

JOB SHADOWING

Part of your mentoring experience involves the opportunity to “job shadow” people who are employed in work areas of interest to you. Your mentors and you will make the necessary arrangements for you to meet with someone who has agreed to let you follow him/her as he/she performs work tasks. It is important that you be prepared for this experience so that you can maximize the opportunity to see someone do the kind of work you think that you’re interested in or curious about.

Read over the materials below with your mentor so that you know how to prepare yourself for the experience.

Business Manners and Dress

When you are job shadowing you are in an environment very different from the school environment in which you normally live. You will need to talk to your mentor about what to expect in the work environment of each of your job shadowing experiences before you report for your job shadow. Some questions to ask:

- Is the workplace I will visit an office, corporation, small business, or public agency? Is it a warehouse, artist’s studio, computer graphic station? How do people dress there? How should I dress?
- People in the work world shake hands when they meet and are introduced. Practice your handshake with your mentor so that you know you are businesslike in your handshake.
- Practice saying the name of someone to whom you are introduced. Practice saying your own name slowly and clearly.
- When you enter someone’s office or work area, do not sit down before you are invited to do so. Do not put anything on someone’s desk unless you are invited to do so. Don’t pick up anything that does not belong to you. Do not interrupt conversations nor ask questions when work conversations are occurring. If you do have questions, wait until the person you are shadowing is free to answer your queries.

Job Shadowing Reflections

- You will be doing some writing when you are job shadowing. Bring a pen and pencil, and a notebook with a cover hard enough so that you can use it as a makeshift table if nothing else is available.
- It is important to talk about the job your host is performing. Prepare some questions ahead of time to guide your conversation. Do ask for your host’s business card before leaving so that you can follow-up with a written thank-you for their time.

Post Visitation Reflection

Think about what you know of your own skills, talents, abilities and motivation. Taking your unique qualifications into consideration, would you want a job or career in this field? Why or why not?