

Hosting a Job Shadowing experience

What are the benefits for you?

Job shadowing

- contributes to the professional development of a fellow colleague and yourself
- encourages you to reflect on why you do what you do and challenges you to think about your reactions and approaches to variety of situations
- encourages you to reflect on your leadership style (improving self-awareness) and improves self-reflection and communication skills in teaching others.
- develops your coaching skills.
- useful in transferring knowledge (e.g. can be used by someone who is about to retire to train a new staff member)

If you have been approached to host a colleague for job shadowing experience, there are several factors to consider to make this a quality experience for both you and the participant.

Preparing for a job shadowing placement

Learning Needs

Consider how you can assist this colleague's learning needs, including the best times and days to ensure the best learning experience. Determine the maximum time commitment (in most instances work shadowing is for up to one day (this can be split into two half-day visits as negotiated)).

Boundaries

Think about what your boundaries will be as a host and be upfront about these with the visiting colleague (e.g. what they will and won't be able to observe - consider confidentiality of sensitive information).

Health and Safety

Ensure they are aware of all workplace health and safety (WHS) considerations for the work area. Will you need to provide advice on appropriate dress or other requirements eg closed in shoes required for a particular work environment.

Note: The staff member must complete a job shadowing request form which is approved by their team leader before commencing a placement.

During the job shadowing placement

1. Meet the visiting colleague at the designated time, date and location.
2. Provide any local induction needed (e.g. fire emergency evacuation and procedures specific to the work area) and introduce them to team members.
3. Clarify with them what they want to learn (this may have changed since the shadowing was organised).
4. Talk through the activities they are likely to shadow (e.g. report writing, attending meetings, reading emails, answering phone calls, etc.), and discuss the behaviour that you expect. For example, if you are reading emails, can the person shadowing read over your shoulder?
5. Give them some background around the client groups you support and networks that help you achieve success in your role.
6. Have a discussion about privacy, confidentiality and/or any relevant legal or workplace health and safety considerations.
7. Provide opportunities for the employee to ask questions and provide feedback to check their learning.

After the job shadowing placement

1. Reflect on the job shadowing experience - what went well, what questions did they ask that surprised you and what would you do differently next time?
2. Explore any follow-up actions (if applicable), such as:
 - further job shadowing opportunities or invitations to meet again
 - sharing learnings from the experience with your team
 - partner with the job shadower's area to share information and collaborate on projects - this helps in process improvement and incorporates a collaborative approach