

Lesson Plan 2

JOB SHADOWING

OBJECTIVE:

Upon successful completion, students will be able to describe what it means to be a professional in a career of their choosing.

CAREER PREPARATION LEARNING RESULTS MET OR PARTIALLY MET:

- A.2. Analyze skills and abilities required in a variety of career options and relate them to their own skills and abilities.
- A.3. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the changing nature of work and educational requirements.
- B.1. Use a career planning process that includes self-assessment, personal development, and a career portfolio as a way to gain initial entry into the workplace.
- B.3. Assess personal, educational, and career skills that are transferable among various jobs.

SKILLS UTILIZED:

Questioning, listening, business etiquette, research skills

NECESSARY SUPPLIES:

- 1. Copies of *Job Shadow Guidelines*
- 2. Copies of *Job Shadowing—Questions to Ask*.

TIME REQUIRED:

20 minutes at the end of one class to discuss job shadowing and to give them their assignment. Follow-up may require one to two 45-minute classes depending on the choice of additional assignments.

LESSON PROCEDURE:

- 1. Introduce students to the concept of job shadowing. Ask them who they think is the ideal person to speak to regarding a specific career.
- 2. Coach students on how to approach a professional about job shadowing. Most students will have success simply by calling a professional. Some will need assistance in finding someone in their chosen field. The local phone book or chamber of commerce directory will help.
- 3. Following their job shadows, reserve one or two class periods for them to report on their findings. Prompt students to discuss their findings. Were they surprised by what they found? Do they still find this profession interesting? If not, what other careers are they interested in pursuing? Remind students that career exploration is not a one shot deal, but a process that takes time.

ASSIGNMENT:

Students will spend at least one hour with a professional in a field of their choosing. They will interview the person and report back either through: 1) a report detailing what they discovered; 2) a 5 - 10 minute presentation to the class; or 3) a combination of #1 and #2.

ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- 1. Students research their chosen profession (Internet, books, magazines, CHOICES software) prior to their job shadow experience.
- 2. Students send thank you letters to the professional interviewed.
- 3. Students write a paper based on the following topic: Now that you've spent some time with a professional in a career of interest, you should know what skills are required for that line of work. Compare and contrast your current skills, knowledge, and experience to the requirements of the job. Outline the steps you might take to prepare yourself for this career.

SUGGESTED FOLLOW-UP:

Students participate in several job shadows to discover similarities and differences in various careers.

Job Shadow Guidelines

What is a job shadow? A student spends time with a business person to ask and observe what personal attributes, skills, and training helped make the person successful. It is also a good time to observe this person's work environment and working conditions, the dress expected on the job, and to talk with other people within the organization about the products and services that the business produces.

How do I find an employer to call? First, evaluate your own interests, skills, and abilities to determine what type of job shadow would be most useful for you. Talk to your parents, friends, and teachers, and ask for their suggestions on who you might call. Use the Yellow Pages phone directory; call the Chamber of Commerce; or go online to research local businesses that employ people in the kinds of occupations that interest you. Your guidance counselor or school-to-career counselor may be able to help you as well.

Making the Call

The phone call to the employer is an important first step. When you decide exactly what you want to say, write it out, practice saying it, make the necessary changes, and practice again. You should sound natural and unrehearsed. Remember—employers want the students in their community to be successful. If they can't help you, most will offer helpful information that might lead to another location.

Start with a script such as:

Good morning. My name is _____, a junior at _____ by _____ . I'm interested in exploring the career of a _____ by participating in a job shadow. Would it be possible to speak with someone who might help me arrange a job shadow with your company? I would really like to come in to spend some time with someone to observe and ask questions.

Be ready to answer questions from the employer such as when and for how long you want to visit, as well as what kinds of activities you want to observe.

Pre Job Shadow Activities

After you have secured a place in which to conduct your job shadow, you need to prepare yourself to get the most out of the experience. The following suggestions will help keep you focused, and will also help you justify the excused absence for the activity.

- 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
 - how to get there
- 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.

JOB SHADOWING—QUESTIONS TO ASK

OCCUPATION: _____

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? _____

JOB SHADOWING—QUESTIONS TO ASK

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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Paid Holidays |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dental Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Paid Vacations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> On Site Child Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bonuses | <input type="checkbox"/> Profit Sharing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overtime | |

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

12. What physical demands does this occupation require?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long periods of sitting | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk or be able to move around |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long periods of standing | <input type="checkbox"/> Stoop, bend, or kneel regularly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some lifting | <input type="checkbox"/> Regular lifting of 50+ pounds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Climbing | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

13. What are the working conditions in this occupation?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor work | <input type="checkbox"/> Wet, humid environment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor work | <input type="checkbox"/> Noisy environment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cold working environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Warm working environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |