



Job Shadow Day (JSD) Student 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 how much goes into this job." -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.

Can I shadow a family member?

JSD is intended to provide an opportunity for students to experience something new that they could not otherwise coordinate on their own. However, friends' and family members' workplaces often make great job shadow sites. Consider arranging a separate job shadow during a school break or summer vacation!

Why can't we choose where to go? Why didn't I get my first choice site?

Keep in mind that hundreds of students visit a limited number of local workplaces on the same day. School staff work together with UVBEP staff to make the best match possible for each student. A number of factors go into determining where students are assigned. Student interest surveys, available job shadow hosts, number of students interested in a given field, school transportation needs and guidance counselor recommendations all play a role. Because of the large number of students participating, it is impossible to accommodate specific requests.

My friend is getting lunch at her Job Shadow site, but I have to bring mine. Why can't they just give everyone lunch?

Some employers may have a budget for providing lunch for job shadow students while others may not be able to justify the expense. Some hosts generously pay from their own pocket to take students out to lunch. This is easier for hosts who have only a few job shadow students. Every employer is different, and, although it may seem unfair, not all are able to provide lunch.

I don't like my site assignment. Can I change? Do I have to go?

Assignments are made based on your interest survey. A site is selected that is related to at least one interest you indicate. Once assignments have been made, changes affect multiple people. Your school counselor may request a change under special circumstances, but in most cases changes are not possible.

Workers at your site have set aside part of their day to host you. They have put work into planning the day and are looking forward to your visit. JSD is a school day like any other. An unexcused absence on JSD is an unexcused absence from school and is inconsiderate to hosts.

What if it's boring?

There will be times during the day where you are simply an observer. Make the most of these opportunities to discover what happens at this workplace on a typical day. Every job has a tedious side to it as well as an appealing side. Notice what it is you find boring and why, and think about how that plays into your future career choices.

What should I wear?

Some hosts indicate how students should dress for JSD. See your permission slip for specific details. If no instructions are given, dress neatly and comfortably. Remember that what is acceptable in school may not be appropriate for the work place. (i.e. jeans with holes, t-shirts with slogans, certain kinds of jewelry or make-up).

What should I bring?

Bring pen and paper for notes and your "Expectations Worksheet". Hosts have been told you will come with questions, so bring them, and be sure to ask. You can bring a book to read while waiting for the bus. See your permission slip for additional details specific to your site.

We were done early and had nothing to do while waiting for the bus to pick us up. Why didn't the host keep us busy the whole time?

You are visiting during regular working hours and instances may arise when a host needs to attend to business. Some down time is to be expected, and you may spend some time waiting. If you find yourself in a situation that you find uncomfortable or unacceptable, call your school.

Approached with an open mind and some thoughtful preparation, Job Shadow Day can be a valuable experience on your path to a future career.

"It was nice to see my job shadow student so excited about (this career). She asked good questions and interacted well with (everyone)." -Job Shadow Host

"(The students) I worked with today were so enthusiastic that I found additional joy in my work by looking at my job through their eyes." -Job Shadow Host