

My job shadow with Dr. Jonnie Howard By Monica Cuccia

I have always wondered what went on behind the closed doors in the President's Office from the first day that I hired on at Lamar Institute of Technology. The opportunity to find out first hand was offered to all the employees by Dr. Howard. I immediately asked my supervisor at the time that was 15 months ago...

July 18, 2018. The day is here, and I arrive to work 15 minutes early so that I can grab a bite to eat at Mega Bites. I have heard in the past that Dr. Howard is typically too busy to stop to eat lunch, and I don't want to slow him down today. As I wait in his office, I am a little nervous if I am being entirely honest. Dr. Howard arrives just a few minutes after 8:00 AM. He quickly walks in with his hands full and greets me and asks me and his assistant, Judy, to come to his office as he wants to go over the schedule for the day and make changes. As we discuss the needed changes Dr. Howard asks if I knew that the day before was his 2-year anniversary working at Lamar Institute of Technology and he would be cutting our day short to take time to himself to enjoy this. He shares with me that he has not had a day off in 2 years and wanted to take ½ a day to himself.

The first meeting of the day starts at 8:30 Am with the President's Cabinet Meeting. There are a lot of familiar faces around the table as they begin to discuss many topics that center around recruiting and retention of our students. This is a base year, and we need to retain as many students as we can. As I listen to Dr. Howard, I can tell that he genuinely enjoys his work and takes pride in our university. There is change happening at Lamar Institute of Technology, and it is looking very bright. Dr. Howard stated that his team made his job easy and they are hardworking and loyal. I even found out that they take retreats together for teambuilding.

Next, Dr. Howard needs to have a private meeting, and he asked me to pick a member of the President's Cabinet to shadow until he is finished. I chose Melissa Armentor, I saw her often in the hall and wanted to know what her job was like. Off we went to her office. I learned she is working toward her doctorate degree. And she is a very driven individual. Our time was up and I'm back in Dr. Howard's office with six new hires. Dr. Howard greets each one individually, and we sit down to have an enjoyable meet and greet. We go around the table so each person can introduce themselves. Dr. Howard is genuinely interested in each person and how they came to be part of the L.I.T family. After a tour of his office and the picture wall. We are on the move once more to sit in a conference call, but it was over by the time we made it in.

In closing my day might have been short but it was fascinating. I knew Dr. Howard was a great man before I was given this opportunity to shadow him, I can say now that he is very dedicated to our university and only has our best interest at heart. I respect Dr. Howard for the amount of work that he puts in every day for L.I.T. His day is not 8 to 5 like most of us work. He is driven and gives most of his day to better Lamar Institute of Technology. Thank you Dr. Howard for caring so much.

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