

Frequently Asked Questions by Professionals

Job Shadowing & Mentoring

1. **How long does an experience last?** A standard experience is two hours. If you prefer to have more time, you can discuss it with the Program Coordinator, School Point Person (SPP) and/or college student when he/she contacts you.
2. **How do you prepare the student for the experience?** CEA provides information about job shadowing and mentoring experiences to the (SPP) in each district/college and asks them to incorporate this information into their own orientations.
3. **What do I do if the experience didn't go well or isn't going well?** CEA hopes that all professionals have a great experience, but we understand that is not always the case. **Question #4** lists some of the things that may occur and suggestions on how to handle those situations, should they come up. If, after the experience, you still feel that the experience did not go well, your options are:
 - a. **Call or email the PC. Please do not call or email the student or the SPP.** Contact the Program Coordinator (Laura Knight, 636-922-8249, lknight@stchas.edu) as soon as possible following the experience. She will investigate and find out what happened.
 - b. **Complete your satisfaction survey.** For more information, **Question #5** discusses the importance of the survey. Good or bad, this is the perfect time to let us know how it went. Here's the link: [CEA Professional Satisfaction Survey](#)

Both the professional and the student complete an online survey, so keep in mind that even if you thought there was a problem, the student may have thought it went really well. For this reason, we ask that any negative feedback you may have go through CEA.

4. **What if the student shows up late (or isn't dressed appropriately, doesn't ask questions, etc.)?** These are some of the "soft skills" students expect you to discuss and are mentioned in *Best Practices & Tips*. Even though we ask that students are given guidelines, something information was miscommunicated or misunderstood. Most times the student has no idea s/he did something wrong. Here are some suggestions so you can use these situations as learning experiences:
 - a. **Student shows up late.** Talk to the student and find out what happened. Did the student get lost? If so, suggest to the student that in the future, s/he make a dry run.
 - b. **Student is dressed inappropriately.** Again, talk to the student and find out what happened. If you discussed appropriate dress with the SPP, ask the student if s/he was made aware of it. Ask the student if s/he thinks what they're wearing is appropriate, using yourself and your coworkers as examples.
 - c. **Student doesn't ask questions.** Try to break the ice. Ask a silly question such as, "If you could have any super power, what would it be?" Also, ask the student if s/he researched your company ahead of time. If not, suggest to the student that for their next job shadow or interview, to research the company and the career and have questions prepared.

If the experience doesn't go well, remember, many of the students who participate in the CEA program are teenagers and this is probably their first job shadowing/mentoring experience. They will not be perfect. Help them so that their next time (another experience through CEA, an interview, internship, etc.), is better than this one.

5. **I'm a busy professional. Why do I have to fill out a survey, especially if everything went great? How important is this?** On a scale of 1 to 10, it's a 12. Great or not, we really need you to complete the survey if you were an active participant. If you arranged a job shadowing for another employee, then that employee needs to complete it. Here are some of the reasons:
 - a. For accountability purposes, surveys are critical for the integrity of the program. They let us know that the experience actually took place and who provided it.
 - b. It allows us to see if the processes we have in place are working. We use the feedback to make program improvements for future participants.
 - c. When someone has an awesome experience, we use their comments (first names only) to promote the program to other professionals and students, as well as funding sources.
 - d. The weighted results help us to set goals.

6. **What kind of feedback have you gotten from students that would help me with this experience?** Like professionals, each student completes a survey after their experience is finished. Based on feedback from their surveys, students appreciate it when:
 - a. **You welcome** them and focus your attention on them while they're there.
 - b. **Your passion** for your job shows through, because it gets them excited about their own future.
 - c. **You explain** why and demonstrate how; **you provide** hands-on, if you can.
 - d. **You share** all aspects of your job, not just the obvious ones.

Students also tell us how they felt during their experiences:

- a. **"I felt passed around."** If your plan for the job shadowing includes the student spending time with your colleagues, please let the student know ahead of time and explain why. *"I want you to visit with some of my co-workers so you can see how the whole department works together."*
- b. **"I was just sprung on this person who didn't even know I was coming. I felt like a burden."** If you arrange a job shadowing for another employee, please make sure that the other employee is aware of this before the student arrives and is somewhat prepared for the experience (let them look over the Orientation Packet). Explain it to the student, if necessary. *"Because of our scheduling, I wasn't sure who you'd be shadowing until this morning. S/he just found out, but is really looking forward to it."*

As you can see, simple explanations up front will help the student feel more comfortable during his/her experience.

Instagram – Students are encouraged to take pictures of their experiences and post them on Instagram. It is understood that some businesses may discourage this, so students are required to ask permission first.

