



Job Shadow Day (JSD) Workplace Host FAQ's

"It seems like a job that takes a lot of work, but provides a satisfying reward, something that fits me well. I was surprised by how much goes into this job." -2006 Job Shadow Student

Since 1999, UVBEP has facilitated job shadow placements for thousands of Upper Valley eighth graders. Thanks to the generosity and hospitality of hundreds of local employers, students have had an opportunity to see first-hand what a typical workday is like and how the subjects they are studying in school are used on a daily basis in the workplace.

Because of the high number of students participating, we are aware that questions and concerns can arise. Most evaluation responses are positive, yet we continue to enhance the program based on participant feedback. The following "Frequently Asked Questions" explain why JSD is structured the way it is and give some suggestions for handling different scenarios.

Transportation

I was expecting notification regarding what time the bus would arrive, but I didn't. Why is that?

School counselors make every effort to contact all hosts once the transportation route is finalized a day or two before JSD. Contact may be made by phone, email or voicemail during a brief window of time. It could be that a phone message was not relayed, or an email message was filtered as junk mail.

The bus was half an hour late/early dropping off/picking up. Can you fix this next time?

School transportation staff put a great deal of effort into creating bus routes. Some travel time estimates are inaccurate and unexpected delays can arise. Please provide clear directions for student drop-off/pick-up, and school staff will work to the best of their ability to ensure a smooth process. When planning your agenda for the day, consider flexible first and last activities to accommodate schedule fluctuations.

We had students from different schools arriving and departing at different times. How can I make sure they all get the full experience?

It is a good idea to have an icebreaker activity at the beginning of the day that students can join in as they arrive. It is also fine to have workplace-relevant reading material or other independent activities for students to look through at the beginning or end of the day as they are waiting for others to arrive or for their bus. Ideas will be shared at the host information session and in the host confirmation packet.

Schedule

The day is too short to cover all we wanted to. Can it be longer?

JSD needs to fit within the parameters of the school day and school transportation needs. Students and busses need to be back at school in time for afternoon dismissal. Several past hosts have suggested creating an agenda in advance. Show students ways they can learn more about your field on their own.

The day is too long. The kids lost interest. Can it be shorter?

Because of JSD transportation logistics, only one drop-off and one pick-up bus run is possible, and earlier pick-ups cannot easily be accommodated. If you need ideas for engaging students, please come to UVBEP's host information session, try the activities we provide in the confirmation packet or contact UVBEP for customized suggestions.

Students

I requested that students contact me prior to JSD, but they never did. Why is that?

If a host makes a request for student contact prior to JSD, the information is printed on the student's parent permission slip. A student could misread, or misunderstand the information, may not have email access or access to a phone during business hours.

Some students I have had the past few years come dressed inappropriately. Can you make sure they dress for their Job Shadow site?

Hosts have the opportunity to indicate how they would like students to dress when completing the host confirmation form. This information is printed on the parent permission slip. Many students may not be aware of what is considered appropriate dress. For example, jeans may be acceptable at one worksite but not at another. Please specify if your worksite has a strict dress code or if you have a strong preference.

I had a student who was disrespectful. What should I have done?

Pull the student aside, and let them know privately what behavior you find unacceptable and why. If the behavior continues, please call the school contact, who will pick the student up. Workplace hosts are not expected to handle disrespectful or disruptive students.

One student was disinterested and didn't seem to want to be here. What should I have done?

Students at this age often will seem disinterested, when, in fact they are listening and processing information. Because schools have chosen to make JSD a mandatory school activity for all students, occasionally there will be a student who is not engaged. If a student's attitude is negatively affecting the experience of other participants, call the school contact to have the student picked up.

Can you send only students who are genuinely interested in my field?

JSD is a part of the 8th grade curriculum. Every student is placed in a job shadow site. Some students have a more developed sense of their interests than others. Each student completes a JSD application indicating their general interests and is matched to a site that has a connection to these interests. For many, JSD is the first time they clearly see the connection between their interests and their futures, and it may be the catalyst to discovering they are not really interested in what they thought they were!

Why do you send 8th graders? They seem too young to be sure this is the field they want to pursue.

Research has shown that middle school is a critical time for career exploration. Students need real examples of what potential careers entail and a taste of what a typical workday is like. Experiences like JSD enable them to learn more about what their interests are so that later on in their education they can seek more intensive work-based learning opportunities.

Many thanks to all the Upper Valley workplace hosts who are willing to partner with our schools to offer our students this valuable experience!

"Having youth in our building was quite refreshing. As adults we tend to get caught up in our own worlds, and I think it is great being able to simplify things and get back to basics, so to speak. It was great getting to (learn more about) what my co-workers really do and to see their energy about their jobs." -2006 Job Shadow Host

"I was able to answer questions, which led to more questions. It was very satisfying to relate the different equipment to different job positions. The student easily understood the show-and-tell method. The entire process of seeing the student interested in the company and the different types of machines and job positions was enriching and fulfilling." -2006 Job Shadow Host