



For the Host: Enhancing a Student's Workplace Visit

Experiential Learning Encouraged

Students are being encouraged to seek out opportunities to visit a variety of workplaces. These visits can take many forms:

- ❖ A class field trip
- ❖ Job shadowing an employee for a few hours or a day
- ❖ Job twinning- accompanying another student to his or her co-op placement
- ❖ Short term experiential learning opportunities

Making the School to Workplace Connection

One of the goals of all of these experiential learning opportunities is to help students connect what they are learning in school with what employees actually do on the job. A framework that helps to make these connections explicit is the Essential Skills Resource prepared by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

These employability skills are categorized into 9 areas:

1. Reading Text
2. Document Use
3. Numeracy
4. Writing
5. Oral Communication
6. Working with Others
7. Thinking Skills
8. Computer Use
9. Continuous Learning

You can learn more about these skills by visiting the HRDC website at www.hrdc-rhdcc.gc.ca/essentialskills

Learning More about Essential Skills

In their career studies classes, students are learning about how those skills are defined and how they are typically applied in the workplace. They may investigate job profiles for specific careers for information about the level of competency in each of these areas required for entry level positions.

When students visit workplaces, they also record observations and ask questions about the role of the essential skills. They may have observation sheets/charts or interview guidelines that help them to gather information which will then be shared back in the classroom. They may also be writing personal reflections or reports on their learning.

Preparing for the Student Visit

With this information about the focus for the student visit, you can think about how you might enhance their learning about the Essential Skills at your workplace. Here are some items to gather that would be useful for students to review:

- ❖ samples of written communication: form letters, memos, agendas, minutes of meetings, etc.
- ❖ a chart identifying workplace functions that have been computerized and the application programs that support them
- ❖ manuals, reference materials used to support training
- ❖ sample forms and other documents
- ❖ graphs, drawings, blueprints
- ❖ telephone message forms
- ❖ copies of speeches
- ❖ spread sheets, budgets, financial statements
- ❖ calendar of social events
- ❖ Workplace safety posters

As students review these documents, they see evidence of how academic, personal management and interpersonal skills contribute to success on the job.

Student Interviews

The workplace visit will also be an opportunity for the student to interview you or some of the other employees. Here is a sample of an interview guideline provided to students:

Meet Your Workplace Host

You will have an opportunity to interview your host during your job shadowing day. Use the following questions to learn more about your host's job. Record his or her responses on your questionnaire. If you have additional questions, ask these as well.

1. Why did you select this type of work?
2. What do you like most about your job?
3. Tell me a story about a day or an event that really stands out in your memory as a high point in your career.
4. What skills do you have that contribute to your success in your job?
5. How did you learn these skills?
6. How do you continue to learn on the job?
7. When you think about career and imagine yourself in 3 or 4 years, how might your job have changed?
8. What advice would you give to a young person wanting to enter this field?

You might also consider taking a few minutes to interview the student. This student resume can be completed before the visit so that you have some background information to use during the interview:

Student Resume

Name:

School:

Job Shadowing Workplace:

Host:

Career Interests

List careers of interest to you:

Work Experience

List 3 work experiences you have had. These can include activities at home, at school and in the neighbourhood, as well as part-time work (e.g. working on a school newspaper, babysitting, household chores.)

Workplace Essential Skills

Indicate areas which you have identified as a strength for you:

Interests and Hobbies

Include clubs, sports teams, hobbies or interests that you choose for your leisure time:

Community/Volunteer Service

Include any activities you have participated in individually or as a member of a group that benefited others in your community:

Educational Goal(s)

Describe your educational goal(s):

Students may also have completed the following chart outlining their expectations for the workplace visit. This information can be helpful in planning activities for their visit.

Job Shadow Day Expectations

You will have an opportunity to share with your Workplace Host, your hopes and expectations for the day.

Read the list of objectives listed below and rate their importance to you.

Job Shadowing Expectations

LeastMost
Important

1. To see how what I'm learning at school is used on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
2. To see what people do all day on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
3. To identify skills I need to get a good job.	1	2	3	4	5
4. To learn about employee benefits.	1	2	3	4	5
5. To find about more about the workplace I chose.	1	2	3	4	5
6. To see how technology is used on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
7. To explore some new career ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
8. To learn about educational requirements or training for careers in this area.	1	2	3	4	5
9. To get information about earning potential in this job.	1	2	3	4	5
10. To make contacts that could help me to get a job.	1	2	3	4	5

Post Job-Shadowing Reflection

Review your expectations for the day, and circle the expectations that you feel were met by your job-shadowing experience.

Planning and Reflection Enhance the Learning Experience

Students will get the most benefit from their workplace experiences if they have done some pre-thinking and planning about the day. They also benefit from opportunities to debrief the experience and certainly that will happen back at school. However, if you have some time at the end of the day to meet with them, this would provide an immediate opportunity for them to summarize their impressions of the day. This conversation will also provide you with valuable feedback.

Here's an interview protocol that you might use:

1. Tell me a story about the most interesting experience you had at our workplace.
What was happening?
What were you doing?
Who else was involved?
How were you feeling?
2. What did you experience today that you would recommend as part of the day for other students coming to our workplace?
3. If you were coming back to our workplace, what 3 wishes might you have for your return visit?
4. What have you learned about yourself from your time with us?

Mutual Appreciation

Students will certainly be encouraged to thank you for hosting them at your workplace. They would also benefit from hearing from you the value you place on their initiative in organizing or planning for the visit. It's very encouraging to younger people to know that learning has been mutual and that their participation has been helpful.

Here's a few ways you might start that conversation:

- I liked it when.... (describe the student's actions)
- I admire you for... (describe the quality)
- I felt (name the emotion) when (describe the student's behaviour)

Receiving that kind of positive feedback from an admired adult will contribute to a memorable experience for any student coming to visit your workplace.

Thanks!