



The Hayfield School Sixth Form Work Shadowing 2011 - 2012

Work Shadowing for Sixth Formers

Guidelines for Students

What is work shadowing?

Work shadowing essentially involves you 'keeping in step' with a worker, observing the various tasks he/she performs, learning about his/her role and how he/she fits into the organisation as a whole.

The worker you shadow therefore acts as a 'work-guide' giving you the opportunity to see a particular job from their point of view.

The Purpose of Work Shadowing:

Work shadowing is strongly encouraged for all Sixth Form students because it can help achieve a number of general and specific objectives which are highly desirable.

General Objectives:

1. To develop communication skills and build self-confidence. The very exercise of telephoning an employer to ask for a placement and then spending a day or more in an unfamiliar environment is a worthwhile process in itself.
2. To raise awareness of the world of work. Any placement with an organisation will raise your awareness of business activity in general.

Specific Objectives:

1. To enhance your UCAS application. Participation in a work shadowing experience will demonstrate your awareness of future career pathways and will also support your chosen University courses.
2. To improve your marketability to employers. As you will now be aware, obtaining employment is becoming increasingly difficult and more competitive. Relevant work shadowing is an excellent boost to your prospects and will significantly enhance your C.V.
3. To provide you with the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of a particular job. This clearly will enable you to make career decisions on a more informed basis.
4. To provide you with a contact in business which may prove valuable for A level coursework.

Your Objectives:

The first step in organising a work shadowing placement is to clarify your objectives. Think carefully about the purpose of the placement and what you want to get out of it. Then write down clearly and concisely your objectives.

An example of the objectives of work shadowing a Bank Manager:

1. To gain first hand experiences of the role and responsibilities of a bank manager.
2. To acquire an understanding of the main roles and operations of a typical branch bank.
3. To investigate the recruitment process and career opportunities within branch banking.
4. To acquire useful experience to support my application for 'Trainee Manager' after A levels/ Degree course.
5. To establish a contact at a bank which may provide opportunities for holiday/part time work.

The above example would be relevant to someone who has very clear career aspirations. If you are still uncertain about your future career plans work shadowing is still useful in giving you the opportunity to find out about a particular job - even if you decide to reject this option after your placement.

What is the next step?

1. *Choose the type of job to shadow*

The objectives you have set should help you to identify the type of job you wish to shadow. Try to be as precise as possible when choosing the position e.g.

Physics/general Science teacher in a secondary school rather than just 'teacher'.

Choosing the exact job description may mean you have to undertake some research - use your group tutor, the careers library and the careers packages on to help you. There is no point asking to shadow a medical technician if you do not know exactly what one is.

2. *Organise the placement*

Having set your objectives and chosen the job which will allow you to meet these objectives, the next step is to talk to your group tutor. He/she will be able to tell you whether or not your choice is realistic and practical.

You can now think about establishing contact with a suitable organisation. You may either use an organisation you already have contact with through parents, friends etc or use the Yellow Pages!! If you do encounter difficulties in finding a suitable placement, the school will try to help. You must however follow the procedure detailed below so that the school knows exactly who is going where, and when.

How do I organise the work shadowing placements?

1. *Decide when you are going to complete your work-shadowing.*

Ideally it will be completed in the holidays or in exceptional cases, such as work-shadowing a teacher, permission will be given to complete the placement during school time.

2. *Decide the position you wish to work shadow, and type of organisation.*

Discuss your ideas with your Group Tutor.

3. *Contact the placement*

- usually by telephone outlining the description of the job, your objectives for the placement and preferred dates. You will not make a good impression if you are not prepared for your first contact with the company
- pausing and using language such as “erm” will not create the impression of being confident and organised.

Be prepared before you make that call!

- Agree a date and a time for the work shadowing and make sure you know exactly where you should report to and who to ask for, as well as any issues that are specific to the job such as what clothes are appropriate.

Offer to confirm the details in a letter and to provide a CV.

4. *Tell your Group Tutor*

You must tell your Group Tutor about your work shadowing so it can be included in any reference they may write for you.

5. *Absence*

If for any reason you are not able to visit the placement on the date you agreed, you must inform them ASAP.

6. *Thanks!*

Do not forget that a thank you, particularly in the form of a letter after your placement will stand you in good stead. You never know what the future holds! You may wish to explore the possibility of a further visit for work experience or assistance with an A-Level project.

7. *Sixth Form Work Shadowing - Student Evaluation Sheet*

Please complete the Work Shadowing Evaluation Form and return to your Group Tutor to provide us with information about your experience which could be used by your Tutor when filling references for your future career.

Work Shadowing

Standard letter to employer confirming details.

Employers Name and Address

Date

Dear (Name of Employer),

I am writing to confirm the work shadowing placement discussed with you recently by telephone.
The agreed dates are

(day and date)

to

My agreed objectives for this placement are:-

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I shall arrive at your premises at _____ (time) on _____ (day) and shall ask for
(name).

I have enclosed a copy of my CV in order to give you some background information about myself.

*(if applicable).

I look forward to seeing you on (day and date).

Yours sincerely,

c/o Tutor Group



***Standard letter to participating employers
thanking them for their involvement***

Student Name and Address

Date:

Firm's Name and Address

Dear

I am writing to thank you and your company for your time and hospitality during my recent work shadowing placement.

I found the experience both interesting and enjoyable and certainly feel that I am in a better position to make decisions about my future after A levels.

Yours faithfully/sincerely, *(faithfully if the letter is addressed to sir/madam
sincerely if addressed personally eg: Dear Mr Smith)*

Signature *(signature and then print or type name underneath)*

Sixth Form Work Shadowing

Student Evaluation Sheet

To be completed by the student after completion of work shadowing exercise and returned to Group Tutor.

Name of student

Tutor Group

Name of organisation

Contact name

Position shadowed

Dates

Evaluation of Work Shadowing

Explain briefly what your objectives were and how far these were met. What did you gain from this experience? Was it useful? In what ways? This will be used by your Group Tutor when compiling your UCAS or job reference so be as detailed and positive as possible.

Evaluation of the Organisation

Comment briefly on how helpful the contact/firm was. Were you expected? Made to feel comfortable or uncomfortable. Given attention/neglected? Were there any specific problems?

This booklet has been compiled to give you help and guidance before, during and after your work shadowing.

Take it with you - use it to make notes which will later help you complete the necessary forms within this booklet.

Be prepared

Be positive

Be polite

Ask questions

**But most of all
enjoy your work shadowing**