

## STUDENT GUIDE

### What Is Job Shadowing?

Job Shadowing allows you to gain experience in a professional environment, have the chance to explore a career area you might otherwise not have exposure to, or build your professional network in your chosen career area. Through the USC Job Shadow Program, you will be matched with an employer volunteer who has experience in your field and wants to support your career exploration.

### After the Match

Confirm the Details: Once you receive information about the shadow details from your employer host, ask for any logistical information or any questions you may have.

### Tips for a Successful Job Shadow Experience

1. **Research the company:** Before your job shadow starts, take the time to research the company and learn about its operations. Understanding what the company does, its mission statement, and goals will give you valuable insight and context for conversations, processes, and your overall experience.
2. **Bring your resume:** Bring a copy of your resume and ask for feedback when there is an opportunity. Employers may be able to provide industry-based feedback for you.
3. **Arrive on time:** Impressions are everything, and professionalism is key! Your job shadow host has provided you the opportunity to shadow them during their workday. Be respectful of the date and time that you both agreed on. You never know when a job shadow experience could lead to a job down the road.
4. **Dress appropriately and present professionally:** Plan to wear business casual attire unless the nature of the company/position warrants otherwise. When in doubt, reach out to your job shadow host for guidance on appropriate attire. Make sure your clothing is clean, wrinkle-free, and ready to go the day before your job shadow. Pay attention to proper hygiene (shower, teeth brushed, deodorant, and nails cleaned and trimmed).
5. **Upon arrival:** introduce yourself and offer a firm handshake. Make eye contact throughout conversations and activities. During the job shadow experience, demonstrate a positive, teachable attitude and use appropriate language and a friendly tone.
6. **Ask relevant questions:** This is your chance to get quality feedback from a working professional about what it's like to work in your chosen career. Make a list of well-thought-out questions before your job shadow to ensure that everything you would like to know gets covered during your experience. Questions may include:
  - What led you to your current role?
  - What does a typical day look like?
  - What trends are most impacting your company and job right now?
  - What do you like/dislike most about your job?
  - What can I do right now to best prepare for a career in this industry or job function?
  - What resources (e.g., books, podcasts, newsletters, etc.) should I be aware of?

**Note:** Do not ask questions about salary. Many organizations list salary ranges on their websites.

7. **Follow-up with a thank-you note:** After your job shadow experience, follow up with a handwritten thank-you note or email to the individual you shadowed. You want to leave a lasting positive impression, and a thank-you note goes a long way.

### Important Reminders

If you have to cancel due to an emergency or unexpected event, let the employer know and reschedule the shadow.

**!** If you ever feel uncomfortable, observe or experience behavior in a manner that violates the USC Job Shadow Program Code of Conduct, promptly report your observations to Zo Sediqi at [psediqi@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:psediqi@mailbox.sc.edu).

