Job shadowing is an unpaid experience where a student follows an employer for a short period of time to learn about a particular occupation or industry. This activity helps students explore the world of work and the range of opportunities found within an occupational area.

For employers, hosting job shadows is a chance to make a difference in the workforce of the future without making a major time commitment. It's exciting to help students make the link between learning and earning and many employers state that they and their employees discover new skills and talents in the process of sharing their job skills.

Vermont Work-based Learning Manual
http://www.state.vt.us/stw/wblm/2C0jobshadow.pdf (This is a great source – How to)

Me and My Shadow
Students who shadow employees get an idea of the expectations employers place on their workers and can sample corporate culture. When they open their doors to student shadowers, businesses aspiring to attract future workers find that job shadowing programs help them make inroads into educational institutions and provide opportunities to foster vocational interest and relationships with tomorrow’s workforce. ... Over time, such relationships can help employers address anticipated talent shortages, especially in hard-to-fill positions.

Carol Morrison - 9/4/10
http://talentmgmt.com/articles/view/me_and_my_shadow/print:1

Benefits

• The student observes and gains insight on possible future careers and cultivates networking opportunities.
• Employers provide an overview of the organization and industry, and share career advice and tips on work/life balance.

Employer Commitments

• Provide a host to take students around.
• Help the students to understand required skills needed for the job.
• Demonstrate and explain effective work methods.
• Show a desire to work with students and introduce them to a realistic view of their career area and work roles.
• Welcome questions and provide students with constructive feedback, especially as it relates to realistic expectations of the student.
• Present the ability to work with persons of different educational, economic, cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds.
• Organize activities/assignments for the student and remain available during the student’s shadowing assignment via email.
Features to consider including

- a tour of your office/facility
- lunch with you and/or key colleagues
- brief discussion of different departmental functions
- introduction to the mission of the workplace: What do you do?
- “hands-on” project/assignment
- resume critique
- promotional materials

Topics to discuss

- how your work relates to classes they might be taking in school
- what your path from undergraduate study to your current position has been
- what you like about your job as well as some of the disadvantages to your career.
- a personal note: Why is my job important to me?
- Discussion about the student's career interests and plans. Offer suggestions for appropriate training or experience.

Ideas compiled from Career Services, Texas State University (http://www.careerservices.txstate.edu/Employers/shadowing.html) and Cspcpa.org.