



JOB SHADOW

A **Job Shadow** is a career exploration activity in which students observe the workday of a professional, interact with clients or customers, and attend meetings and other appointments. Job shadows are designed to help students explore a field of interest while developing research skills and building occupational knowledge. A job shadow is conducted at the workplace. It should include a tour of the workplace and the opportunity for students to ask questions of the worker being shadowed throughout the day.

Job shadows are designed to promote:

- Exploration of a field of interest;
- Exposure to careers and jobs; and
- Awareness of the academic, technical and personal skills required in particular jobs.

Success Factors

- Conduct orientations for the student and worksite partners.
- Prior to the job shadow, have the student research the occupation, develop questions and establish learning expectations and goals.
- Have the employee share his or her career path and the skills necessary to do the job.
- Have the student reflect on the experience.

Key Legal, Safety & Health Issues

- The job shadow activity is optimally "a visit to a work place for the purpose of career exploration for no less than three hours and no more than 25 hours in one semester, intersession or summer school session." (CA Education Code Section 51769 b)
- Most California school districts provide workers' compensation coverage for students participating in job shadow experiences. (CA Education Code Section 51769 a)
- Transportation plans are the responsibility of the school. Many districts favor students taking public transportation. In all cases, the school as well as the parents or guardian should approve transportation plans.
- Students participating in job shadowing activities can participate in mock situations, shadow employees or even participate in the operations of the workplace as long as the person typically responsible for the duty is observing the students' actions. (US DOL Fact Sheet No. 013, *Employment Relationship Under the Fair Labor Standards Act*)

Resources (to locate a resource visit stc-clearinghouse.com or nww.org)

Job Shadow Guidebook for Students & Teachers – San Diego School-to-Career Partnership

Job Shadowing: How to Have a Successful Groundhog Job Shadow Day – Monster.com

Take a Closer Look at Job Shadows – Worksite21

California Law, Education and Labor Code

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html>

REMEMBER... *All Work-Based Learning Experiences Should:*

- Be developmentally appropriate;
- Include an orientation for all parties;
- Identify learning objectives;
- Explore all aspects of the industry;
- Develop the SCANS¹ competencies;
- Assess student performance;
- Provide opportunities for reflection;
- Link to the student's next step;
- Be documented and recorded; and
- Comply with state and federal labor laws.

¹SCANS is an acronym for the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills which created The SCANS Report for America 2000, issued by the US Department of Labor, April, 1992. The report defines a set of skills and competencies necessary for success in the workplace.

This factsheet is part of the Work-Based Learning Toolkit and is intended to provide an overview of relevant quality, safety and legal issues relating to work-based learning placements at the time of publication.

It is not intended to provide comprehensive information nor to serve as a substitute for appropriate legal advice.

To access the complete toolkit, visit www.stc-clearinghouse.com or www.nww.org