



Making a Good First Impression & How to Act in a Professional Healthcare Setting

THE HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENT

- Professionalism = Respectful of everyone (patients and staff); SHHH! – not too much noise/talking
- No playin’ around – This is a serious place, people come here to heal... and sometimes to die
- Every health worker is busy taking care of patients – Your tour is a privilege, be thankful for their time
- Patient Confidentiality is not only expected, it is the LAW! (The law is called HIPAA–Google it)
 - Anything you see, you can’t talk to friends and family about it – not even if you recognized a patient you knew (or even if someone famous!) – this is a very serious law for good reasons
- ABSOLUTELY NO CELL PHONES! No texting, in fact turn them off; you can check them during lunch
 - Cell phones can interact badly with medical equipment keeping patients alive
 - It is highly unlikely that you would have an emergency call during your tour
- You want students in future years to be welcomed back – Act “adult” as possible so the health professionals feel it was a good use of their time

WHAT TO DO for a Good Impression	WHAT TO WEAR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress to impress. If you have a special school or health pathway shirt, everyone wear them! • Be polite to everyone. <u>No bad attitudes!</u> • Make eye contact & smile. • Offer a handshake when introducing yourself. • State your name SLOWLY and CLEARLY. • Speak with confidence. Little louder if you’re shy. • Be careful to keep your voices low, especially in the patient hallways. There are a lot of you! • Ask questions! It shows you are interested. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nicest shirt you own, or borrow one. (If a T-shirt, the newer the better. No rock band, anarchy, or other graphics!) • Hoodies/sweatshirts are too casual and unprofessional. Sweaters <u>might</u> be OK. • Ladies: Leave your tank tops, halters, and crop tops at home. Cover up the cleavage! • Men: A belt for your pants! No saggies. • Comfortable, CLEAN close-toed shoes. NO FLIP FLOPS, SANDALS, or HIGH HEELS!

FOLLOW-UP!

- You want the healthcare facility to know that you appreciated their time – Send “thank you” letters saying what the day meant to you, and what you learned. Try to use perfect spelling and grammar – Remember, these are professionals and you are still making a good impression even after you leave!
- Sending a “thank you” note is a good habit to get into, especially when you get out of school and start interviewing for adult work positions. It may be the most important “good manner” that employers want, before they will offer you a job! (Remember, you may want to come back for an internship.)



Health Industry Preparation Worksheet – What have you discovered?

So now that you've learned a bit about the healthcare environment, it's your turn to think about what your behavior means to the staff, the patients, and their visiting families.

After you've had some time to write down your thoughts, we suggest you discuss these out loud with the class – your classmates might have some good points that you didn't think about!

Why is it so important to protect patients' confidentiality, especially if I saw someone I knew and wanted to tell my parents or a friend later? _____

What does that word "professionalism" mean to me? _____

If I meet a doctor, how should I act? _____

What about the CEO? _____

What's the big deal if my clothes are casual? Why does it mean so much that I "dress to impress?" _____

I don't get the "no flip flops, sandals, or high heels." This is San Diego, doesn't everyone wear them (I even wear them to school)? Why would that matter? _____

Why is the "no cell phone" rule such a big deal? I'm a really fast texter. What does it matter to the staff, the patients and their families? _____

Why should I care about sending a "thank you" note? I already went on the tour, it's over! Or is it? What are some of the reasons I want them to remember me, and keep a good impression of me later?

What didn't make sense to me during the presentation? (or) What else do I want to know before I go on this tour/job shadow? _____

In-Class Discussion: Good impression, or Bad idea?

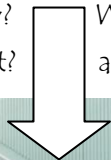
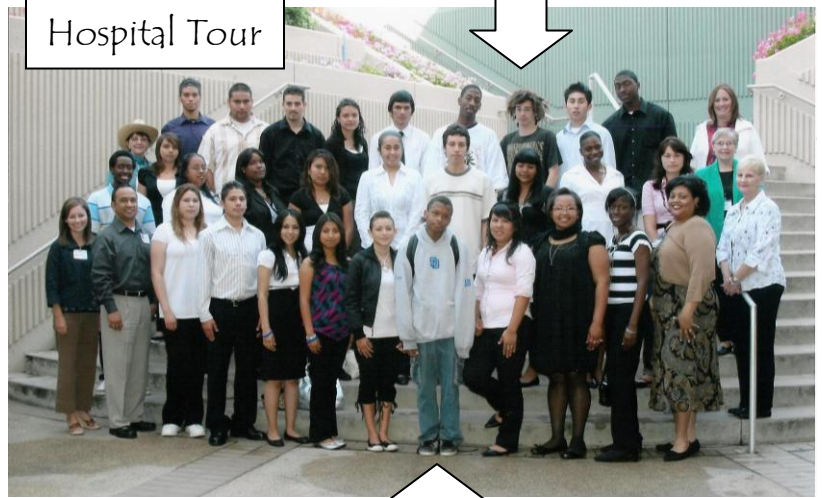
Each of these photos and scenarios actually occurred (recently) with students *just like you*. Some of them appear professional and adult, while others do not. What are your thoughts? (If you know them, remember the questions are for learning purposes and not to be cruel.)

Career Fair



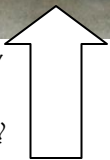
Does he stand out in a good way?
What about his faded, rock band T-shirt?

Hospital Tour



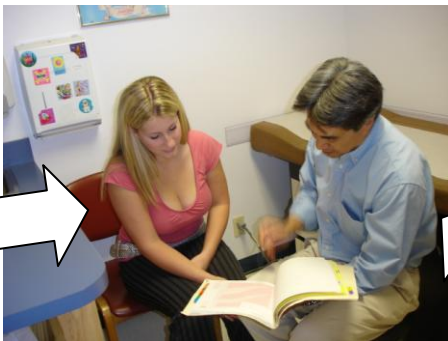
What would you think about his interest?

Does his body language portray self-confidence? How does his hoodie look next to the others?



Notice any tank tops/ too much skin? What about flip flops/sandals/high heels?

Job Shadow



What kind of impression is she giving? Do you find her low-cut shirt distracting? What do you think the staff in the medical office might have been thinking?

Pediatrician (MD)

Consider this (real-life) scenario:

A high school intern was uncomfortable while observing a doctor performing a patient check-up. She made jokes and comments to break the tension. Both the patient and doctor were offended, and both of them reported her for unprofessional behavior. The student could have been fired. She negatively affected that patient's experience of the hospital—remember, a hospital is a business as well as a healing place (why does that matter?). Do you think interns/teens will be welcomed back if that occurs again?

What about this?

Two students met the CEO of a large hospital during their summer internship. A parent of one of the students works at the same hospital. The students—who want to be CEOs themselves one day—decided to email the CEO and chat about informal things, like a new haircut. They didn't seem to realize the difference between a social and professional relationship, or that they might be seen as disrespectful. The hospital will not hire them again because they showed poor judgment/rudeness. What do you think about their behavior?