



Guide to

Professional Services
Job Shadowing

Introduction

Professional Services Job Shadowing is where an individual from one area of the School has the opportunity to work alongside and gain experience of the role of another individual, and gain an insight into that particular work area.

It can also be used to provide an individual within a department the opportunity to work alongside more experienced colleagues so they can learn and develop within their current role. Within the School, job shadowing can be used as a development opportunity for staff members and should be discussed as part of the Career Development Review process.

Types of Job shadowing

The type of job shadowing that is undertaken will depend on the needs of the host and the shadowee and on the amount of time that can be allocated to the shadowing. This should be discussed between the host, the shadowee and their line manager. It can range from:

Observation

- The shadowee will spend an agreed period of time observing the day to day work of the host.
- It should be a typical representation of what the host does on a daily basis.
- This type of shadowing works best when a shadowee is looking to gain a greater understanding of what a host's job role actually consists of.
- The host will provide opportunities for questions and a debrief to ensure that both parties benefit from the shadowing.

Regular briefings

- The shadowee shadows the host for specific activities over a period of time.
- This type of shadowing provides short periods of focused activity.
- This works best when the individuals work near to each other and the host can then advise of dates and times of specific activities which are of value to understanding the role.
- Careful timing and planning is required to ensure it does not become disruptive.

Hands on

- This is an extension of the observation model detailed above.
- The shadowee starts to undertake some of the tasks they have observed.
- This provides the shadowee with hands on experience of the role whilst being supervised by the host.
- This type of job shadowing is not always possible and would need to be discussed on a case by case basis.

Roles involved

Each party has a key role to play in making job shadowing a success.

The line manager

- As part of the CDR process individuals may discuss job shadowing as either a way of developing their current role or as part of their career development into a different role.
- The line manager will agree with them what this will look like and how much time can be allowed for this activity.
- The line manager may have a view as to who would be the best host for this job shadowing experience or may be able to suggest suitable contacts.

The shadowee

- A shadowee needs to consider why they are doing the shadowing and what they hope to achieve.
- They will need to do some preparation which will involve working with their line manager or the host prior to the shadowing to set objectives for the session(s).
- Following the shadowing it's important to review and discuss outcomes and what happens next.

The host

- A host is the person who agrees to be shadowed.
- The role does involve some preparation and thought.
- A host needs to consider if the time requested is the best time for shadowing to take place and how long each period of shadowing should be for.
- They will also need to take into consideration current work obligations.

Making it work

Undertaking job shadowing

Undertaking job shadowing can be a very rewarding experience and can provide the shadow with a unique development. However, there are several things that need to be considered throughout the job shadowing placement to ensure it is a success.

When preparing for a placement it is important to:

- Provide the host with an outline of what you are expecting from the shadowing.
- Check if there are any special requirements for the placement, such as dress code.
- Make sure you discuss any disability requirements with your host in advance of the placement, so that the host has enough time to put adjustments in place.
- Consider what questions you may want to ask during the job shadowing placement.

During the process the shadow should:

- Take notes, you may come away with some useful thoughts and observations.
- Show tact, discretion and maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Ensure that you show good time keeping and inform your host if you are not available for any reason.

Once the job shadowing is complete it is important to:

- Evaluate and reflect on the placement.
- Provide your host with feedback on what you have observed.
- Consider what you will do as a result of the shadowing experience, including how you will feed your learning back to your team.

Hosting a job shadowing placement

Hosting a job shadowing placement can be very rewarding. However, there are also several things that need to be considered when preparing for the placement to help ensure that the shadowee gets the most out of the placement.

When preparing for a placement it is important to:

- Agree a suitable time, dependent on the shadowee's objectives and the service needs in the host area, for the job shadowing to take place.
- Ensure that other colleagues are briefed about the shadowing experience and inform any relevant individuals/departments about when the shadowing will be taking place.
- Consider what you may need to know about the shadowee and what they hope to get from the process.
- Discuss any disability requirements and additional support requirements with the shadowee.
- Consider whether there are any health and safety requirements that you need to address prior to the visit.
- Prepare your work area, ensuring that there is enough space for both of you to undertake any relevant activities.

During a placement you should:

- Provide the shadowee with relevant information about your job/department/team.
- Provide appropriate notice if any of the shadowing activities have to be cancelled or changed in any way.
- Provide time between sessions or prior to sessions for questions and feedback.

Evaluating job shadowing

Once the job shadowing placement is complete it is important to evaluate and reflect on the placement.

For the shadow to reflect on and record:

- Was the role as you expected it to be?
- What did you gain personally from the experience?
- How did you cope with the different working environment?

For the shadow and host to consider and record:

- What did you get from the experience of working with the host?
- What concerns or questions have arisen as a result of the experience?
- Did the experience answer what you were looking to answer?

How to apply:

If you have a specific person in mind for the shadowing, you can approach them and organise the process yourself. If you are unaware of whom you could shadow, or would like help in arranging job shadowing, please complete the Job Shadowing application form and return it to Hr.Learning@lse.ac.uk. Once we have arranged a match for you, we will be in touch with the details.