in date]**. Two days before you are to attend your job shadow, you must call to confirm the job shadow. A confirmation phone call is a way of making sure the employer is ready for your visit. Your job shadows will be completed during the week of **[insert date]**.

Once you have set up your job shadow, the next step involves getting your parent or guardian to sign the **Parent Permission Form**. This form must be signed in order to participate in the job shadow. [Distribute forms and explain the due dates for them. Also, display this form on the overhead projector. (See **Implementation Options** for suggestions.)]

It is important to schedule your job shadow BEFORE having your parent or guardian sign the permission forms, so that they know when and what they are giving you permission to do.

The next tasks in the **Job Shadow Checklist** are activities you will do in class with my guidance. These include drafting a resume, a one-page summary of your skills, work experience (if any), education, and career goals. Once you've set up your job shadow, you will conduct online research to learn as much as you can about the company. Finally, you will generate questions to ask your job shadow host (that cannot be answered through independent research), that will help you figure out whether the career is a good fit for you.

5. Point out to students that they are to complete the next items on the checklist AFTER the job shadow. First, they will need to ensure that the employer completes an evaluation and returns it to school. Then, in class, they will reflect upon the experience and will draft thank-you letters to send to their job shadow hosts.

III. Setting Up a Job Shadow (20 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Once you identify a workplace of interest, the next step is to make a phone call to schedule a job shadow. Remember, when calling a business, use a professional voice, not a conversational tone you might use when talking to your friends on the phone. Unlike a friend, a potential job shadow host has never met you, so when you call to introduce yourself, you are making an important first impression.

2. Have students open to **Student Handbook page 94, Tips for Setting Up the Job Shadow**. Invite volunteers to read aloud each tip. Emphasize Tip #3, the importance of not giving up if they don't reach the right person to set up the job shadow. If you've set up the job shadow for students in advance, someone will be expecting their call. However, if you are not able to alert the company in advance, the student will have to be patient, polite, and pro-active to arrange a visit. Encourage them to be persistent in finding the right person to help them make it happen.

3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** One way to prepare for your call is to have a script and use it to practice what you will say. You don't need to follow the script word for word, but having something prepared will help you stick to the point and get the information you need. A script can also be helpful in case you are nervous or are worried about getting flustered during the call.

4. Have students open to **Student Handbook pages 95-96, Job Shadow Phone Call Script** and with help from a volunteer, model a call to set up a job shadow. Point out how this script reflects some of the tips in **Student Handbook page 94, Tips for Setting Up the Job Shadow**. Then have volunteers come to the front of class to model the different options on **Student Handbook pages 97-98, Job Shadow Phone Call Responses**. Make sure that you address each of the options listed on the form.

Ask students to give examples of how you followed the tips, including any of the following:

- Introduced yourself right away.
- Stated the purpose of your call.
- Confirmed that you were talking to the person responsible for scheduling job shadows.
- Spoke clearly and slowly.
- Said "thank you" at the end of the call.

5. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now it's your turn. With a partner, take turns rehearsing the job shadow set-up call using the job shadow phone call script. The partner playing the recipient of the call is to use **Student Handbook pages 97-98, Job Shadow Phone Call Responses**. For questions that require a response, choose one of the options listed. The partner making the call should adapt what to say based on the responses. For example, if the recipient says she or he is not the one to schedule job shadows, then the caller needs to repeat his introduction when he's transferred to a new person.
6. Allow students time to practice, taking turns being the caller and the person who answers the call.

IV. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

1. Invite pairs to model for the class the job shadow phone call they have been practicing.
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** When you visit the workplace during your job shadow, you will take along similar documents to those you would take to a job interview. Next week will be the first of two lessons on creating an effective resume. The first will focus on how you can use a resume to feature your strengths and skills. During the second lesson, you will create a resume you can use to describe your school and work experience.

CALENDAR

Month: _____

You will use this calendar to keep track of your job shadow due dates.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

CALENDAR

Month: _____

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Workplace Observations

Directions: List two workplaces you have visited, worked at, or seen on TV. For each, list at least two observations about what it might be like to work there. An example has been done for you.

Workplace	How Observed	Observations
Fast food restaurant	Visited a friend who works as a cashier	Job is fast paced and a little stressful. Lots of people my age work there and are friendly toward each other.

Benefits of a Job Shadow

A job shadow can help you...

- Explore and define career interests.
- Get a first-hand look into what a specific job involves, including the benefits and challenges.
- Understand the education and experience required to enter a career.
- Discover jobs you may not have known existed.
- Decide if a career is a good fit for you.
- Learn what it takes to get ahead of people working in your field of interest.
- Connect what you are learning in school to the skills required to succeed in a career.
- Get inside information about a company's culture (i.e., is it very casual with people rollerblading through the corridors? Or is it very corporate – formal offices, suits and ties?).
- Learn how to communicate in the workplace.
- Meet people who may provide ongoing career guidance.

SOURCES:

Nathan Hale High School, West Allis - West Milwaukee School District

http://www.quintcareers.com/job_shadowing.html

<http://www.cbia.com/edf/JobShadowing.htm>

https://cms.uwm.edu/cdc/explore/informational_interview.cfm

<http://www.state.vt.us/stw/wblm/2C0jobshadow.pdf>

Job Shadow Checklist

Directions: With guidance from your teacher, review each task in the job shadow process. Identify dates to complete each task, and write them in the boxes on the right. As you finish each task, put a check mark next to it.

Check when complete	Items to complete	Date due
SET-UP (student responsibility)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make contact with company to set up job shadow	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm job shadow	
PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION (student responsibility)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent permission form	
IN-CLASS PREPARATION		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resume	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Interview questions	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Company research	
IN-CLASS FOLLOW UP		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reflect on your experience	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write a thank-you letter	
EMPLOYER EVALUATION OF STUDENT		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employer completes evaluation	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student returns evaluation to school	

Tips for Setting up the Job Shadow

1. **Introduce yourself:** Begin by introducing yourself and stating the purpose of your call.
2. **Be prepared:** Prepare an introduction in advance. Practice what you're going to say a few times before you make the call.
3. **Make sure you're talking to the right person — at the right time:** Always identify the name of the person you're talking to and confirm that he or she is the right person to set up the job shadow. Be understanding if the person needs to forward the call to someone else, or if he or she asks you to call back another time.
4. **Speak clearly and slowly.**
5. **Take notes:** Jot down answers to help you remember the call. If you have to call back, note the person who answered the call, and the date and time to call back.
6. **Keep it brief:** Respect the other person's time. Keep the topic of the call to setting up the job shadow, including time and place.
7. **Say thank you:** Always thank the person for their time and their help.

Job Shadow Phone Call Script

Directions: Use the script below to schedule your job shadow. Fill in the blanks for statements 1, 3, and 6 before you make your call. The lines in bold indicate where you should be taking notes during the call. Make sure to record all of this information before you finish the call.

1. Hi, my name is _____ and I am a Junior at _____ High School. Participating in a job shadow is an important part of our career education. I would like to visit your company for a day or half day in order to observe someone working as a _____ to learn more about this career. May I speak with the person who might help me schedule this?
 - a. If person is unavailable or out for the day, get their name and the name of the person you spoke with.
 - i. Name of person you spoke with:** _____
 - ii. Name of job shadow contact person:** _____
2. Repeat step 1 if transferred to another individual.
3. May I schedule a job shadow with one of your employees?
 - a. If the answer is yes, go on to the next question. If the answer is no, thank this person for their time and politely end the phone call.
4. Common time ranges for job shadows include:
Half Day: 8AM-11PM; 9AM-12PM; 1PM-4PM. Full Day: 8AM-3PM; 9AM-4PM
5. Would it be possible to schedule my job shadow during the week of _____ [as given by your teacher]?
 - a. Date and time of job shadow:** _____
6. Repeat date and time you schedule.

7. Ask for the name, phone number, and e-mail address of your contact person, directions to the job shadow site, and appropriate dress for this workplace.

a. **Name:** _____

b. **Phone Number:** _____

c. **E-mail:** _____

d. **Address:** _____

e. **Directions:** _____

f. **Appropriate dress for this workplace:** _____

8. Repeat the name and phone number of your contact person, directions, and appropriate dress for this workplace.

9. Thank you very much for your time and commitment to help make the job shadow a great and helpful experience.

Job Shadow Phone Call Responses

1. Hi, my name is _____ and I am a Junior at _____ High School. I am interested in participating in a job shadow at your company. May I speak with the person in charge of scheduling job shadows?

Possible Responses:

Option A: I am the person in charge of scheduling job shadows.

Option B: I am not the person in charge of scheduling job shadows. I'll transfer you to him/her.

Option C: He/She is out of the office or unavailable at the moment. Can I take a message and have him/her get back to you?

Option D: We don't do that here.

2. Repeat above or continue if transferred to another individual.
3. Participating in a job shadow is an important part of our career education. I would like to visit your company for a day or half day in order to observe someone working as a _____ to learn more about this career.
4. May I schedule a job shadow with one of your employees?

Possible Responses:

Option A: Sure. I know the perfect person. Her name is _____.

Option B: I really don't know which employee is interested. I'll have to get back to you.

5. Common time ranges for job shadows include:
Half Day: 8AM-11PM; 9AM-12PM; 1PM-4PM. **Full Day:** 8AM-3PM; 9AM-4PM
6. Would it be possible to schedule my job shadow during the week of _____ [as given by teacher]?

Possible Responses:

Option A: That week is perfect. Let's schedule for Tuesday that week from 1-4.

Option B: That week will not work for me.

7. Repeat date and time you schedule.
8. Ask for the name, phone number, and e-mail address of your contact person, directions to the job shadow site, and appropriate dress for this workplace.
9. Repeat the name and phone number of your contact person, directions, and appropriate dress for this workplace.
10. Thank you very much for your time and commitment to help make the job shadow a great and helpful experience.