

Shadowing 101

Shadowing is Observing

When we speak of shadowing, we are referring to observing. Shadowing can be applied to just about any profession but shadowing a health professional includes observing how they spend his/her day, how they interact and communicate with patients, and how they work within a health care team. It also helps you determine if your desired field of interest is the right career choice for you, and, when you apply to professional schools, it shows the admissions offices that you've worked inside a health care facility.

How to Find an Experience

- Ask, call, or email the resources available to you.
- Ask your family physician and do some research for the local hospitals and clinics around.
- Look into specific programs available like: Pre-Med AMSA, Reach Out & Read program, Moffit Cancer Center, and etc.

Additional Suggestions and Tips

- Be professional. This includes respecting scheduled times, as well as dressing professionally.
- Ask questions! But only when appropriate to do so. Remember you're only an observer! The focus is the patient, not you.
- Be a good listener and pay attention to the person speaking.
- Respect the hospital's policies.
- Reflect on your shadowing experience in a journal
- Shadow multiple physicians in different areas!
- Send your physician a thank you letter when you're done.

What to Send to When Inquiring?

- Your resume. An informative resume is greatly appreciated
- An insertion on why you want to shadow that specific specialization
- A professional email including your name, that you are a premed student, your major, how you get their contact info, and what you're looking for. Be ready to leave a similar message if you call!

What to Include in a Reflection?

- What did you learn from the health professional?
- What was it like to be in that field?
 - How did they organize their time?
- What did you learn *from* the patients?
- What skills did you observe in the health professional?
- How did this experience shape you and your goals for the future?
- What parts did you enjoy the most?
- Write some illnesses you found interesting to research later.
- Dates & times you've shadowed
- This will all help during applications and interviews.

