Job Shadowing

Personal Development

WHAT IS IT

This Guide explains how Job Shadowing can provide the opportunity for an individual to observe someone, normally with a known level of knowledge, or specific skills, undertaken their own job for a period or whilst undertaking a specific activity.

WHY USE IT

An individual can normally gain high quality development by:-
- o observing someone else (host) or a role model undertaking their job within an associate or relevant function
- o providing the opportunity to ask questions of the host about any aspect of their job, such as sources of job knowledge, skills, behaviours, relationships, work processes etc
- o sharing experiences, concerns, issues of mutual interest
- o reducing any apparent barriers between associated functions.

Job Shadowing enables very quick access to the knowledge and skills of a role model or someone with a recognised level of knowledge or skills.

Job Shadowing also provides a development opportunity that is relatively quick and uncomplicated to organise, and enables the individual to apply their learning almost instantly.

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

1. WHEN TO USE

An opportunity to watch a 'master in action' a very well established development method and has been practiced for hundreds of years within many industries for the benefit of millions of individuals.

It provides the opportunity for an individual to improve their level of knowledge or specific skills by observation, interpretation and subsequent application within their own role.

2. HOW TO USE

- o Identify the specific areas of focus for improvement
- o Carefully identify a suitable person (host) to shadow and seek their agreement
- o Define SMART objectives for the shadowing together with details of how to evaluate the value derived from the development opportunity
- o Explain the objectives with the host and agree timing, frequency and length of the job shadowing and schedule accordingly

- o Carefully plan and prepare in advance the key experiences the individual wishes to observe and questions they wish to raise
- o During the shadowing the individual should make notes to record:-
  - ➢ what specific methods, tactics, skills were adopted and why
  - ➢ how the host sought to achieve specific goals
  - ➢ what actual results were sought, realised or became apparent
  - ➢ highlight differences in knowledge, skills and behaviours between the host and individual and options for addressing these

- o Before the end of the meeting evaluate the experience against the development objective and decide the extent to which it has been met
- o Reflect on all aspects of the Job Shadowing experience. Create and implement plans to address any additional development needs arising from the experience including the discussions with the host
- o Where appropriate share the your new knowledge with others

3. EVALUATION

- o Evaluate the impact of the learning obtained from the Job Shadowing and agree next steps with your manager in order to achieve the agreed development objective
- o Share your experience with your learning buddy, focusing on interpretation of the experience to improve job performance

4. TOP TIPS

For the Individual
• Take care to select the most suitable manager to Job Shadow and carefully consider how you explain your request
• Consider obtaining added value from the Job Shadowing in addition to your main objective, such as trying to improve relationships between the two functions and teams

For the Manager
• Before the Job Shadowing is undertaken agree a Smart development objective, evaluation method, and date for follow-up discussion with the individual
• After the Job Shadowing listen carefully to the feedback and assess the individual's confidence and capability to apply the learning to satisfy the agreed development objective and be ready to provide additional support as required
• Encourage the individual to share their learning with others in order to increase the overall scope and value of the payback
• Consider the value of other members of your team improving their knowledge by undertaking Job Shadowing visits to the same or alternative functions.

NEXT STEPS

We trust that this Success Guide will assist your personal development and help build your capability and performance

You may find some of our other Success Guides of value for your Personal or Career Development. For your convenience we list these below and you can access the index for these via the link below:-

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