



JOB SHADOW VS INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

JOB SHADOWING

Job Shadowing is an opportunity to “shadow” or follow an employer, gaining information about careers in which you are interested, allowing you to make informed decisions about career choices. You follow a sponsor (employer participants) at their office to gather information about their job, career field and the kind of preparation you need to enter their profession

Job Shadowing helps you...

- Gain insight into careers of interest and make informed decisions about careers
- To perhaps include on resume to show serious interest in career field

WHAT MIGHT I DO WHILE SHADOWING?

- Observe work being performed
- Attend staff or committee meetings or presentations
- Tour the organization
- Attend a training program for new employees
- Assist with completion of sample work
- Visit a client or a site

POINTS TO COVER WHEN ARRANGING

Discuss the purpose for shadowing

- Briefly share your academic background, major and minor
- Arrange mutually agreeable date/time
- Give the sponsor your phone number and email
- Obtain directions to the organization
- Ask for parking instructions
- Ask whether you should bring a lunch
- Ask about appropriate attire

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Informational interviewing is a popular and effective method of collecting information on a career field from professionals currently in that area. It should assist you in making your career choice by gaining a more realistic insight into your career area of interest and to network with professionals. It is not, however, a job-seeking method.

Informational interviewing helps you...

- Sharpen your perception of the career you are researching, thus helping you make more educated career decisions
- Develop contacts
- Measure your compatibility with the people, environment and general lifestyles surrounding a certain career

WHAT MIGHT I DO WHILE INTERVIEWING?

- Meet for 20-30 minutes over in the office of the professional, over coffee, or over lunch
- Tour the organization
- Ask lots of questions and listen to advice
- Ask to maintain contact and expand network by asking if there is anyone else they would recommend you speak with

POINTS TO COVER WHEN ARRANGING

- Ask if the professional would be willing to meet with you to discuss their profession
- Briefly share your academic background,
- Arrange mutually agreeable date/time and location
- Give your phone number and email
- Obtain directions (if needed)
- Ask about appropriate attire

STEPS TO CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL JOB SHADOW OR INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

PREPARATION

- Be informed about your career of interest utilizing resources on career.auburn.edu
- Develop a list of questions
- Start with people you are familiar with
- Contact individual well in advance to schedule an appointment
- Be prepared to respond to questions

DURING

- Dress appropriately and arrive 5-10 minutes early
- Refer to your list of questions if needed; it shows you are prepared
- Observe work environment, people, dress, etc.
- Thank them for their time and assistance
- Ask for business cards and other contacts

FOLLOW-UP

- Summarize information you gathered
- Send a written thank you note within 24 hours
- Keep in contact 3 times per year
- Contact new leads

CONTACTING THE PROFESSIONAL PHONE

When you call your contact, introduce yourself and explain the purpose of your call: "Hello, thank you for taking my call. My name is Jane Doe, and I am a student at Auburn University . I am interested in exploring the field of public relations, ____ gave me your contact information and thought you might be willing to help. I was hoping you might be willing to [meet with me to discuss your position and give me some advice about entering this field] OR

[allow me to conduct a job shadow]. If you are busy right now, is there a more convenient time for me to call?"

EMAIL

If emailing, be sure to include a subject line and use proper grammar and spelling. You might also include something stating, "If you are not currently able to meet with me, is there someone you know who might?" Always have someone else read over the email before you send it to avoid potential problems.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- How did you get started in this industry?
- What is your educational background and previous work experience?
- What short- and long-term trends affect your industry?
- What are the positive and negative aspects of your position and this industry?
- What are the major rewards of your job?
- What are the major frustrations you encounter on your job? How do you deal?
- What fringe benefits are offered?
- Based on my research, I see that the average salary range is \$___ to \$___. Would you say that is accurate?
- Is training typically formal or on-the-job?
- What professional associations represent this industry?
- Is there another professional I should talk with about careers/trends in this field?
- What are some other good sources of information about this industry?
- What are the current career opportunities?
- What qualifications are sought by employers in this field for entry-level?
- Of your organization's recent hires, what qualities made them attractive?
- What professional organizations would you recommend I join?
- Can I contact you with further questions?