

Job Shadow Tips for Hosts

Here are some ideas to help make your day as job shadow host a success:

KEYS FOR HOST EMPLOYEES:

- Find out if your employer participates in job shadowing and if there any current policies in place regarding student visitors. (For example, some activity suggestions offered here may not always be appropriate in regards to client confidentiality.)
- If yours is a union environment, seek its involvement in your planning.
- Find out some information about your student visitors (grade level, interests, etc.) from the school in advance, so you can plan your comments and activities accordingly.
- Use a check-off sheet to see if you've covered everything.
- Be patient – it's hard to do your work, answer questions and be good host at the same time!
- Only take as many students as you can handle.
- Emphasize the positive in your conversations but always be honest and straightforward - most of all -- be yourself!
- Have fun!!

IDEAS FOR STRUCTURING YOUR DAY:

➤ ***Start the day with an orientation & introductions***

Tell student(s) a little about yourself and ask them some questions as well. Talk about:

- Your professional background
- Interests/hobbies – what do you do for fun?
- Describe your “typical” day and be prepared to field questions regarding salaries, promotions, schooling, etc.
- Talk about the CPA career path and why you chose to pursue it.
- If possible, introduce your guest to someone at the partner/manager level

Anything you can do to “**break the ice**” and make the student feel welcome and at ease with you and your colleagues – this way they are more likely to ask questions.

➤ ***Give a tour***

- Give the student a tour of your office or business and explain the roles of each person to which they are introduced.
- Try to interact with your co-workers on all levels to give the student a good overview of how your firm runs (firm/company culture).
- Give an overview of what your firm/business does and how it affects the local or regional community.

***TIP: Have each student ask you at least one thing that they would like answered or would like to see during the visit.**

➤ ***Suggested activities***

- Plan to allow the student to do some limited, hands-on tasks (make sure you closely supervise) and try to invoke conversation that will let he/she participate.

- Plan to review a small job with someone who reviews your work or whose work you supervise
- Call a client – Either answer your phone calls while the student(s) are at your desk or set aside a phone call you need to make.
- Show off your computer programs and let the student(s) drive
- Give the student(s) a journal entry to record. Point out debits and credits – this is basic stuff they are familiar with.
- Make a quick entry in the various software programs you use such as depreciation software, billing software, etc.
- Help your student visitor learn as he/she observes. Don't assume that they know. Use language that the student can understand and try to avoid technical jargon.
- Stress the importance of promptness, attendance, appropriate personal appearance and attire and a positive work ethic.
- Take the student(s) with lunch -- Invite a co-worker to lunch along with the student(s).

***TIP: Finishing the students' visit by taking them to lunch is a great way to end the day on a positive note!**

➤ ***Some other ways to help you relate to students:***

- Explain how your work relates to classes they might be taking in school such as math, accounting, and business courses.
- Share examples of your daily routine that incorporates skills they are learning such as communication, logic, computers, or writing.
- Tell the student about yourself, where you went to school, some work and college experiences (internships, your first job, etc.) and why you chose accounting as your career.
- Explain the important aspects of your work and how they relate to other jobs within the firm or company.
- Explain what you like about your job as well as some of the disadvantages to your career.

Keep in mind these are only suggested guidelines. Each job shadow experience is unique. Plan a day that works for you and your firm or company.