
Job Shadowing For New Hires

1.0 Policy Objective & Scope

The objective of this policy is to establish a standardized job shadowing program for all new hires in the cabinet and millwork manufacturing facility. This program ensures that new employees receive structured, hands-on exposure to their assigned department's workflows, safety protocols, and quality standards before assuming independent duties.

This policy applies to all new full-time, part-time, and temporary production employees, as well as any internal transfers to a new department. It covers the initial shadowing period, typically the first two weeks of employment, and outlines the responsibilities of the new hire, the assigned shadowing mentor, and supervisory staff.

2.0 Roles & Responsibilities

- **Human Resources Manager:** Coordinates the onboarding schedule, assigns mentors, and ensures all new hires complete mandatory safety training prior to shadowing.
- **Production Supervisor:** Selects qualified mentors from the department, monitors shadowing progress, and conducts weekly check-ins with the new hire.
- **Shadowing Mentor (Experienced Employee):** Provides direct, one-on-one guidance, demonstrates proper techniques, answers questions, and reports any performance or safety concerns to the supervisor.
- **New Hire:** Actively observes, asks questions, takes notes, and follows all safety and quality instructions. Must not operate machinery or perform tasks without direct mentor supervision.
- **Engineering Manager (if applicable):** Reviews shadowing materials related to blueprint reading or CNC programming for new hires in engineering or setup roles.

3.0 Core Rules & Guidelines

- All new hires must complete a general safety orientation and sign off on company policies before beginning any shadowing activities.
- The shadowing period shall last a minimum of 40 hours (one full work week) and may be extended up to 80 hours at the supervisor's discretion based on role complexity.
- Mentors must have at least six months of tenure in their current role and a clean safety record. They must be approved by the Production Supervisor.
- New hires are strictly prohibited from operating any machinery, power tools, or equipment during the shadowing period unless explicitly authorized in writing by the supervisor and mentor.
- A daily shadowing log must be completed by the mentor and reviewed by the new hire, documenting tasks observed, key learnings, and any questions raised.
- No more than two new hires may be assigned to a single mentor at any time to ensure adequate attention and safety.

4.0 Step-by-Step Workflow

1. HR sends a new hire onboarding notification to the Production Supervisor at least three business days before the start date, including the job title and department.
2. Production Supervisor selects a qualified mentor from the department and confirms their availability for the shadowing period.
3. HR conducts a general safety orientation with the new hire on day one, covering emergency exits, PPE requirements, and company policies. The new hire signs an acknowledgment form.
4. HR introduces the new hire to the Production Supervisor and the assigned mentor. The mentor provides a tour of the department and explains the daily workflow.
5. Mentor begins structured shadowing: demonstrates each key task (e.g., material handling, machine setup, quality inspection) while explaining safety precautions and quality standards.
6. New hire observes and takes notes. Mentor encourages questions and clarifies any misunderstandings immediately. No hands-on operation is permitted at this stage.
7. At the end of each shift, the mentor completes a daily shadowing log entry in ShopDocs, noting tasks observed, the new hire's engagement level, and any concerns.
8. Production Supervisor conducts a brief check-in with the new hire and mentor at the end of the first week to review progress and address any issues.
9. If the supervisor determines the new hire is ready, they may authorize limited hands-on practice under direct mentor supervision during the second week (e.g., simple assembly, material sorting).
10. At the conclusion of the shadowing period, the mentor submits a final shadowing evaluation form to the Production Supervisor, summarizing the new hire's readiness for independent work.
11. Production Supervisor reviews the evaluation and either approves the new hire to begin independent duties or recommends an extension of the shadowing period (up to an additional 40 hours).
12. HR files the completed shadowing log, evaluation form, and any extension approvals in the employee's personnel file. The new hire is officially transitioned to the production floor.

5.0 Documentation & Compliance

- All shadowing logs, evaluation forms, and extension approvals must be uploaded to the employee's digital file in the HR document management system (e.g., ShopDocs) within three business days of completion.
- The Production Supervisor is responsible for maintaining a master shadowing schedule spreadsheet, tracking mentor assignments, and shadowing durations for all new hires.
- HR will conduct a quarterly audit of a random sample of 10% of new hire files to verify that shadowing documentation is complete and signed by all required parties.
- Any deviations from this policy (e.g., a new hire operating equipment without authorization) must be documented in an incident report and reviewed by the Operations Manager.
- Compliance with this policy is a condition of employment. Failure to follow the shadowing workflow may result in disciplinary action for the mentor or supervisor, up to and including termination.

Regulatory Disclaimer: This document is a generic policy and workflow template. The end-user assumes all liability for validating all procedures, roles, and administrative guidelines against actual organizational structures before formal implementation.