



NSW PRIMARY PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION

LEADERSHIP WORKING PARTY

SHADOWING

Shadowing

What is shadowing?

It is:

- A powerful professional learning tool where one person, staying close and unobtrusive (like a shadow), observes another over a period of time
- A strategy for observing the components of another person's job and the strategies they employ in each circumstance
- A process that results in the creating of an objective record of what is occurring. This is a non-evaluative description (behavioural account) of the observed person's activities throughout that period of time
- An opportunity for the observer to reflect and then when appropriate to ask questions that explore what has been observed

Shadowing logistics (mentor or nominated principal)

- Prepare your staff, students, and any others who will be involved
- Do not allow the presence of the shadow to disrupt normal routines
 - Keep shadowing and socialising separate
 - Save explanations and discussion until appropriate time(s)
- Prepare for an alternate option if a confidential interview unexpectedly occurs
- Process the experience together and provide advice for further learning in areas raised in the discussion during a designated debriefing session
- Maintain confidentiality at all times

Key points in shadowing (participant)

- You should ask questions in a professional manner at appropriate times
- Your shadowing record should capture the normal work routines of the person being observed. You should try to:
 - Record observable events without making any inferences or judgements
 - Summarise conversations, noting any key words and pivotal phrases
 - Describe physical settings and the nonverbal features of interactions
 - Include time notations
 - Jot down questions you want to ask later
 - Relate what you have seen to The Standards and Principal Criteria
 - Be prepared to participate in the debriefing session as designated
 - Be flexible
 - Identify two or three standards/criteria on which to base your observations

Recommendations for organisation

- 3 consecutive days or 2 days plus 1 day the next week
- 3 single days (try for different days of the week)
- Maximum 5 days
- Use the shadowing matrix as a reference for your observations
- Use the recording framework to record your observations in relation to the Exposure Draft National for principals and criteria for principals
- Utilise this information to identify your areas for future learning
- Shadowing Evaluation Report and Record at Future Learning. This forms part of your feedback to your local PP Council