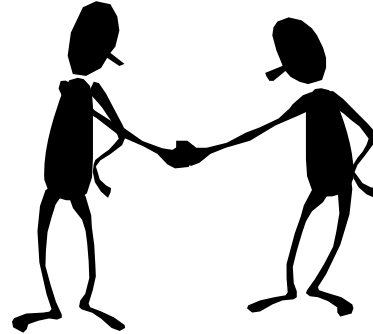




Your Own Network: Creating Your Own Shadowing Opportunities

- Who do you, your family members, or your teachers know? You might be surprised to discover that you already have an extensive network.
- After you've contacted people you know, make the leap and call some people you don't know.
- Discuss your interest in shadowing with your parents, your teachers, and other friends and adults who might lead to shadowing contacts.
- Collect and organize contact information from your sources. Make a list of which contact possibilities most appeal to you. Contact these folks, introduce yourself, and explain your career aspirations and your interest in shadowing with them. Explain that you would be interested in observing them in their workplace for short periods of time.
- Be prepared to negotiate with your contact. Keep in mind that as a shadow, you should be accommodating their busy schedules. Be as flexible as you can when you negotiate the length of shadowing.



What to say?

Develop a short 30-40 second script for yourself to help organize your thoughts.

General guidelines for your script:

Objective: arrange a time to shadow, record names and phone numbers of contacts, obtain addresses and directions

To the receptionist:

Introduce yourself

- Ask to speak with the person in charge of job shadowing or volunteering, be sure to obtain their name and extension and write them down. (Could be office manager, clinic or volunteer coordinator, the nurse or the doctor, etc...)
- Ask if they have time to speak with you, if not ask when is a good time to call back.
- Be prepared to explain the reason for your call – career and educational goals, first hand experience, etc.
- If they are interested in what they hear be prepared for questions.



INITIAL CONTACT

Introduce Yourself

Hi, my name is _____ and I am interested in _____ as a health career. I'm a _____ attending _____ high school. I got your name from _____ (give the person's name or the northwest Missouri AHEC.)

One of my personal goals is to shadow health professionals and I was wondering if you had some time now to talk about opportunities to shadow _____ (a person, with you or at your facility.) My ultimate goal is to spend _____ hours this academic year observing health professionals as they interact with patients.

If yes: *Arrange For convenient time, confirm location and appropriate dress*

If they seem interested, *share information about your training and the agreements you signed.*

I have received HIPAA training and signed a non-disclosure agreement; my parents have signed parental consent for me to participate. I can also provide a letter of introduction explaining the program, letters of reference and my immunization records if needed.

Ask If Willing To Refer

As a professional in the field, I was wondering if you could give me some advice and suggestions about who to contact for shadowing opportunities. Do you know of anyone at your facility or in this area who is willing to offer an opportunity to shadow?

Arrange For Convenient Follow-Up time

Thank you for your time. I appreciate it. (Please be sure to get or check the address.) When would be a good time to reach you (next week)? Thanks again.

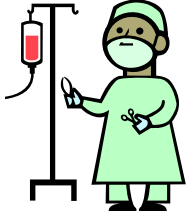
In person:

Create a portfolio with copies of your HIPAA test, standards and precautions and other training, shadowing contracts, blank facility agreements, blank evaluations and report forms, letters of reference. If you would like a personal letter of introduction, you may request one from an AHEC staff member.

- Be alert and enthusiastic at all times!
- Be prepared to introduce yourself to your contact's co-workers. Introduce yourself with your first and last name and a firm handshake. Remember to smile and to make good eye contact while shaking hands.
- Before leaving, thank your contact for giving you the opportunity to shadow. If you have a lot of questions saved up for your contact, ask permission to email or to contact him/her at another time to talk about your shadowing experience.
- Remember, the person you shadow is not there to entertain you, they have a job to do, so while we hope you have a fun time, keep in mind this is work – it can be a real reality check.

After Job Shadowing:

- **Promptly write a nice thank-you note to your contact for providing you the opportunity to shadow.**



SHADOWING ETIQUETTE

1. Appearance

A hospital, clinic or health department is a professional work setting. therefore, your dress and appearance should be professional. Clothing should be neat and clean; do not try to make extreme fashion statements. Women should wear nice dress pants or even a skirt (of conservative length) while men should wear a shirt and nice pants. (a tie is nice if you own one) No blue jeans are ever allowed when shadowing at any healthcare facility. And please, no hats. You may not wear mid-riff tops, spaghetti straps, tank tops or tee shirts. Keep in mind that you will be standing for long periods of time, so you may want to wear comfortable shoes. Tennis shoes are okay if they are clean. Absolutely no open toed shoes or flip flops or anything similar are allowed. Hairstyles should be neat. Women with long hair should pull their hair back, so that it will not disturb them or the patient. Also, be sure that your fingernails, hands etc.. are neat and clean. Please, no body jewelry, other than small earrings.

2. Arrival to Shadow Site

Plan to arrive at least 10 minutes early. You never know what could happen with traffic etc...Health care workers are busy people and they should not have to wait on a student for a considerable amount of time. If you are late, be sure to call the facility directly and let them know your expected time of arrival. When you arrive, introduce yourself to the secretary or receptionist or office manager and wait patiently for the preceptor. Do not be surprised or disappointed if they are late. Physicians, nurses and dentists frequently encounter emergency situations making it difficult for them to stay on schedule. While your shadowing experience is important to them, please be mindful of unexpected emergencies that are a part of their daily routine.

3. Language

Please be polite at your shadowing site. Be sure to use proper titles when speaking with all of the clinic or hospital staff. Also, when you speak to people, use an assertive tone, speak up and look them in the eye. They May extend a handshake, shake their hand politely and firmly.

4. Manners

You should not chew gum while shadowing. However, to maintain fresh breath, you may need to use a breath mint or mouth spray. Always remember that you do not want to have bad breath when speaking with a preceptor or patient. If you smoke or chew, (something that should concern you as a future healthcare worker) please eliminate any trace of smoke from yourself or your clothes. Always remember that you are the guest. Treat everyone and everything with the utmost respect. Always

obtain permission to use a phone in case of emergency and do not assume that you can go to all areas of the clinic or hospital. Please follow their guidelines on this. If you have a coat and/or purse, ask the staff if there is a certain place you may keep these.

Remember that when speaking with patients, that medicine allows you to see certain emotional and physical aspects of people and families that may be hidden from public view. Never show disgust at touching or dealing with a particular patient. Do no “gawk” at anything. If you feel like you need to remove yourself from a situation (if you feel faint or ill) please do so politely and quickly. It’s strongly suggested that you eat breakfast or a meal before your shadowing begins.

5. Patient Confidentiality (check site requirements for consent and compliance)

As listed in all of the forms you have signed about confidentiality, everything that you see and hear must be kept confidential both inside and outside the hospital. You may be exposed to people’s private feelings, actions and even certain body parts and functions. You may have access to confidential charts and records; but if you are interested in learning more about a patient’s situation, please ask the preceptor rather than read the chart yourself.

6. Polite Assertiveness

In order to make this an effective learning experience, you will want to show visible interest and excitement in whatever you are asked to do while shadowing. While most of your experience will be hands off, you may be asked to do certain task and should do so with enthusiasm. You will want to demonstrate confidence in your abilities, excitement and commitment to medicine. If the opportunity arises, volunteer to do a variety of jobs with permission from the preceptor. Be politely assertive.

7. Express Gratitude

After your first shadowing experience, it would be nice for you to send a thank you card to your preceptor. Be sure to get their name and the exact spelling. Thank them for their time for sharing their knowledge. Believe me, thank you cards will go a long way in showing how much you appreciated the experience and the preceptor will remember you! If there was someone in the office who also helped you, such as the office manager, mention this person in the card as well.

8. Complete shadowing report

Following each series of shadowing experiences, please logon to www.nwmoahec.org and complete the online shadowing report within 2 weeks of your shadowing. If you have any questions contact the Northwest Missouri Area Health Education Center office at (816) 271-6769. Have a wonderful shadowing experience!

Signature of Student

Date