



# Guide to Shadowing

## [ What is Job Shadowing? ]

Shadowing allows you to explore a career by observing a professional in the field. Spending time with a professional provides insight that you may not obtain otherwise, such as learning about their daily schedule, the work environment, and what the field entails. Shadowing affords you the opportunity to learn, to ask, and to decide about a career without having to commit to it. Start with a self assessment by answering the following:

- » What do you hope to accomplish by job shadowing?
  
- » What majors/careers are you interested in shadowing? Why?
  
- » List majors/careers you are interested in, rank them by level of interest, and then select one to shadow.
  
- » I plan to shadow \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

# [ Tips for Finding Opportunities ]

Use these strategies and tips to find job shadowing opportunities and connect with potential shadowing contacts.



## Asking family and friends.

- Explain what you hope to accomplish by job shadowing.
- Ask for relevant referrals.
- Thank your family and/or friends for their help.



## Conducting a phone call.

- Introduce yourself (your name, identify yourself as a UNL student, and explain why you are calling).
- Ask if shadowing is available and, if so, who you could talk to about it.
- Be prepared to write down information.
- Get the contact information of the person you spoke to.



## Making professional connections.

- Search for alumni, employers and professional associations on websites such as **LinkedIn.com**.
- Attend UNL Career Fairs and events.
- Talk to your professors and advisors.



## Posting on social media.

- Know your audience (who your connections are and how your post will be received).
- Make sure your profile is professional.
- Spell-check your post.
- Do not provide too much personal information.

### Sample Social Media Post:

I'm thinking about becoming a \_\_\_\_\_.  
Does anyone know someone in this field who might be willing to let me job shadow or interview them?



## Writing an email.

- Include a subject for the email.
- Spell-check your email.
- Sign your email and provide your contact information.

### Sample Email:

**Subject:** Shadowing Request by UNL Student [Your Name]

**Message:**

Dear [Name],

[Your referral contact] suggested I contact you as someone who might be willing to help me learn about [career of interest]. I am a UNL student in the process of deciding on a major and career path and [career of interest] is a field I am considering. I am hoping to shadow or meet with you to get your insight as a professional in the field.

Please let me know if you would be available for shadowing or meeting with me. Thank you for considering this request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Your name, UNL Student  
Your email  
Your phone number



## Utilizing Husker Hire Link.

- Visit **unl.edu/careers/hhl** to log in to your account.
- Search for jobs or areas of interest.
- Review descriptions to learn about interest areas.
- Identify organizations you could contact for a shadowing experience.
- Use the organizations' contact information to get connected.

# [How to Prepare]

What should you do before you shadow? Discuss the following with your advisor:

- >> What are some questions that you can ask the professional you are shadowing about their career? You should have at least three questions prepared.

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- >> What do you know about the major/career you are planning to shadow? What more should you learn before you shadow and how will you find that information?

- >> What are you most excited/unsure about for your job shadowing experience?



## Important information to obtain before your job shadowing experience:

- Contact information (phone number and email) of the person you will meet.
- Date, time and duration.
- Dress code.
- Address (including parking directions).
- Additional information that you may need.

**Quick Tip:** Bring a pen and paper for note taking.

# [ Self Reflection ]

Things to think about or discuss with your advisor, friends or family after you shadow:

- >> What did you learn about the job you shadowed? What did you like and dislike?
  
- >> What is your interest level in pursuing this career now? Has your interest level in this career changed from before you shadowed (ex. has it increased or decreased)?
  
- >> What skills do you possess that fit with the job you shadowed?
  
- >> What parts of the job can you picture yourself doing?
  
- >> What majors might relate to this career?
  
- >> What additional information do you need about this major/career after shadowing?

## [ Next Steps ]

Write a thank you note within 24 hours of your shadowing experience. Then meet with your advisor to reflect on your experience and to discuss possible next steps such as:

- Meet with the Explore Center to explore majors.
- Meet with Career Services to explore careers.
- Continue to research majors and careers based on your shadowing experience.
- Find other shadowing, volunteer or internship opportunities to gain more experience.

Sample Thank You Note:

**Subject:** Thank You

**Message:**

Dear [Name],

Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to give me the opportunity to meet with you and your staff. I was impressed with your organization and the kindness and courtesy I received during my visit.

Meeting and spending time with you has been a great help in guiding my future career decisions. I hope to have the opportunity to meet again in the future.

Sincerely,

Your name, UNL Student  
Your phone number  
Your email

## Get in Touch

### Explore Center

Love Library South 127  
402.472.3605  
explorecenter.unl.edu



### Career Services

225 NE Union  
402.472.3145  
unl.edu/careers



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