

**Module: Exploring Careers**

**Topic:** Job Shadowing

**Competency:** Students will demonstrate the ability to locate, understand and use career information.

**Length:** Suggested two class periods to discuss, plan, and report on the job shadowing experience and one day to job shadow.

**Objective:** Students will be able to shadow an adult for some or all of a work day to observe not only job characteristics and responsibilities, but also what each job requires on a day-to-day basis. Note: Students should have already completed an interest assessment so that they can shadow someone in a job that matches their interests.

**Materials:** Job Shadow Questions to Ask – student handout  
Job Shadowing Planning Sheet  
Sample Contact E-mail or Letter

**Teacher Notes:**

1. Check to see if your school has had experience organizing job shadows in the past, and if your school has guidelines in place to ensure a quality experience for each student. If needed the National Job Shadow Coalition ([www.jobshadow.org](http://www.jobshadow.org)) has information that can help you get started on organizing a job shadow day.
2. The National Job Shadow Coalition traditionally organizes a Groundhog Job Shadow Day for students around the country. If you wish, have your students complete a job shadow in late January or early February. Your school may want to participate in this national event, or you may wish to have students arrange their job shadows based on their hosts' schedules.
3. You may even want to guide students to attempt to schedule their job shadows for a non-school day such as a break between semesters, teacher planning days, etc.
4. If your school does not have a list of job shadow hosts, you can contact community members who may help you in compiling a list of businesses and professionals who are willing to host your students.
5. The Job Shadowing experience may not be suitable for all eighth grade students. Many may have no desire or not have the maturity to do this activity. Teams or partners may be considered. For those students who do, it will be an excellent opportunity to gain insight into a career area. This activity will give the more mature student the chance to have an in-depth experience. Students will develop communication skills and gain self-confidence if they are involved in setting up the job shadow.
6. For your information, you can even go on a virtual job shadow by watching career videos in which workers describe their job, their work environment, their prospects for advancement and the education, skills, and other requirements needed to succeed in that job. Check out [Virtual Job Shadow](http://www.virtualjobshadow.com) (<http://www.virtualjobshadow.com>). This site is not being endorsed but rather letting you know that such a product exists if unable to arrange job shadowing opportunities locally. This is a cost item.

**Description of Activity:**

1. Introduce students to the concept of job shadowing where they will “shadow” an adult at his or her job for part or all of a work day. The job shadow will let them see a sample career in action and visit a real workplace.
2. Each student should decide, based on his/her career research, which worksite they want to shadow.
3. Review the Job Shadow Planning Sheet with students. Follow school policy and change this process accordingly. Once they have selected a worksite, they can email or send a letter asking if the employer is willing to host them for a job shadow day. See sample contact e-email or letter.
4. Coach the students on the questions they should ask during the job shadow day. See sample *Job Shadow Questions to Ask*.
5. Students should write a summary of their shadowing experience.
6. Students should write or e-mail a thank-you note to the Job Shadowing participant.
7. The teacher will provide resources for students and help arrange shadowing schedule between student and job site.

**Evaluation:** Students will participate in a job shadow experience, interview the hosts, and reflect on their experience.

# Job Shadowing – Questions to Ask

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Facility Visited: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

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1. What are your duties and responsibilities? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are the responsibilities of your department? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. How are computers used in this career? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What type of training or education will I need to get a job in this career in the future?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Why did you decide to do this type of work? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What do you like most about your job? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What do you like least about your job? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Will there be many jobs like yours available in the future? Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. What is the typical salary range for someone in this field:  
Entry level: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mid-level: \_\_\_\_\_  
Top level: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Which of these benefits are typically offered in this occupation?

Health Insurance	_____	Paid Holidays	_____
Dental Insurance	_____	Paid Vacations	_____
Life Insurance	_____	On Site Child Care	_____
Bonuses	_____	Profit Sharing	_____
Overtime	_____		_____

11. What other benefits are generally available for this type of job? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. What physical demands does this occupation require?

Long periods of sitting	_____	Walk or be able to move around	_____
Long periods of standing	_____	Stoop, bend, or kneel regularly	_____
Some lifting	_____	Regular lifting of 50+ pounds	_____
Climbing	_____	Other: _____	

13. What are the working conditions in this occupation?

Indoor work	_____	Wet, humid environment	_____
Outdoor work	_____	Noisy environment	_____
Cold working environment	_____	Hazards	_____
Warm working environment	_____	Other: _____	

My opinion/impression about this occupational area is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I would/would not want to work for this company because: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## SAMPLE CONTACT E-MAIL OR LETTER

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am in the eighth grade at \_\_\_\_\_. I have been exploring my career interests and I'm interested in a job shadow at your business. Would you be able to host me?

If I shadow you, I would hope to follow you for <<*an entire day/half a day*>> to learn what you do on the job every day. I'm particularly interested in \_\_\_\_\_, and so would like to learn more about your career.

Our class will be doing job shadows on <<*list date here or write "at your convenience" and ask you host to set a date*>>.

You can contact me at <<*e-mail, phone or address*>>. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

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## SAMPLE THANK YOU E-MAIL OR LETTER

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Thanks again for hosting me for a job shadow on <<*date*>>. I appreciate your thoughtfulness in taking the time to help me learn more about your career.

I was particularly interested in \_\_\_\_\_.

You've given me a lot to think about as I plan for future career options. Thanks for your help. I hope you'll be willing to host students from my school again in the future.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

# JOB SHADOW PLANNING SHEET

**Contact Information:** *(Potential job shadow host's name, business, and contact information)*

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**Method and date of contacting host:**

- E-mail
- Phone call
- Letter
- Other

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Response from potential host:**

- Yes – If yes, date, time and location for job shadow: \_\_\_\_\_
- No

**Logistics:** *(transportation to and from job shadow)*

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## Pre Job Shadow Activities

After you have secured a place in which to contact your job shadow, you need to prepare yourself to get the most out of the experience. The following suggestions will help keep you focused.

- Know about the company you're visiting:
  - the type of product or service they sell
  - who owns or operates the business
  - correct spelling of the name of the person being interviewed
  - correct mailing address
- Research several occupations relating to the company using online sources or information from your guidance office.
- Research the company's Web site, if available.
- Make sure you have the appropriate clothes ready for the day you visit.
- Prepare a folder to keep notes, business cards, or any other information given to you during the day. Make sure you bring a pen or pencil.