

SHADOWING IN THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS:

BUILDING A COLD CALL SCRIPT

What to Include

You'll want to include the following information when asking to shadow via email, phone, or in person:

- Introduction: your name, where you attend school, and how far along you are in your education
- A brief outline of your career goals and interest in healthcare
- How you learned of that particular professional
- Why you think they would be a good person for you to shadow/what you hope to get out of the experience
- A direct request to shadow the individual, including scheduling information (more on that below)

If emailing, make sure to write a professional-sounding email and consider also attaching your resume to give the office a fuller picture of who you are. If making contact by phone, be prepared with a brief—think thirty seconds or less—version of your request in case you need to leave a message. In any event, you'll want to be polite, polished, and concise. Keep in mind, you may not be contacting the professional directly, so you'll want to tailor your outreach to the person you're currently speaking to.

Be prepared to be flexible with your schedule. While it's fine to let the office know if there are certain times you simply cannot be available (for instance, if you're going out of town), make it easy for them to say yes. This means working around their schedule as much as possible, even if it entails a few compromises on your end.

Similarly, begin planning your experience well before you'd actually like to shadow, to make time for professionals who might not immediately be available. It is recommended to make contact with offices at least a month in advance, though giving yourself even more time may be beneficial in case you don't find a match right away.

How to Ask to Shadow: Email

Email script to ask a professional you already know (e.g., a family friend or your former doctor)

Dear [Individual],

I hope this note finds you well. Since we last saw each other for my last check-up, I started college at Cleveland State University, where I've been majoring in psychology and am pre-med. I am particularly interested in pediatrics, psychiatry, and family medicine.

I am hoping to arrange some shadowing opportunities in order to learn more about the day-to-day of being a doctor, and I'm wondering if you'd be open to me spending some time in your office over my winter break, spring break, or summer, when I will be back in the area. I'd be so grateful for your time. Please let me know. I would be happy to discuss what dates would be convenient for you via email or over the phone.

Sincerely,

Jane Seidman

123-456-7890

Email script to ask a professional whom you DON'T know personally

Dear [Individual],

My name is Julia Bailey and I'm a junior at Cleveland State University majoring in Biology. I'm writing because I'm considering applying to medical school and am hoping to shadow a doctor in order to give me a better sense of the profession. I received your contact information through my primary care doctor, Dr. Laura Kim, who suggested that you might be a good person to get in touch with due to my interest in cardiology, which I would love to discuss with you in light of your experience in the field.

Would you be willing to allow me to shadow you during a work day in the upcoming months? I would be grateful for any amount of time that you could spare, whether that's one day or a few. I'll be out of Cleveland during the first week of June, but am otherwise available. If you are open to letting me shadow you, please let me know of some days that might work for you and I will arrange my schedule to make those dates work.

Please let me know if you need any other information from me. Thank you so much for your time—I look forward to hearing back from you.

Best,

Julia Bailey

987-654-3210

How to Ask to Shadow: Email

(Note: We recommend reaching out via email first, but if you *only* have phone contact information or someone tells you to reach out over the phone, try this.)

Phone script when leaving a phone message for a professional you already know

Hi [Individual]! I hope all is well. This is your former patient, Jane Seidman, calling from Cleveland. I'm a junior pre-dental student at Cleveland State these days, and I'm calling because I'm hoping to set up some shadowing opportunities and wondering if you'd be open to me spending some time in your office. Please give me a call back when you can at 123-456-7890. You can also reach me over email at jane.seidman—S-e-i-d-m-a-n—3 at vikes dot CSU Ohio dot edu. Looking forward to speaking with you!

Phone script when cold-calling a professional you don't already know

Hi, [Individual]. My name is Marianne Adeyemi and I'm a junior pre-physical therapy student at Cleveland State. I'm calling because I'm hoping to set up some shadowing opportunities in out-patient care, and I found your name on a list of providers in Cleveland. I'd love to speak with you about potentially spending some time in your office one work day a week next semester, beginning in January. Please give me a call back when you have some time at 543-217-9876. You can also reach me over email at m dot Adeyemi—that's a-d-e-y-e-m-i—at vikes.csuohio.edu.

Adapted from <https://www.shemmassianconsulting.com/medical-school-admissions>

Phone: 216-687-9321 Office Location: 218 Berkman Hall