UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

STUDENT LIFE | Career Exploration & Education

JOB SHADOWING: HOST GUIDE

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JOB SHADOWING: HOST GUIDE

Welcome to job shadowing! Thank you for your participation and support in this valuable program.

What is job shadowing?

Job Shadowing is an experiential learning program that provides U of T students and recent graduates (who graduated within the past two years) an opportunity to explore a career of their interest through a half-day to two-day placement. As a job shadowing host, you can share insights into the day-to-day activities of your job, workplace culture, and industry, and engage participants in a practical activity that helps them understand an aspect of your work.

Your involvement will help them gain career clarity while making a meaningful impact on their career journey.

Benefits for hosts

- Gain insight into what students are curious about and their questions regarding the job and industry!
- Share your knowledge, stories and expertise to support students and recent graduates in their career exploration journey.
- Support efforts to create inclusive, equitable career exploration opportunities for participants to self-discover and identify career next steps.

- Spark your curiosity and interest in career development by reflecting on your journey.
- Connect with diverse U of T students and be exposed to new talent that informs potential recruitment efforts; make your presence and organization known to emerging talent.
- Be in partnership with U of T which can open exciting initiatives and meaningful opportunities to engage with U of T staff and student and alumni community.

Program goals for your participants

- Learn about and explore potential career options.
- Understand how their experiential learning and classroom learning is connected.
- Learn from host's stories and knowledge - this can offer insight into the non-linearity of career development, impact of identity in the workplace, industry-specific knowledge, workplace culture, etc.
- Develop a community of support through making connections in their field of interest.
- Gain career clarity through experiencing the realities of a career firsthand.

Your job shadowing participants

University of Toronto (U of T) is ranked first in graduate employability in Canada. It is the top Canadian choice among employers, with 87% of U of T students having been employed within six months of graduation.

- 80% of U of T students identify as a visible minority.
- 29.8% of U of T students come from abroad (international student), with the top five countries of origin being China, India, The United States, South Korea and Iran.

Your participants are international and/or domestic undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or recent graduates who have diverse identities (i.e., age, ethnicity, culture, disability, gender, religion, etc.). They will have varying levels of knowledge and skills related to your industry due to different academic backgrounds and career experiences.

Please ensure that the job shadowing experience considers different academic and career backgrounds and is **inclusive** for all your participants.

Values & expectations of the program

Job shadowing is not a recruitment program but rather an experiential learning opportunity for participants to explore careers. At Career Exploration & Education, we hope to collaborate with employer partners to bring about career learning experiences for students and recent graduates that center growth, equity, well-being and community.

Six core values inform how we design and deliver the job shadowing program. We encourage you to reflect on how these values might align with your own and how you could integrate these values in your engagement with job shadowing participants. Please view "Job Shadowing: Values & Theories" for a deeper dive into the values and research context of our experiential learning program.

Support for Hosts

To support you in the job shadowing hosting experience, the Career Exploration team will:

- Prepare your participants for a placement opportunity with you through an orientation and training workshop.
- Screen and match participants who demonstrate good alignment to your placement based on their application.
- Offer you strategic advice on how to set up meaningful experiential learning opportunities.
- Support you and your placement participants – please contact us with questions or concerns leading up to, on the day of and/or after the placement: careerexploration@utoronto.ca
- Enhance next year's program based on your feedback.

Host timeline for job shadowing

How to get involved as a job shadowing host:

Host onboarding & job shadowing timeline	Key Steps
1 **Preparation**	**MEET & APPLY** Meet with a Career Exploration team member to discuss details of hosting job shadowing. If interested in hosting, complete your host placement form to share: a. Which job shadowing cycle(s) you'd like to get involved in. b. Date and length of the placement. c. Number of participants you will host (1-8). d. A short description on what participants can expect from the job shadowing placement experience.
2 **Preparation**	**MATCH** One to two weeks before your placement, you will receive the name(s) and contact information of your participants. a. At least a week prior to the placement, participants will contact you to confirm logistical information and to introduce themselves. b. Please confirm with students the logistics (e.g., location, meeting time, virtual platform if online). c. Before the placement begins, you can also ask students what they are curious to learn or what goals they hope to achieve through their time with you. This can offer you a better understanding of who your participants are.

Host onboarding & job shadowing timeline *(cont')*	Key Steps *(cont')*
3 **Job shadowing placement period**	**HOST** **Placement period** to host job shadowing.
4 **After hosting job shadowing**	**MATCH** Following the placement, complete a **host feedback survey** to share about your hosting experience and to help us further improve the program.

For exact host onboarding and job shadowing program cycle dates, please check our job shadowing website under the "For hosts: Get involved in job shadowing" section.

Structure of the job shadowing experience

You have the choice of hosting job shadowing in person or online.

- If **in person,** consider hosting a job shadowing experience between **half a day and two days** during the placement period to allow participants to experience more fully the realities of your work.
- If **online,** consider hosting a four- to six-hour total online experience over one or two days.

You can host between **one to eight participants.**

Whether you choose to host in person or online, there are **three core components** your job shadowing experience should include:

1 Career Conversations with you
(and – if available – some of your colleagues)

Draw on the wisdom of your experience and discuss how you've established and developed your career.

Potential themes to consider when sharing your experiences:

- career uncertainty
- hope-centered stories
- "fail" stories and how you navigated challenges
- "planned happenstance" – unexpected events that influenced your path
- non-linearity of careers
- impact of intersectional identity on career development
- industry and career insights – (e.g., skills needed)

2 Workplace Culture Conversation
(and workplace tour if in person)

Share aspects of your workplace that demonstrate its culture (plus any employee resource groups) and allow participants to ask about the challenges and benefits of your workplace.

3 Career Learning Activity*

The “hands-on” component of job shadowing. Develop a work-simulated activity that helps participants learn about your work and industry. The activity should give them a hands-on experience with either a transferable skill that you use frequently, or an industry-relevant issue that is topical to your work. The activity should take participants one to two hours to do.

Check out our **Appendix: Resources to host** for more info on how to develop the career learning activity!

Example formats for your career learning activity

- case study/scenario question
- mini research project
- observational & debriefing activities
- work sample
- simulated project proposal

Get stuck or have ideas? Feel free to contact **careerexploration@utoronto.ca** to discuss ideas!

****A note on structure:*** You can assign the career learning activity in advance to give participants more time and notice to prepare for the job shadowing meeting. If you choose this structure, please clearly stipulate the requirements and instructions of the career learning activity to avoid students over-contributing (i.e., spending six hours on the activity instead of the allotted one to two hours).

Creating an accessible & inclusive learning environment

We support career learners who have accessibility accommodation needs. Participants are encouraged to request their accommodation in their introductory email to you. You are invited to work collaboratively with the participant on these requests. **Please do not ask why they need the accommodation or what they are being accommodated for. Any disability is private information.**

If you have questions about an accommodation request, please let the Career Exploration team know at careerexploration@utoronto.ca and we would be happy to help.

You can also check out the Disclosure and Accommodation Guide for more information on how to create an accessible workplace.

The accessibility checklist below includes some examples of accommodation you can provide to ensure a more accessible and inclusive experience.

Accessibility Checklist

In-person job shadowing	
Inclusive design of the job shadowing placement (Universal Design for Learning) – offer multiple ways for participants to take in content, engage with it and peers, demonstrate their learning, and ask questions (e.g., share aloud, partner work, question cards, sticky notes). Clarify terms and use clear language.	Ensure access to tools and assistive technologies (e.g., students with hearing impairment can bring their assistive listening device if needed or if you have one, provide it for them; limit unnecessary background noise).
Consider those who have mobility impairments (e.g. students who need a wheelchair) – ramp and/ or elevator access, barrier-free pathways.	Wayfinding signs in the building (to help participants locate key meeting places, washroom). If you have an online map, you can also share this with participants.
Share an agenda/schedule ahead of time and goals of the placement to set clear expectations.	Consider providing fidget toys, which can help one relieve stress and focus.

Online job shadowing	
Inclusive design of the job shadowing placement (Universal Design for Learning) – offer multiple ways for participants to take in content, engage with it and peers, demonstrate their learning, and ask questions (e.g., share aloud, online interactive tools: Mentimeter and Padlet, polls). Clarify terms and use clear language.	
If online slides are used, ensure slide font and colour are easy to read and describe images as well.	Enable closed captioning (e.g., you can enable subtitles on Zoom by clicking the CC icon).
Provide some short breaks during the session, especially if a meeting is more than one hour long.	Some students may not have access to a webcam. If you use Zoom, we ask that you activate the option for participants to call in using their mobile device to increase access for all participants.

Important note:

For in-person job shadowing, please list all safety concerns or accessibility barriers in the **host placement form** so we can provide this information to students up front as they make decisions about which host to shadow.

Some participants may be experiencing mental health challenges, social anxiety and isolation. If you encounter any incidents or situations that need support, please contact Career Exploration at careerexploration@utoronto.ca.

Inclusivity in the workplace: Influence of culture

It is crucial to recognize that our identities, cultures, and environment shape the way we communicate, work (i.e., working style), and perceive the workplace (e.g., understanding of collaboration). To foster a more inclusive environment, we need to increase awareness of and embrace diverse communication styles and perspectives. **Please share about your workplace culture and be respectful of varied understandings around work.**

The examples below demonstrate how culture can influence perceptions around work:

A work "break"

...can mean taking a break by yourself or in other cultures, with other people.

Direct vs. indirect communication

People who grew up in an environment that favours indirect communication may use silence and implicit meaning to convey their message (e.g., "that's difficult to implement" may actually mean "it's not possible to implement this at this time"). On the other hand, some people convey their message with words that mean what they mean, known as direct communication, which can come across as stringent or succinct depending on the cultural context and one's communication style.

Perceptions about quietness

In some cultures, being "quiet" is respectful while in other workplace cultures, being more talkative and expressive is seen as being sociable.

Asking questions

Recognize that some people find asking questions difficult as some cultures perceive this as one being less competent while in other cultures, asking questions is perceived positively and seen as one being curious. Please create opportunities for students to ask questions in different ways, encourage openness around asking questions and foster a welcoming space.

APPENDIX: RESOURCES TO HOST JOB SHADOWING

Our Appendix: Resources to Host section offers additional tips and strategies for hosting job shadowing.

The resource features:

1.

Steps to create a career learning activity & examples.

2.

Sample job shadowing agenda for in-person and online experiences.

3.

Frequently asked questions.

4.

Job shadowing values and theories

If you have any questions or curiosities about being a job shadowing host, please reach out to the Career Exploration team at careerexploration@utoronto.ca. Thank you!

Career Learning Activity

Steps on how to create a career learning activity

This 1-2 hour activity provides participants a practical opportunity to apply skills and knowledge relevant to your field of work or examine an industry-related issue.

Determine a theme for the activity

1. Determine a theme for the activity

What do you want students to learn? This can be a transferable skill you regularly use in your work or an industry-related issue that you want to discuss with the participants.

- ***Examples of skills:*** data analysis, critical thinking, (etc.)
- ***Examples of industry-related issues:*** health literacy, impact of AI in the financial sector, equitable hiring practices (etc.).

Choose a format and develop an activity

2. Choose a format and develop an activity (about 1-2 hours) that will let participants engage in your theme.

Formats include case study, research project, work sample, etc. For more examples, check out the next section "*What are some career learning activity ideas?*"

General guidelines for the activity:

- Keep the activity general enough to appeal to any interested participants regardless of their background, but complex enough to truly showcase the transferable skills/issues that you want to highlight.
- Consider making the activity mutually beneficial to the participants and to your organization, so that the experience is more exciting and practical.
- If possible, provide a sample or template to participants. This gives them a starting point and a better idea of the instructions (e.g., research proposal template).
- Ensure that the length of time provided is sufficient to complete the activity.

3. Allot time for follow-up after the career learning activity

Ensure time for participants to present back and reflect on their learning. This is also a chance for you to give them feedback! Often, participants have more questions and insights during this meeting, so be sure to allocate time for a rich conversation!

Get stuck or have ideas? Feel free to contact careerexploration@utoronto.ca to discuss ideas!

Remember – these are **simulated work activities!** Job Shadowing participants are not qualified or prepared to provide real deliverables.

What are some career learning activity ideas?

Activity Format	Description	Examples
Case Study	Participants learn how to apply their analytical skills to provide recommendations to solve a typical organizational problem or situation. Ensure that any identifying information in the case study is anonymous or redacted.	• Reviewing a patient's history and developing a patient care plan *(sample skill used: assessment).* • Preparing a project bid, based on a call for proposals *(sample skill used: financial literacy).*
Mini Research Project	Participants dive into an issue, both within the industry and within a specific organizational context and provide their own suggestions for new practices.	• Investigating best practices in health education for a diverse population – participants can share what they learned the hospital is doing and their own suggestions that expand on practices in a short presentation *(sample industry issue used: health literacy).*

Observational Activities	Participants shadow you in a real meeting with your team or clients. Please also provide an opportunity for the students to debrief the experience and reflect on any values, skills, and/or workplace culture they observed.	• Shadowing you in a team meeting. Participants can partake in discussion or post-team meeting, discuss any industry-related issues shared during the team meeting with you *(industry issue used).* • Shadowing you in a client meeting. Participants can share what they learned and how they would engage with a client. This may be followed by a mock client meeting where participants can apply what they learned. *(sample skill used: critical thinking).*
Work Sample	Participants get hands-on experience with real work examples and practice their skills in a defined activity.	• Reviewing data sets, creating visuals, preparing briefing notes, and/or making recommendations on data subject *(sample skill used: data analysis).*
Simulated Project Proposal	Participants develop a proposal in response to a challenge or question that you provide and present their ideas to you.	• Preparing and presenting a lesson plan *(sample skill used: curriculum development).* • Preparing and presenting a social media strategy *(sample skill used: digital communication).*

Sample of a career learning activity:

If you are in the field of marketing, you might ask participants to prepare and present a social media strategy that would increase your brand awareness.

You can provide a sample, tip sheet, or other guidelines to support them.

Theme: for participants to apply digital communication skill and strategic thinking.

Format: Simulated Project Proposal - Students develop a social media strategy proposal in response to a challenge/question that is topical to your industry.

Sample Job Shadowing Agendas

In-person agenda

I'm excited to have you shadow me at XX organization. Below are some important details and our agenda for today's job shadowing experience.

Location: _____

Person of Contact: NAME, 416-123-1234 or personofcontact@email.com. Please reach out to NAME if there's an emergency or if you have any questions.

Time	Activity	Location
9:45 am – 10:00 am	Job Shadowing participants arrive. Meet with participants to bring them to main meeting room	*Lobby*
10:00 am – 10:10 am	Welcome. Safety overview (e.g., fire exit), washrooms.	*Conference room 205*
10:10 am – 12:30 pm	Introduction to organization, team members (if available) and setting the context. Get to know one another. Show a day-in-a-life of your role, discuss important skills and knowledge required in your role and industry, and share your career story. Q&A	*Conference room 205*
12:30 pm – 1:00 pm	Workplace tour + workplace culture conversation	

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Lunch (bring your own/company will offer lunch)	*Lunch room/ outside*
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Participates engage in a Career Learning Activity. **VERSION 1** *All participants can do the same activity, or participants can choose an option.* • Option 1: Participants attend a team meeting to gain a behind-the-scenes insight into how our meetings are conducted, teamwork dynamics, projects/challenges discussed at meetings. Participants can give feedback to the meeting. • Option 2: Participants engage in a case study and are given time for Independent/group work. • Option 3: Participants can observe a project I am undertaking and try a mock task I often do at work. • Option 4: Participants participate in a mock meeting with a client/patient. Debrief Career Learning Activity. Participants share insights and I (host) provide feedback.	*Reconvene in Conference room 205.*
	VERSION 2 **Participants will be divided into Group A and Group B so that participants can alternate and engage in two activities in total:* 2:00 – 3:00pm (Group A: Option 1 | Group B: Option 2) 3:00 – 4:00pm (Group A: Option 2 | Group B: Option 1)	
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Whole group wrap-up and reflections on Job Shadowing experience.	*Conference room 205*

Online agenda

I'm excited to have you shadow me at XX organization. Below are some important details and our agenda for today's job shadowing experience.

Platform and Link to virtual meeting: _____

Person of Contact: NAME, 416-123-1234 or personofcontact@email.com. Please reach out to NAME if there's an emergency or if you have any questions.

Meeting	Time	Activity
Meeting #1 Date: _____	1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Introduction to organization, team members (if available), and setting the context. Get to know one another. Show a day-in-a-life of your role, discuss important skills and knowledge required in your role and industry, and share your career story. Discuss your organization and its workplace culture. Q&A
	3:00 pm – 3:15 pm	Break
	3:15 pm – 3:45 pm	Assign Career Learning Activity to participants (can include demo and instructions, optional group work time)
	3:45 pm – 4:15 pm	*Additional idea (if there's availability and interest from students):* Quick chat with 2 other colleagues (i.e., networking opportunity for students to ask questions and for employees to share their career experiences and advice).
Meeting #2 Date: _____	10:00 am – 10:45 am	Debrief Career Learning Activity. Participants share insights and host provides feedback.
	10:45 am – 11:30 am	Reflections on Job Shadowing experience Final Q&A Wrap-up

Frequently Asked Questions

General

1. **How can I deal with confidential information and privacy issues?**

   Participants will be expected to maintain confidentiality and understand that they will not have access to all information. Depending on your job and organization, you may choose to have participants complete your organization's confidentiality form.

2. **Will I receive requests to accommodate disabilities?**

   When a student requires accommodation, the students will either contact you directly, or ask that we make the request on their behalf. We will aim to provide you with a specific description of how to accommodate the request. If you cannot meet the request, please let the Career Exploration Coordinator know as soon as possible.

3. **Who do I contact in case of an emergency?**

   If there is an emergency at your placement, please contact sarah.memme@utoronto.ca and mary.stefanidis@utoronto.ca with a cc to joselyn.wong@utoronto.ca.

4. **What are some key things to keep in mind when facilitating in-person job shadowing?**

   - Provide an agenda/schedule about the placement, including location, meeting times, and activities.
   - Be transparent about safety concerns and accessibility barriers
     - Communicate these details in the Host Placement Form so we can share this info with students
     - Set aside time at the beginning of the placement to go over safety and accessibility.

FAQs on facilitating virtual job shadowing

1. **Can the Career Exploration Team create and start the job shadowing meeting for me if I am hosting virtually?**

   Unfortunately, we are unable to set up individual Job Shadowing meetings between hosts and students. However, we have some tips for online hosting, such as virtual facilitation strategies and tech guidance.

   Please see below.

2. **What online platform should I use?**

   This is up to your discretion, but please communicate your platform choice to your placed participants in advance of the placement to give them enough time to download any programs and test out the platform. Examples include:

   - Zoom – note that unpaid accounts only support 40-minute meetings. If you choose to use Zoom, be prepared with a backup link in case you get cut off. All current students have access to a Zoom Education account.
   - MS Teams – All current students have access to MS Teams. Recently graduated participants may not have this same access.
   - Google Meet
   - WebEx

3. **Do you have any advice on setting up an online meeting?**

   - For larger groups you host, have a moderator role so that one person can manage questions in the chat, breakout rooms, etc. while you focus on meeting the participants.
   - Familiarize yourself with any online platforms you plan to use for engagement and allot time to orient participants to how to use the technology as well.

4. **How do I encourage dialogue and engagement online?**

   - Recognize that some students will need or want to stay muted and off video. Providing them with the opportunity to participate in the chat is great!
   - In early emails, include a note that encourages participants to unmute and turn on video during the meeting, so that you can connect and have a great discussion (but recognize that it's not a requirement).
   - Consider including an icebreaker at the start of your session (i.e., Share name, program, and class you are most excited about) to encourage people to start talking.
   - Consider non-verbal interactive elements (e.g., Mentimeter, Poll Everywhere).

Questions on filling out the Host Placement Form

1. **What is the host identity section in the Host Placement Form?**

   As a part of our goal to create equitable career exploration opportunities that connect students to diverse stories and experiences, we have included an optional "Host Identity" component in the Host Placement Form.

   The "Host Identity" component invites you (host) to voluntarily select as many aspects of identity that apply to you (e.g., I am Black, I was an international student) and that you are comfortable sharing should you hold career conversations with participants on how your identity influenced your career development and workplace exploration. Your selection of identities will not be shared beyond the Job Shadowing program.

2. **Why do we have this component and what is the impact?**

   Participants may benefit from knowing more about aspects of your identity to support their own career exploration. We hope that by connecting students with hosts who share similar lived experiences as them and who are open to sharing how they navigated these challenges, this could give students hope while normalizing career uncertainty, transition, and decision-making. Through attending to the intersection between identity and the workplace in the Job Shadowing experience, students can be exposed to a diversity of career stories and communities to foster hope, find connection, gain career clarity, and leverage their identities and agency.

3. **How will this "host identity" information be used in the Job Shadowing Program**

   When applying for job shadowing, applicants are asked what identities and career stories they are interested in learning more about, should identity be a factor in their decision to apply to certain job shadowing opportunities. Their response, in addition to their statement of interest, will assist the Career Exploration Team in matching them with hosts who have expressed comfort and consent in sharing this aspect of their identity in career conversations.

Job Shadowing: Values & Theories

Our Values

Below are six core values that inform how we design and deliver the Job Shadowing program. We encourage you to reflect on how these values might align with your own and how you could integrate these values in your engagement with job shadowing participants.

- **Collaboration** – Co-create learning experiences with participants that leverage their agency and encourage learning with, from, and alongside others.
- **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility (EDIA)** – Design and deliver career learning experiences that center and prioritize principles of EDIA. Examples of this include accommodating learners, building an inclusive environment, recognizing implicit biases, etc.
- **Valuing of Identity** – Recognize the value and connection of intersectional identities as part of career exploration, your own and that of the students'.
- **Community & Networks** – Build a sense of community and professional networks through creating spaces which encourage curiosity, shared learning, and active listening.
- **Well-being** – Uncertainty is common in career exploration, and some students and alumni experience stress or anxiety as a result. Exploring ways to normalize uncertainty in career development alongside students can contribute to their wellbeing and career exploration.
- **Hope** – Through the sharing of your career stories around successes, challenges you faced, and how you navigated career uncertainty, this can foster hope and inspire students as they learn from your first-hand accounts which could reflect aspects of their lived experiences.

Theories that Ground our Work

- **Fink's Taxonomy of Significant Learning** – develop learning outcomes of work-integrated learning experiences that go beyond the cognitive domain (e.g., knowledge acquisition) and integrates affect and human dimensions of learning (i.e., care, learning how to learn)[1].

- **Hope Centered Model of Career Development** – This model of career adaptability proposes that hope is critical for self-directed career management. Our capacity to manage career changes and challenges positively can be enhanced by developing these competencies: 1) hope, 2) self-reflection, 3) selfclarity, 4) visioning, 5) goal setting/planning, and 6) implementing/ adapting [2].

- **Planned Happenstance** – Theory that everyone's career is affected by chance which can take us in different, unplanned directions. Rather than trying to take control for it, we can incorporate chance in our career development by taking actions to generate opportunities through open-mindedness, curiosity, and advocating for ourselves to pursue opportunities[3].

- **Systems Theory Framework for Career Development** – Recognizes that the individual is influenced by intrapersonal and contextual factors that can inform career thinking, decision-making, and action[4].

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[1] Fink, L. D. (2003). Creating significant learning experiences: an integrated approach to designing college courses. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

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[4] McMahon, M., Watson, M., & Patton, W. (2014). Context-resonant systems perspectives in career theory. In G. Arulmani et al. (Eds.), Handbook of Career Development (pp. 29-41). Springer

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