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UPPER IOWA UNIVERSITY

Established in 1857®

## **Job Shadowing Program**

### Introduction

Job shadowing is a work experience option where an employee learns about a position by walking through the work as a “shadow” to a competent worker from another area. The job shadowing experience will provide temporary exposure to the work product in an area of interest outside the normal working environment. The *shadower* will witness firsthand the work environment and the occupational/interpersonal skills practiced by their *shadow coach*.

Informal job shadowing is already fairly widespread within the induction process where new employees might spend some time with department co-workers. The Job Shadowing Program would extend this concept and allow for continuous professional development.

### Benefits

In addition to learning more about the range of work undertaken in another area, staff may:

- learn potential new methods of working
- understand more about the management of a similar role in another area
- develop contacts in another area and learn how best to communicate with them
- see the kind of issues or problems encountered on a day-to-day basis
- look for solutions from different angles
- develop strategies to increase cooperation
- gain an awareness and understanding of diverse backgrounds and perspectives

### Purpose

The Job Shadowing Program will:

- provide a learning experience for both parties
- enable a better understanding of the role of other employees and the work they do
- bring together people from different areas of the University
- improve communication and enhance networking opportunities
- share good practice(s)
- enhance individual self-development and assist ongoing professional development
- assist in breaking down barriers between different roles, teams, and divisions/departments

## Guidelines

The potential shadowers will make an initial request to their *immediate supervisor*. Both supervisors need to approve in advance of the shadowing arrangement. The completed form shall then be forwarded to Human Resources.

Before starting any placement, the potential shadower should consider what they hope to gain from the experience, and any learning objectives they might have. In addition, they will need to think about how it would fit in with their general professional development needs; questions they might want an answer to; and how it will fit in with their position.

It would be advisable to consider any aspects of the role the shadower may want to review, and discuss this with their shadow coach beforehand, so that the shadowing session may be planned accordingly.

Placement should be a minimum of a half-day and should not exceed two full working days.

Job shadowing is limited to observation only; the shadower would not be expected to offer direct work experience, responsibility, or skills.

Before agreeing to any shadowing request, the shadower's supervisor will need to assess the resource implications and consider the following questions in order to determine the appropriateness of the request:

- How will it assist the employee (shadower) to carry out current role?
- Will it allow for learning opportunities and professional development?
- Will it help to develop a greater understanding of the role and structure of the section?

## Procedure

1. To participate, shadowers will need to make a request in writing to their supervisor, using the Job Shadow Application Form (see attached). Supervisors may also suggest a job shadow arrangement for an employee.
2. If the supervisor agrees to the request, the shadower will:
  - Seek a person to become a shadow coach and inform them of the interest.
  - Arrange mutually convenient times/dates with the shadow coach and their supervisor.
  - The shadower will then ensure all practical arrangements are made and liaise with their shadow coach.
3. Shadowers must operate within the bounds of any departmental confidentiality policy.
4. At the end of the session, the shadower and the shadow coach will need to discuss the experience and provide feedback. In addition, the shadower will arrange a review with their supervisor.