

Job Shadowing

Commitment

Role	Commitment
Student	One day or less
Educator	One day or less
Employer	One day or less

Arrangement Information

What

Job shadowing is a structured career exploration activity in which students are paired with an industry professional to observe daily work activities; interact with the professional's colleagues, clients, or customers; and attend meetings and other routine work appointments. Often serving as one of students' first close interactions with a workplace and employer, job shadowing provides deeper insight into both careers and work environments. Students benefit most from participating in several job-shadowing experiences, allowing them to compare and contrast the careers, industries, and workplaces that interest them.

When

Job shadowing is a common activity throughout the education experience, but it can be most beneficial in middle grades, high school, and postsecondary education, when students are engaging with the world of work to refine their career aspirations and better understand the work environment.

Time Commitment

Job shadowing typically lasts all or part of a single workday, though some experiences may be longer. The student and the employer should mutually agree upon the duration of the experience in advance, and the experience should be tailored to the specific employee being shadowed and the student's areas of interest. Occasionally, job shadowing is organized so that students spend part of their time with two or more employees. If more than one employee is available, rotational job shadowing allows students to gather information about multiple careers or get multiple perspectives from the same workplace or industry.

Benefits

For **students**, job shadowing provides an up-close look at a specific career within a real workplace. In addition to deepening their understanding of a career field, students gain insight into workplace culture, observe career-ready practices in action, and experience aspects of the job that may not be apparent through classroom learning alone. These experiences can help students confirm or refine their career interests and goals.

For **educators**, job shadowing provides an opportunity to make meaningful connections in the community, inform their classroom curriculum and instructional strategies, and demonstrate to students the real-world application of classroom learning.

For **employers**, job shadowing offers a relatively low-commitment way to introduce students to the organization, highlight available career opportunities, and demonstrate the skills and knowledge needed for success. Because job shadowing requires less preparation and time than more intensive experiences such as internships or pre-apprenticeships, it can be an accessible entry point for employer engagement in work-based learning.