TCNJ Job Shadowing Program

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Job Shadowing Program Overview

The TCNJ job shadowing program was designed to provide a professional development experience for individual employees via observation and inquiry of another employee, known as the host, while the host carries out the tasks, duties and responsibilities consistent with the host's job description.

The program intends to enable employees to cultivate expanded knowledge, awareness and interest in other jobs and professions, with the goal of enhancing employee engagement, enabling career progression, and improving organizational context. In addition, job shadowing provides networking opportunities and visibility to all participants, greater cross-functional collaboration and the broadening of interpersonal reach.

TCNJ's job shadowing program is just one element of a comprehensive talent and professional development portfolio of career growth focused opportunities. Other aspects of talent development include the Individual Development Plan (IDP) program, e-learning instruction and instructor led sessions and seminars.

What is Job Shadowing?

Job shadowing enables a TCNJ staff member (the guest) who is interested in learning more about the attributes of another job, either in the employee's own department, or somewhere else on campus, to acquire knowledge about the characteristics of the position by observing another staff member (the host) who actually performs the work. In other words, the job shadowing experience will provide short term exposure to a host's work product in an area of interest outside the guest's regular working environment.

When shadowing another employee, the guest does not carry out any tasks, assignments, duties or responsibilities on behalf of the host. Rather, the guest bears witness to "how the work is done".

Job shadowing may also be a method to provide an individual within a department the opportunity to work alongside more experienced colleagues so that the shadower can learn and develop within their current role.

Any employee who is interested in a job shadowing assignment will develop a plan for its execution. The assignment will be contingent on the approval of the appropriate supervisor(s) and business unit leaders, as required by the division vice president.

The job shadowing program:

- provides a learning experience for both parties;
- enables a better understanding of the role of other employees and the work they do;
- brings together people from different areas of the College;
- improves communication and enhances networking opportunities;
- enhances individual self-development while strengthening ongoing professional development; and
- assists in breaking down silos that sometimes occur between different roles, teams and business units

Benefits of the Job Shadowing Program

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

- learn potential new methods of working
- understand more about the management of a similar role in another department
- develop contacts in another area and learn how best to communicate with those contacts
- become aware of the various issues that are encountered on a day-to-day basis
- learn ways to encourage improved cooperation across business units; and,
- encourage awareness and understanding of diverse backgrounds and perspectives

Benefits of the Program at a Glance

For the Host	For the Job Shadower (Guest)
Networks with colleagues from different areas of the College	Exposure to other departments and how other job functions work
Shares experiences with others	Learns from the experiences of colleagues
Learns from the job shadower/guest	Increased understanding and appreciation for how other roles support the College
Views and reflects on your own area of work through the novel perspective of the job shadower	Visibility into the needs and priorities of other positions and departments
Develop coaching and communication skills	The opportunity to discuss your role and its needs and priorities with others
Building professional networks	Building professional networks
Two-way learning	Appreciating organizational priorities beyond those of the guest's position or business unit
The opportunity to view and reflect on your own area of work enabled by the perspectives and observations of an individual who is unfamiliar with what you do on a regular basis	Appreciating organizational priorities beyond those of the guest's position or business unit

Benefits of Participating in the Job Shadowing Program

The benefits of participating in the job shadowing program are described below.

Job Shadowers (Guests)

- Increased exposure to different roles and functions within the College
- Prospect of career development and career development opportunities
- Growth of professional relationships

Hosts

- Opportunity to share knowledge and expertise in a particular area
- Support for colleagues in their career development and aspirations
- Making professional connections and building relationships

Participating Business Units

- Creating an environment of continuous learning
- Benefits from improved communication across offices/teams/divisions and fostering a learning culture
- Enabling growth of high potential talent
- Facilitation of employee engagement

Learning Objectives of the Job Shadowing Program

As with all professional development opportunities, the job shadowing program was established with professional and career growth in mind. Learning objectives should be agreed upon between the guest and that guest's supervisor, prior to commencement of the job shadowing relationship.

Outcomes of the job shadowing program from which participants and the College may benefit include:

- Retention of high performers
- Improved cross functional teamwork
- Greater innovation and creativity
- Improved employee understanding of TCNJ operations and strategic issues
- Increased learning capability
- Improved organizational communication

Eligibility Criteria to Participate in the Program

To be eligible to participate in the job shadowing program as a job shadower (guest), or a host, the interested employee must:

- Be a current, regular staff member with a minimum of one year of service in his/her/their own current position
- Obtain approval from the immediate supervisor, and if required by the division vice president, the next level manager
- Be in good standing (no corrective action or disciplinary action within the last year)

Employees who elect to participate in the program are doing so on a voluntary basis.

Duration of the Job Shadowing Relationship

The duration of the job shadowing relationship is to be agreed upon between the job shadower and host, with approval of the business unit leader for each of the employees. The job shadowing structure may be for dedicated work hours or for an ongoing period, the maximum of which must be approved by the business unit leader.

Program Roles and Responsibilities

Job Shadower (Guest)

The guest needs to consider what they hope to achieve prior to applying for the program, must abide by commitments related to the frequency and scheduling of all job shadowing engagements and must be prepared to document learning outcomes during and after the job shadowing engagement comes to an end.

Essential to the engagement are the following:

A guest should:

- Provide the host with an outline of what they are expecting from the job shadowing experience
- Maintain confidentiality with regard to all work product to which the shadower is exposed
- Provide the host with feedback and reflections on what has been observed
- Be on time and inform the host if they are unable to attend any scheduled shadowing session
- Ensure that work colleagues back on the "day job" are aware of the shadower's absence and what coverage is required

The Host

The host is the person who agrees to be shadowed. This role does involve some preparation and is more than permitting a co-worker to observe your work. A host needs to consider if the time requested is the best time for the shadowing to take place and the duration of the job shadowing period. The host must also consider their work obligations and ensure that the shadowing experience does not interfere with the host's ability to successfully carry out day to day responsibilities. Hosts should be prepared to document the experience and learning outcomes of the job shadowing experience.

A host should:

- Provide the job shadower/guest with a timetable for when the shadowing will take place
- Inform other colleagues that work closely with the host about the job shadowing relationship
- Provide time between sessions or prior to sessions for questions and feedback
- Provide the job shadower with information on the team /department in which the shadowing is taking place
- Provide appropriate notice and reasons if the shadowing session has to be cancelled or changed
- Provide constructive feedback to the job shadower

The Supervisor

Individuals may discuss job shadowing as either a way of developing their current role or as part of their career development in advance of pursuing a different role.

If the object of job shadowing is to develop the guest for the employee's current role, the supervisor might consider working alongside the employee to identify the best host that would avail the employee the appropriate experience or exposure for this purpose.

If the job shadow opportunity is for the employee's own career benefit, the supervisor may be able to suggest contacts or put the employee in touch with individuals at the College who could be in the position to assist.

Job Shadowing Types

Observation

A job shadower/guest will spend the agreed upon period of time observing the day to day work of the host. This may involve a range of activities, examples of which include attending meetings, or observing interactions with customers. This type of shadowing works best when a job shadower's objective is to gain a greater understanding of what the host's job role actually consists of.

For example, if a job shadower is considering a career change but isn't quite sure if they fully understand what is involved in a particular role, job shadowing could provide the opportunity to see, firsthand, aspects of the position.

Regular Briefings

Job shadowing for very specific learning outcomes might align well with this type of shadowing relationship. The shadower would engage with the host for specific activities over a period of time. Each activity is preceded by briefing and follow up debrief.

This type of shadowing provides short periods of focused activity, rather than ongoing observation.

Once the Job Shadowing Engagement Ends

Learning outcomes are a vital component of the job shadowing program.

The job *shadower and supervisor* should discuss and document:
•   How job shadowing has enhanced the employee's development
•   How job shadowing has affected the employee's performance

The *job shadower* should document the following:
•   Was the role as you expected it to be?
•   What did you gain personally from the experience?
•   How did you cope with the different working environment?

The *job shadower and the host* should discuss and document:
•   What did you get from the experience of working with the host?
•   What concerns or questions arose as a result of the experience?
•   Did the experience answer the questions you had hoped would be answered?

Interested in Participating in the Job Shadowing Program?

To learn more about the program and the process to participate, please read this section the program description.

Office of Human Resources Talent and Professional Development Team Responsibilities

HR oversees the program and coordinates the application and participation process. HR's role is to assist employees to successfully navigate the program requirements and to work alongside all participants to fulfill the program engagement expectations. This includes:

- Evaluating applications to participate in the program
- Maintaining an inventory of possible assignments, potential job shadowers and potential hosts
- Conducting any necessary outreach in order to match requests with shadowing opportunities
- Working with supervisors and business unit heads who are interested in providing employees with professional development opportunities
- Working with the job shadower and the supervisor to ensure that end of shadowing relationship documentation is completed and added to the employee's Oracle Cloud portal
- Promoting the program

Process to become a Job Shadower (Guest)

The potential job shadower must meet the eligibility requirements and is required to complete an application to participate in the program.

The employee will need to document their current duties and seek approval from their supervisor to apply for the program. Current processes and procedures should be documented in a manner that will enable another employee to assume those tasks without undue loss of efficiency and customer service. A plan that fails to adequately address how the work will be accomplished in the current position, while the program applicant engages in shadowing observations, will result in a denial from the supervisor of the employee's request to participate in the program.

Job shadowing assignments that cross departments necessitate the support of management in both areas. The plan should also state when the proposed job shadowing relationship will begin and end.

At the end of the job shadowing experience, employees are required to document and demonstrate how they met their learning objectives. The report should include a list of the activities completed, knowledge gained and how the knowledge gained will benefit the employee and the College. This report will be sent to Human Resources, the participating supervisors and will be included in the employee's performance management portal in Oracle Cloud.

Process to become a Host

An employee who wishes to become a host is required to submit a written request to their supervisor for approval, prior to applying for the job shadowing program.

The Job Shadowing Program Application Form

To apply for the TCNJ job shadowing program to become a visitor or a host:

- complete the TCNJ Job Shadowing Program Application, or
- complete the application by gaining access to the document via the QR code:

Questions

To learn more about the program, contact HR at woodski@tcnj.edu