What is Shadowing?

Job shadowing is an opportunity for a student to connect or shadow with a business professional who has specific knowledge about an occupation or career in which the student is interested. The student will observe the host’s responsibilities and tasks associated with your career and they will have the opportunity to ask questions about knowledge, skills, talents and level of education required for your job. The purpose of shadowing is to allow the student to gather career related information and expand their networking connections, it also allows them to build interviewing skills and become aware of trends in the field. Students are given a chance to “test drive” a career for a day.

How can you as a job shadow host benefit from Job Shadowing?

A job shadow experience may:

- Prove to be an effective method of identifying a potential intern or job candidate by allowing you to examine the student’s interests, skills and abilities.
- Help introduce students to professional level work activities.
- Create a feeling of personal satisfaction that comes from mentoring a student and connecting back to Shippensburg University.
- Provide an opportunity to market your organization to students and others.

What additional information should I provide to a student before the job shadow?

Provide the student with the following information:

- Location/address and where to go when they arrive
- Parking information including costs if applicable or where to meet you if taking public transportation
- Dress code (be as specific as possible, i.e. wear a business suit or a shirt and tie)
- What to bring with them
- Itinerary for their visit

What should I plan to do or talk about with the student during the job shadow?

Students will visit with you at your workplace, see your work in action and may be allowed to participate in some type of meaningful activity. The experience can be structured in many ways with the goal being to provide a realistic understanding of the career field. Talking with your student about why you are in that career field, what you enjoy about it, the disadvantages of the career field will be helpful to the student.

Ideas of activities for your job shadow itinerary can include:

- Observation of daily routine
- Participation in meetings or presentations
- Listening in on customer/ conference calls
- Facility tours
- Speaking with a variety of employees in different departments & review of organizational chart
- If applicable, a “hands on” project/assignment
- Lunch with you and other employees
Below are some topics you may want to share with your student:

Occupational field- How has it changed from the time you graduated? How do you see it affected, if at all, by the economy? What graduate degrees are prominent in the industry?

Current job- What do you like best and least about your job? What types of people do you work with and for? What is your current role and responsibility? How did you get your current position?

Career Future/Alternatives- What other jobs and careers could you go into? If things develop as you would like, what types of career goals do you see for yourself? Before choosing this path, what other employers were you considering?

Lifestyle- What obligation does your work place upon your personal time? How much flexibility do you have in terms of dress, hours of work, vacation schedule? How often do people in your line of work change jobs?

Advice for a New Professional- How is the current workforce in your industry in relation to the economy? What do you look for in a new hire? What keywords do you look for on a resume?

College Activities- Which campus activities helped you prepare for your current professional position? Which courses or activities do you wish you had taken or been a member of that would have better prepared you for what you are doing right now?

Feedback- What should the student think about for future job shadow experiences?

As you talk with your student please keep in mind that they are all at different levels. Some are freshman just exploring majors and careers and others are juniors and are in their major classes and have more career experience.

How are students prepared for a job shadow experience?

In order to participate, students had to submit a resume and apply for a job shadowing opportunity. They also are required to attend a Job Shadow send off meeting with the Career & Community Engagement Center staff, the College of Business Internship Coordinator and Assistant Director of Alumni Relations. The purpose of the job shadow opportunity is explained in detail as is how a student should conduct themselves on their job shadow. They should be prepared to tell you what they would like to get out of their job shadow opportunity and why they chose to participate in the program. They have been instructed on business protocol including attire, conduct/etiquette, and being timely. They have also been instructed to prepare a list of questions about your industry. Students are also required to attend a post job shadow reflection meeting as well as complete the post job shadow evaluation.

Who do I contact if I have any questions prior to, during or after I host a job shadow?

If you have any questions please contact Lorie Davis, Director of Career Mentoring & Employer Relations at 717-477-1484 or ladavis@ship.edu