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Tanner

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On September 4th, 2014 I was fortunate enough to shadow a local dentist for my job shadow. I shadowed Dr. Michael Loffler and his staff who are located here in Lindsay. Dr. Loffler was actually my dentist before which was why I chose to shadow him. Throughout the day I spoke to his receptionist for the day, his wife, and was able to sit in during some patient’s cleanings done by Brenda, the hygienist.

I am very fascinated by teeth and dental care and when I learned about the job shadow assignment my first choice was a dentist. When I first arrived at Dr. Loffler’s office I was greeted by his staff. While Dr. Loffler checked in with his staff on their schedule for the day I waited in the waiting room to finally greet him. The first part of the day was spent in the front of the office with his wife. Mrs. Loffler showed me the computer software used in their office, how they organize patients’ records, and how everyone in the office works to assist the dentist. While we spoke she explained to me the amount of schooling a student needs to become a dentist or dental hygienist. She also recommended certain schools which included San Joaquin Valley College because of its eighteen month program for aspiring hygienists.

Aside from that she also told me about her husband’s own personal experience as an aspiring dentist and current dentist. I was able to get insight on what the typical day around the office is like and about the dentist’s other duties. For example as a dentist he always has to update his secretary on special orders and tools to perform on a patient. She also explained that Dr. Loffler is lucky enough to not have to take work home however he must always be on call in case of an emergency. I also learned from Brenda, the hygienist that in Dr. Loffler’s office they see about ten patients a day. While watching her clean patients’ teeth I noticed, as a hygienist or dentist you have to be a people person and be able to relax a patient because not everyone is fond of visiting the dentist.

While being in the office I learned a lot about the educational requirements to become a dentist and about the daily demands of being a dentist. I ultimately enjoyed being reassured that with having your own office comes the liberty to create your own hours, vacation days, and daily schedules. Being able to be your own boss is a trait I specifically liked because I would love to own my own business. The one thing I disliked had to be being on call at all times only because I would fear being put under so much pressure.

After shadowing Dr. Loffler and visiting his staff, I am still very interested in becoming a dentist. I feel like it is a perfect career for me because I enjoy learning about dental health and also love business and the thought of one day owning my own business. Also I really like socializing with people and I feel that as a dentist I will be able to socialize with people from the community I am located in and create a comfortable experience for my patients when they enter my office.