

## **Job Shadowing Program and Information Packet Overview**

The Oklahoma Women in Higher Education's (OKWHE) Job Shadowing Program is intended for members who would like to observe a professional who holds a position she is not only interested in, but one she could also feasibly attain within the next 5 to 7 years (given her current career track).

Job shadowing allows the OKWHE member to observe a higher education professional as he or she carries out his or her job duties on campus (or other site) over the course of one working day. Through your willingness to host an OKWHE member in this way, you are providing her with a firsthand look at the skills and knowledge required to succeed in a position such as yours, as well as providing women across the state opportunities to improve their understanding of leadership roles and expectations in higher education.

Enclosed is an overview of the roles and expectations of the host/hostess and participant/OKWHE member, as well as practical tips for structuring the experience.

### **Overview of the OKWHE**

OKWHE is a volunteer organization of women working in higher education whose goal is to encourage women's leadership in the State. OKWHE is affiliated with the American Council on Education's (ACE) Inclusive Excellence Group Women's Network, and this job shadowing program initiative enhances OKWHE's ability to achieve the national goals of this Network's *Moving the Needle* initiative to increase women in leadership at America's colleges and universities, and to create awareness of the benefits/opportunities of membership in OKWHE.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Job Shadow Host/Hostess**

- Provide an atmosphere that encourages questions and discussion related to the position.
- Participate in various facets of the position throughout the day, as opportunities are available.
- Introduce participant to others in your department, as applicable.
- Offer suggestions and guidance to the OKWHE member, as applicable.
- Suggest resources for further learning/research, and provide any materials related to the day specifically (such as materials for meetings she will be attending with you, etc.).
- Help participant compare and contrast her current position with your position. (i.e., skills needed, daily duties, etc.)
- Provide the participant with an overview of your job and of your career path.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the OKWHE Member**

- Review any materials received from the host/hostess in advance so as to be fully prepared for the day.
- Become familiar with any related regulations and philosophies of the institution or agency.
- Following the schedule of the day and fully participate when appropriate.
- Be prompt and demonstrate a commitment to learning and being present throughout the day.

## **Timelines and Schedules**

Best practices in job shadowing suggest that having an hour-by-hour plan allows for the most efficient use of everyone's time, while also allowing for flexibility throughout the day. Having more things planned and not finishing them all is certainly preferred to having only a couple things planned and completing them both before lunch (which can make for an awkward afternoon). Having a schedule in place will also make your OKWHE member feel like you were prepared for her arrival and avoids the need for having the participant simply sit in your office and watch you work (leaving her without any opportunity to get involved in the work at some level).

You might also contact your participant in advance to find out what she would like to have covered on the job shadow day; this will help you tailor the day to her needs and desires.

The OKWHE member will contact you directly to set up a mutually agreed upon day to complete the job shadowing experience.

## **Recommendations for a Successful Day**

- Strive to have a detailed schedule in place for the day, noting that having as little downtime as possible is desired by the participant (as she would like to make the most of being in your company).
- Send a schedule of the day's activities to the OKWHE member in advance so that she knows what to expect for the day, being sure to include logistic information such as where to park, details on lunch plans, etc.
- Send related materials to your OKWHE member beforehand. For example, if she will be accompanying you to a meeting, perhaps you could send her an agenda and any supporting materials (as you feel comfortable) so that she will have some context (allowing her to get as much out of the meeting as possible).

- Involve the OKWHE member in planning for the day, asking her in advance what she would like to do/participate in.
- Share shadowing duties with your colleagues which allows the OKWHE member to be exposed to different parts of your department/division
- Have information ready for the OKWHE member to take home, such as resources for further study into the position, etc.
- Give the participant a brief tour of the workplace and introduce her to other employees. Explain how various departments work together and how each job contributes to the overall function of the institution.

### **Suggested Activities**

- Attend a regularly-scheduled staff or professional meeting.
- Take a tour of other parts of campus (outside your division).
- Arrange a visit with other members of the staff.
- Play with/use any applicable technology.
- Visit with students affiliated with your department.
- Have the OKWHE member assist with job duties.
- Arrange for the OKWHE member to shadow additional team members.
- Attend recreational and/or cultural activities on campus.
- Arrange a group activity involving many members on campus, such as a lunch outing.
- Allow the OKWHE member to listen in on a conference (or other) call.
- “Follow” a piece of paperwork through your department.
- Research a particular topic relevant to your work.
- Assist a student or other staff member on campus.

### **Suggested Topics of Conversation**

- Obstacles encountered on the way to your career, and how you overcame them.

- Relevant educational opportunities that you took advantage of which helped you attain this position.
- How did you become interested in the educational industry and/or in your current position?
- What is your educational background and how did it help guide you to where you are today?
- Describe the jobs you had leading up to your current position.
- What do you like most about your job?
- What do you dislike your job?
- What about the job did you not expect?
- What are the next steps in your career?
- Why did you decide to become a.....?
- How much and what kind of control do you have about decisions made regarding...?
- What do you wish you had known looking back over your career (specifically reflecting on the time in your life when you were at the OKWHE member's level)?
- Don't forget to ask questions of the OKWHE member as well, such as: What about this position interests you? Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

### **Experience Expectations**

- Help your OKWHE member focus on their future and on setting academic and career goals.
- After the job shadowing experience, the OKWHE member should have a clearer idea as to whether or not she will pursue the host/hostess' position in the future.
- The OKWHE member should gain new perspectives on their own education and potential.
- The job shadowing experience should be a positive one, with the understanding that all aspects of the position may be discussed (both the highs and lows).
- The OKWHE member should have the opportunity to be actively involved in the day, as opposed to being just a passive observer.

- Willingness to provide feedback to the OKWHE member related to her career goals and how the day went.
- Conversations between the OKWHE member and the job shadow host/hostess should help highlight the connection between the member's current position and the one to which she aspires (e.g., the job shadow host/hostess' position).

### **Confidentiality**

- Nothing that the OKWHE member shares with the host/hostess will be discussed with anyone except the OKWHE Job Shadowing Coordinating Committee (if applicable). Similarly, nothing the host/hostess shares with the OKWHE member (or that the OKWHE member overhears/observes) will be discussed with anyone except the OKWHE Job Shadowing Coordinating Committee (if applicable).

### **Program Follow-Up and Feedback**

- You will be receiving a questionnaire after the job shadowing experience, and will be asked to provide feedback to the OKWHE member and OKWHE board related to the job shadowing program and member's specific experience.