

## **Job Explorer: My Dream Job-Lesson 10**

**Topic:** Internships, Volunteering, and Job Shadowing

**Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

- Examine job internships as a means of learning about a career
- Examine volunteering as a means of learning about a career
- Examine shadowing as a means of learning about a career

**Materials:**

- Worksheets #10A, #10B, #10C, and #10D

**Focus Question:** Are job internships, volunteering, and shadowing good ways of learning about a future career?

**Teaching Strategies:**

Introduction:

- Ask students to explain their answers to the following:
  - What do you know about any of the following: job internships, volunteering, and shadowing?
  - Which of these opportunities would you find most valuable in learning about a possible career?

Body of the lesson:

Tell the class that today they will be discussing job internships, volunteering, and shadowing and what we can learn from each about a career.

- Distribute Worksheet #10A, “Internships.” Have students follow the directions for the exercise on the worksheet. Then, have them explain their answers to the following:
  - What did you learn about internships from this worksheet?
  - Describe the different types of internships available to potential workers?
  - What are some of the different ways of finding internships?
  - If someone asked you for advice about internships what would you tell that person?
  - After completing this reading, what questions do you have about internships?
- Distribute Worksheet # 10B, “Volunteering.” Have students follow the directions for the exercise on the worksheet. Then, have them explain their answers to the following:
  - What is this worksheet about?
  - Which of the four statements in the exercise were true, which were false, and which were you unsure about?
  - Based on what you read on this worksheet, what advice would you give someone about how to succeed in a volunteering opportunity?
  - If you were an employer, what qualities would you be looking for in a volunteer-worker?
  - After looking at this worksheet, what questions do you have about volunteering?
- Distribute Worksheet #10C, “Shadowing.” Divide the class into 8 groups. Have two groups read Part I on the worksheet, two groups read Part II on the worksheet,

two groups read Part III on the worksheet, and two groups read Part IV on the worksheet. Tell each group that they should be prepared to make a brief presentation (1-2 minutes) in which they:

1. summarize the information they read
  2. explain what they learned from the reading about job shadowing
- Call on four of the groups (one that read Part I, one that read Part II, one that read Part III, and one that read Part IV) to deliver their presentations to the whole class. As part of the whole-class discussion, ask the class to explain their answers to the following:
    - What did you learn about job shadowing from these presentations.

Summary/Assessment:

- Distribute Worksheet #10D, “Comparison.” Have students follow the directions to complete the exercise on the worksheet. Then have the class explain their answers to the following:
  - What are the major difference between internships, volunteering, and job shadowing?
  - Which of these job exploration experiences would you prefer?

## Worksheet #10A, “Internships”

### What is an internship?

Internships are short-term work experiences that allow you to observe and participate in professional work environments and explore how your interests relate to possible careers. Having an internship is beneficial because it provides the opportunity to:

1. Get an inside view of an industry and organization/company
2. Gain valuable skills and knowledge
3. Make professional connections and enhance your network
4. Get experience in a field prior to taking a full-time job

Increasingly, employers are looking for students who have gained experience through internships

### Types of Internships

Internships can vary from industry to industry and from one organization to another. Typically, interns have an opportunity to work at an organization for a selected number of hours per week over a specific period of time. They can vary greatly in terms of intensity, work style and compensation. Internships are available during the summer as well as the school year.

Remember that the purpose of an internship is not to make money; it is to explore a career interest, develop skills, and gain experience. It is up to you to make the most of the internship by learning as much as you can, asking questions and making contacts, the value of which far exceeds most internships compensation. When considering an internship, focus on the skills you will learn and the experiences you will have, not simply on the company name.

### Finding an Internship

In general, there are three different ways you can find an internship:

- **Advertised** opportunities are those that are posted, much like traditional jobs, and are often posted in the same places, such as company websites, job boards and other job posting systems. Many advertised internships are a part of established internship programs that offer additional support and learning opportunities.
- **Hidden** opportunities are not advertised. They are often found in newer and/or smaller companies. Hidden opportunities are primarily identified through networking with friends, family members, former employers, classmates and other personal contacts.
- **Self-created** opportunities are developed by the intern and the employer together. Often, a student will approach an organization in which he or she is interested in working and propose a project or simply offer his or her skills. This is a great way to intern for a company that has not had interns, does not normally hire interns or does not have an established internship program. While this takes initiative and time, self-created opportunities can be especially rewarding because the intern has a hand in designing the experience.

An effective internship search will involve applying to advertised opportunities as well as networking to find hidden opportunities. Keep in mind that there are many resources for finding an internship, so do not limit yourself to only one website or networking contact.

### Internship Timelines

All industries recruit at different times, so it is important to become familiar with the recruiting cycles in your target industry. Knowing when companies recruit or collect resumes is critical for the interview process. Moreover, you will want to give yourself plenty of time to apply because it can be time consuming once you find an internship to which you would like to apply.

Many organizations, including some government agencies and large media companies (and virtually all financial services and consulting firms), conduct their recruiting well in advance of their start dates, while others hire on an as-needed basis, usually 2-3 months in advance. Generally, the less structured the internship, the more the company will hire as needed and on a rolling basis.

Adapted from <http://www.careereducation.columbia.edu/findajob/internship>

## Worksheet 10B “Volunteering”

We all have heard about the challenge facing new jobseekers who need experience before they can get a job, but also need a job to get experience. So what is someone just about to enter market to do? Why not try volunteering? Besides gaining that seemingly elusive job experience, volunteering can let you "try before you buy" a new career. Try it on for size to determine if you would enjoy the work by actually doing the work.

Many times volunteers are later offered a paid position with their volunteer company. Especially if they have treated their volunteering as they would a "real" job and performed their work conscientiously. You make yourself desirable to the prospective employer by demonstrating your ability to perform the tasks required of the position. Also while you are volunteering the employer can see how well you fit into the job environment. They can also have a preview of your work ethics. Do you stay on track? Do you leave early? Are you punctual? Do you work well with your coworkers? All of these things, which an interviewer must try to guess from a short interview, become plainly obvious when they watch you volunteer on a day-by-day basis.

Volunteering is also a great way to build up your networking contacts. Today's employees will hold many jobs throughout their career. The better you are at building the connections with other people - in other words, developing a good network- the easier it will be for you to transition from one stage of your career to the next. Networking is so very important in finding a job, as many job openings never appear in the newspaper or in the various other traditional job search venues. Also if you are volunteering the field that you want to work in the contacts that you can make are invaluable. People will remember you if you do quality work. Be organized and maintain your network of contacts. Remember the old saying, "it's not what you know, but who you know?"

By volunteering you show yourself to be a disciplined, motivated and dedicated person. These are qualities that are highly valued by prospective employers.

Choose your volunteer position to maximize the job skill experience that you will earn. In other words, if you want to work in as a librarian it would be more useful to volunteer at a library or at least at some place that you will use the same skills at.

So after deciding on your career goal ... what do you want to be or what do you want to do? Then do some research at the library and online. Also do some research in person, by interviewing people that already work in the field you are interested in. Try to identify the specific job skills that are needed for the career you desire. Make a list of them.

Pretend that you are the employer that wants to hire a person in your desired job. What would you want to ask them? What kind of experience would you want them to have and what job skills would they need? Use the answers to these questions to identify the specific job skills that you want to gain experience in. Then look for available volunteer opportunities. Try to match the job skills of the volunteer position with the job skill requirements for your desired job.

Be sure to keep an ongoing written record of all your volunteer positions, supervisors' names, dates of service, and particularly any awards or honors received. Also be sure to quantify your accomplishments and to document them on your volunteer record.

There is almost an endless supply of volunteer opportunities. Even if a certain place is not actively trying to recruit volunteers, often if you will approach the person in charge and offer to volunteer your services. They will be more than happy to work with you.

Also be sure to approach your volunteer supervisor and request a letter of recommendation. Remember job skills that you gain through volunteering are real job skills. They have value. They increase your value as a job candidate.

<http://voices.yahoo.com/how-job-experience-via-volunteering-2042932.html?cat=2>

## **Worksheet #10C, “Shadowing”**

### **I. What is job shadowing?**

Job shadowing is a career exploration activity that offers an opportunity to spend time with a professional currently working in a person’s career field of interest. A job shadowing opportunity usually last for a day, but could be a little longer. Job shadowing offers a chance to see what it’s actually like working in a specific job. Not only does job shadowing give a person the opportunity to observe the day-to-day activities of someone in the current workforce, it also gives a person the chance to have questions about a career answered.

### **II. How to set up a job shadowing experience**

First check with your school counselor to see if the school offers a formal job shadowing program. If not, career counselors or other teachers can be of enormous help in assisting you to find potential job shadowing opportunities that may exist. The alumni of your college or high school are a good place to start. Large organizations and government agencies also offer job-shadowing programs for students. You may also check with organizations of interest to see if there is someone currently working in your career field of interest who would be interested in hosting a job shadower for one or more days over the course of the summer or perhaps during one of your school breaks.

### **III. Preparing for the job shadow.**

You will want to make a good impression at the job site so be sure to check out the dress code before arriving. If you have been corresponding with your job shadow sponsor, don’t hesitate to ask about appropriate dress code for your visit. Since job shadowing is similar to information interviewing, preparing a list of questions beforehand is essential to getting the most you can out of the experience. Once the shadowing experience is over, be sure to immediately send out a thank you note that highlights what you enjoyed most and that expresses your gratitude for the time and effort the job shadow sponsor took out of his/her busy day.

### **IV. Job Shadowing for career changers.**

Job shadowing can also be a good activity for those currently in the process of changing careers. Not only can a job shadow provide more information than print or online resources, it can also offer a first-hand look at the culture of the organization. Besides possessing the relevant knowledge and skills to complete a job successfully, fitting in with the overall culture and other staff members is crucial to future success within any organization. Career changers possess a multitude of transferable skills that they usually can bring to a new job; but, depending on the nature of the change, additional training or education may be required.

Adapted from <http://internships.about.com/od/internships101/a/whatisjobshadowing.htm?p=1>

## **Worksheet #10D, “Comparison”**

Exercise: Complete the chart below, listing two differences and two similarities between internship, volunteering, and job shadowing.

<b>Job Exploration Category</b>	<b>Similarities</b>	<b>Differences</b>
Internships	1. 2.	1. 2.
Volunteering	1. 2.	1. 2.
Job Shadowing	1. 2.	1. 2.

Worksheet #10 E

1. From your four-column list of qualifications, select four qualifications that you possess that are essential to success in your dream job.
  - a. For your dream job essay, the goal is for the judges to feel like you are the best candidate for the job. Make sure you explain your qualifications!
2. Create an Outline for your “Dream Job Essay.”

Introduction: 1. Share the three most important duties of my dream job 2. Share why I believe I’m qualified 3. Thesis Statement	
My Qualification 1 1. Explain why this qualification is necessary to succeed in the job 2. Two examples of why I have this qualification	
My Qualification 2 1. Explain why this qualification is necessary to succeed in the job 2. Two examples of why I have this qualification	
My Qualification 3 1. Explain why this qualification is necessary to succeed in the job 2. Two examples of why I have this qualification	
My Qualification 4 1. Explain why this qualification is necessary to succeed in the job 2. Two examples of why I have this qualification	
Conclusion 1. Repeat thesis statement 2. Remember this is your last chance to make an impression on the judges	