

Summa Health

White Coats & Blue Suits Guidelines



Contents

- What is Job Shadowing?
- Why Job Shadowing? Gaining a new perspective.
- Who is involved in Job Shadowing?
- Different types of Job Shadowing
- The benefits of Job Shadowing
- What do I need to think about? Some practical considerations
- What needs to happen? Responsibilities of the host and shadow
- Adding value to the experience
- Useful questions to ask
- Post shadow reflection

What is Job Shadowing?

Job shadowing is where an individual from one area of the organization (shadow) has the opportunity to work alongside and gain experience of the role of another individual (host), and gain an insight into a particular department or work area. It can also be used to provide an individual the opportunity to work alongside more experienced colleagues within their work area so they can learn and develop within their current role.

Why Job Shadowing? Gaining a new perspective

Job shadowing has many potential benefits for employees and departments within the organization:

- It can help to improve communication across departments, facilities, and sites and thus encourage continuous improvement.
- It is an excellent networking tool and can facilitate the breaking down of internal barriers across the organization.
- It is an opportunity for hosts to share best practices, allowing for self-development of the shadow and, often, the host.
- It allows individuals to view processes they are involved in from a different angle.

Job shadowing provides the individual with a unique opportunity to find out how other professionals work and what their roles involve. It develops a deeper knowledge and understanding of other roles and functions within the organization. By engaging in job shadowing individuals will be able to:

- See how other staff and teams work.
- Gain insight into the roles and responsibilities of other members of staff and other departments.
- Reflect and learn from others.
- See the bigger picture and understand more about how the whole system functions.
- Can be used as a way of “testing out” possible career options.

For the individual being shadowed there is the opportunity to:

- Share your experiences with colleagues from a different work area from your own
- Review and reflect on your work through discussion with the person shadowing you which allows you the opportunity to see your role through “fresh eyes”

Who is involved in Job Shadowing?

The shadow

All active Summa ERG members are eligible to apply. A person who applies to be a shadow needs to consider why they are engaging in the shadowing and what they hope to achieve from the experience. They will also need to do some preparation, which will involve working with their manager and their host prior to the shadowing to set objectives for the sessions. Following the shadowing, it is important to review and discuss outcomes and what happens next.

The host

A host is the person who agrees to be shadowed. This person generally will be in the role of manager or above and can be from any department. This role does involve some preparation and thought, and is not just about being followed by someone for an agreed upon time span. A host needs to consider if the time requested is the best time departmentally for the shadowing to take place and determine how long the period of shadowing should be. They will also need to take into consideration their work obligations and ensure that the shadowing experience does not get in the way of their day-to-day responsibilities.

The manager

As part of the process, applicants need to discuss job shadowing with their manager. The manager will formally agree to the proposed plan and will approve how much time can be allowed for this activity.

Different types of job shadowing

Observation – “fly on the wall”

This type of shadowing works best when a shadow is looking to gain a greater understanding of the host’s job role. As a shadow, you will spend the agreed period of time observing the day to day work of your host. This may involve a range of activities such as attending meetings, watching interactions with patients, etc. In fact, it should be a typical representation of what the host does on a daily basis. If someone is considering a career change but is not quite sure if they fully understand what is involved in that role, job shadowing will give them the opportunity to explore this further.

Hands On – “job sharing”

This is an extension of the observation model, where the shadow may undertake some of the tasks they have observed. This provides the shadow with hands on experience of the role while having the safety net of being closely supervised by the host. While this offers a more immersive experience for the shadow, this may not be possible due to departmental considerations, and would need to be discussed on a case-by-case basis between the host and shadow.

Regular Briefings – “Burst Interactions”

In this model, the shadow and host meet over a period of time for specific activities, which are all preceded by a mini-brief and a follow up de-brief. This works best when a shadow works near the host. The host will advise the shadow of dates and times for specific activities which are of value in understanding the role of the host. This type of shadowing provides short periods of focused activity, rather than passive ongoing observation. However, this type of activity requires careful timing and planning so as not to become disruptive.

Benefits of Job Shadowing:

For the Host	For the Shadow
Network with colleagues from different areas	Understand how other departments work
Share your experience with others	Learn from the experiences of colleagues
Learn from your shadow	Understand and appreciate how other roles support the organization
The opportunity to view and reflect on your own area of work supported by the “fresh eyed” view of the shadow	Understand and appreciate other needs and priorities outside of my established work role
Develop your coaching/mentoring skills	The opportunity to discuss my role and its needs and priorities with others
Provide a broader or alternative view of processes	Understand why things work the way they do

What do I need to think about? Some practical considerations:

The Host	The Shadow
When is the best time for a shadow to get a good overview of the role?	What do I want to know about the job?
What do I need to inform the shadow of prior to the shadowing?	What questions do I want to ask?
Do I need to let anyone else know that the shadowing is taking place?	What do I want to know about the team department?
What does the shadow hope to get from the process?	Are there any specific tasks or elements of the job I would like to see above all others?
What do I need to know about them?	What do I know already about this job/ department/ team?
Do I need to consider or complete any health & safety requirements prior to the visit?	Are there any special job or departmental requirements (such as dress code)?
Do they have any additional support requirements that I need to be aware of?	What will I do because of this shadowing? (including how I will feed the learning back to my team)

What needs to happen? Responsibilities of the host and shadow

As a shadow you may be taking a fly on the wall approach or desire to be more hands on. Whichever applies to your situation there are some things that are essential if the experience is to be of benefit to you:

A shadow should:

- Provide an outline of what you expect or hope to gain from the shadowing prior to the shadowing taking place
- Show tact, discretion, and awareness. If required, withdraw from situations when circumstances deem it appropriate (for example, when HIPAA or PHI may be involved)
- Maintain confidentiality at all times
- Provide your host with feedback and reflections on what you have observed
- Show good time keeping and inform your host if you are unavailable for any reason
- Ensure that your work colleagues in your department are aware of your absence and of what coverage may be required
- Learn as much as you can prior to the shadowing. For example, review the job description and talk to others you know who are in this role
- Throughout the shadowing experience, take notes. You may come away with a useful list of numbers and emails as well as facts, thoughts, and observations. Reflecting on these notes following the experience will allow you to maximize your learning
- Discuss any disability requirements with your host in advance of the placement to allow enough time to put adjustments in place in order to maximize the benefit of the shadowing

A host should:

- Provide the shadow with a timetable for when the shadowing will take place
- Agree upon suitable times. This is dependent on the shadowing objectives and the service needs of the host area
- Prepare an area for the shadow to be placed
- Ensure colleagues in your area are briefed about the shadowing experience
- Provide time prior to or in between sessions for questions and feedback
- Provide the shadow with information on the team/department that the shadowing is taking place in
- Provide appropriate notice and explanation if the shadowing activity has to be cancelled or altered
- Provide constructive feedback to the shadow
- Inquire about and discuss any disability requirements with the shadow in advance of the placement

Adding Value to the experience

For you to consider and record

- What are your preconceptions of the role to be shadowed?
- What do you hope to gain personally from the experience?
- How do you think you will cope in this different working environment?

For you and your host to consider and record

- What do you need to know in order to get the most from this experience?
- What needs or special considerations do you have in relation to this experience that your host needs to be aware of?
- Do you have any particular questions that you would like to be answered?

For you and your manager to record

- How does job shadowing fit in with your personal or career development needs?
- How might this job-shadowing better inform the work of your current team?
- How will your experience and knowledge from this experience be fed back to your team?

Useful questions to ask a host when shadowing for career development

General questions

- What education/training did you have before taking this role? How helpful was it in getting you the role and supporting you in the role?
- Are there any other experiences - work or non-work related - that have supported you in your career?
- If you could go back in time, would you do anything differently in preparation for this career path?
- What would you look for if you were recruiting for this post?
- Are there any journals or career related web sites you think would be helpful in learning about this role?
- Is volunteering a good way to gain experience that would be recognized in an interview?
- What happened at your job interview? What should I expect?
- Are there any professional groups I could join that would be useful to me?
- What qualifications do you feel are important for this role?
- What personal qualities do you need to succeed in this role?
- Why did you apply for this role?

Job pros & cons

- Would you choose the same occupation if you were just starting out? Why or why not?
- Do you have any special words of warning or encouragement because of your experience?
- If you could change any aspect of your career/role, what would you change?
- Why did you choose this career/role? Was it what you expected it to be?
- What is your favorite thing about your current role?
- What do you feel are the most challenging elements of your role?

The job itself

- Could you give me an example of a typical day for you in this role?
- What do you spend most of your time doing?
- In terms of a career path, what would that look like for this sort of role? Where could you progress to?
- Whom do you work with and what are the relationship links?
- How important is teamwork to this role?
- How often do you work alone?
- How much of the work is self-directed and how much is regulated by others?
- What are usual work patterns like in this role?

Post Shadow Reflection

For you 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 you and your host to consider and record

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

For you and your manager to reflect on and record

- How has this job shadowing enhanced your personal/ career development?
- How has this job shadowing affected you/your team's performance?
- Did you provide feedback to your team?