

BEST PRACTICES: THE IMPACT OF INTERNSHIPS

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INTRODUCTION

The dream...hire experienced employees who require very little, if any, training. But this dream conflicts with reality. Are there projects you'd like to get done but don't have time to do yourself? Maybe an intern could do it for you, with a little guidance and a few dollars. How can organizations meet the needs of today and prepare the workforce of the future? One solution is to develop a quality internship program. This booklet will assist you.

What Is An Internship?

An internship is any carefully monitored work or service experience in which a student has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what she or he is learning throughout the experience. The following characteristics have been adapted from materials published by the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE). (See Appendix B for contact information.)

- Duration of anywhere from a month to two years, but a typical experience usually lasts from three to six months.
- Generally a one-time experience.
- May be part-time or full-time.
- May be paid or non-paid.
- Internships may be part of an educational program and carefully monitored and evaluated for academic credit, or internships can be part of a learning plan that someone develops individually. Generally, they are directly related to the student's field of study. Many internship programs have a requirement of minimum hours worked-per credit.
- An important element that distinguishes an internship from a short-term job or volunteer work is that an intentional "learning agenda" is structured into the experience.
- Learning activities common to most internships include learning objectives, observation, reflection, assessment, and evaluation.
- An effort is made to establish a reasonable balance between the intern's learning goals and the specific work an organization needs to have completed.
- Internships promote academic, career and/or personal development.

How Do Internships Benefit Employers?

- Flexible, cost-effective workforce not requiring a long-term employer commitment.
- Proven, cost-effective way to recruit and evaluate potential employees.
- The intern will make a meaningful contribution to completing the employer's objectives.
- Year-round source of highly motivated pre-professionals.
- Students bring new perspectives to old problems.
- Visibility of your organization is increased on campus.
- Quality candidates for temporary or seasonal positions and projects.
- Freedom for professional staff to pursue more creative projects.
- Your image in the community is enhanced as you contribute your expertise to the educational enterprise.



STEPS TO BEGINNING AN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



Internship programs vary. What kind of program will work best for you? The following steps will assist you in the design of your program.

■ Step 1: Set goals

Program goals should be simple and easy to understand. These goals must meet the expectations of the organization. Success will require the commitment of management.

- What does your organization hope to achieve from the program?
- Are you an organization searching for additional help on a project?
- Is your organization growing quickly and having difficulty finding motivated new employees?
- Is your organization seeking new employees with management potential?
- Are you a nonprofit that can provide a rewarding experience, but cannot provide compensation?
- Is your organization looking for talent in hard-to-fill specialty areas?
- Does the length of time of internship match the goal? Or is it too short?
- Does the task require several internships whose contributions build upon each other?

■ Step 2: Write a plan

Carefully plan and document your internship program details and goals in advance. A bad experience can jeopardize the chance of attracting good students for next year. (See the Internship Position Description in Appendix A.) Managers, mentors, interns, and career centers are all going to be reading what you write about the internship. Draft a job description that clearly explains the job's duties. Do you want someone for a specific project? What about general support around the workplace? Can you give the intern a taste of everything your company does, consistent with program goals? Structure the internship in advance so that you can be sure to meet your goals and not find the program floundering. The above points should be discussed openly with the candidates so that they may also judge whether the employer's requirements match their needs and abilities. (See page 11 for more details.)

- **Who will have the primary responsibility for the intern?** Will that person be a mentor or merely a supervisor? Does this person have the time to train and work with an intern? A very important part of your plan should be the assignment of a mentor and/or supervisor. They should be selected because they like to teach or train and have the resources to do so. If the person selected has never mentored an intern, provide some basic training. Suggestions may be provided by a former mentor or even by your school contacts. The mentoring process should also be explained to the intern. Some organizations also have a third role called "Coordinator". This person interfaces with the schools, assists with recruiting, monitors the process, coordinates the paperwork, answers questions, and solves problems. He or she also keeps track of how many interns are in the organization; including who's working in different departments and what the interns are doing. The coordinator also tracks the number of interns and their specific responsibilities, and reports outcomes to management. There is flexibility regarding these three roles. In some organizations one person may even do all three. The supervisor may be the mentor with a separate coordinator; or the supervisor may also be the coordinator and the mentor may be separate.
- **What kind of student do you need?** Will this internship provide sufficient work and learning experience for a college student? A career center can help you to determine whether you'll need a high school student, technical student, or college student with a 2- or 4-year degree.
- **Will you pay the intern?** Wages vary widely from field to field, so be sure yours are competitive or offer competitive incentives. Funding may be available from the PHEAA Work-Study program. (Please see Resources Appendix C.)
- **Where will you put the intern?** Do you have adequate workspace for them? Will you help make parking arrangements, living arrangements, etc.?
- **What sort of academic background and experience do you want in an intern?** Decide on standards for quality in advance in order to narrow the choices and find the best candidates.

- **What will the intern be doing?** Be as specific as possible. Interns need structure so they don't become lost, confused or bored. (See page 11.)
- **Do you want to plan a program beyond the work you give your interns?** Will there be special training programs, performance reviews, lunches with executives, social events? Keep in mind that your interns are walking advertisements for your organization. If they have a good experience working for you, they're likely to tell their friends.

■ **Step 3: Recruit the intern(s)**

An intern may be discovered at the last minute, but a tip from those who have established programs is to get out there early! This cannot be overemphasized.

- **Begin searching three to four months before you need a student to begin.** Many schools operate on semesters, but some on trimesters or quarters. This will give you time to plan, complete paperwork, and to interview candidates. Starting early has other advantages: the longer you accept applications, the better chance of finding the best person for the job. The sooner you find a candidate, the longer you have to form a good working relationship.
- **How will you find those ideal candidates to fill your internship position(s)?** Develop relationships with local recruitment resources. Promote yourself with school-to-work coordinators in high schools and with the career or internship centers at colleges and universities. Attend internship and job fairs, place ads in their school newspapers and websites, and send material to student organizations. Promote the organization fully in the area by attending meetings and conferences of organizations that have student members.
- **Choose your interns as carefully as you'd choose permanent employees.** You're making an investment of time and money with this person. They might be permanent employees some day. This is where the interview will come in handy: Is the intern truly motivated, or does he or she just want a job? Do the intern's career goals match what your organization offers? Will the intern fit into your organization's culture? Does he or she have the level of experience you need. Another tip for achieving a high acceptance rate of offers to interns is to insure the potential candidates can judge for themselves that the work will be a meaningful experience and important step for them in their career.
- **Learn the legal implications of hiring interns.** Just like any other workers, they are subject to legal protections and regulations. Protect the organization and intern by knowing the laws: What work can and cannot be assigned? This is especially important if your company employs international students, who need special qualifications to work in the U.S. Consult your corporate lawyer or the intern/international student office at the candidate's school. (See page 7.)

■ **Step 4: Keep your focus on the future.**

Hiring productive interns gives you a competitive advantage in recruiting the best workers. Interns who have a positive experience may wish to pursue employment within the organization (and will tell their friends.) The time spent training the potential workforce is invaluable, and can help you to determine if the intern is a fit for the organization. What interns learn about the work, the organization and the industry, makes them more qualified than a new candidate off the street. Hiring a former intern reduces recruiting costs and turnover rates. Build a reputation that will pay off with students, colleges, and the community.



COMMON INTERN CONCERNS



■ **Be prepared!**

That wonderful day has arrived and the intern arrives to start their internship only to learn that no one knew he or she was coming, and there is no place for the intern to work.

■ **Um...I need a chair.**

If you want to get a job done, you need to supply the intern with the tools to do the job. Many employers hire an intern and don't consider that they will need a desk, chair, phone, and a computer to complete the task assigned. It is awkward for everyone and not efficient to move an intern from desk to desk.

■ **Give us real work!**

Interns want to work and learn, and help you get a job done that you couldn't otherwise complete. Consider the level of the intern and match to the level of the work. For example, a high school intern may find that clerical tasks provide a challenging and satisfying internship. Interns from postsecondary environments may be especially concerned about applying skills they have obtained as well as being given opportunities to learn more and grow professionally.

■ **Do what you say and say what you do!**

During the interview process, be honest with your interns about what they can expect during their internship. If the job will require stuffing some envelopes, then make that clear. If you say they will be researching a project, and they spend 90% of their time doing "grunt work," bad feelings will develop. Honesty doesn't cost anything and will make the interns feel much more respected.

■ **We like feedback!**

Remember that interns are students and they may not have the business skills and experiences that you take for granted. If your intern makes an oversight, talk with her/him out of the view and hearing of co-workers. Be sure to ask for the intern's perspective before explaining how the situation should be handled in the future.

■ **We want to be included, too!**

Is there a staff meeting they can attend? Can they quietly tag along to that next project meeting? Headed to lunch with people in the office? Please include them in the daily life of your workplace.

■ **Please explain.**

When you assign work, make sure you give a detailed explanation. Involve the intern and ask for suggestions. Don't make the conversation only "one way." While the work may seem trivial and obvious to you, it may not be obvious to someone who's never done it before. Patience and a few extra minutes at the beginning will pay off later when your intern produces good work independently.

■ **I want a mentor and a minute of your time please!**

A mentor can be someone other than the intern's direct supervisor who can act as a sounding board and guide to help with the unwritten rules of the company. Direct supervisors may also serve as mentors, however, the intern may not be comfortable sharing all of his/her concerns. A mentor should be someone who likes to teach. As newcomers, interns may not speak up if they're feeling ignored. If a busy person wants to be a mentor, he/she should schedule regular times to meet with the intern.

■ **Show me the money (as best you can).**

Each internship and industry has its own personality, but remember that interns have expenses. Your organization may not be in a position to pay much, but anything can help. You may be able to help pay for their parking, take them to lunch every so often, or develop other creative ways to assist them. (See the PHEAA Web page: Appendix C for Work-Study qualifying information.)

■ **Can I work around my class schedule?**

If the student is taking classes and interning, be realistic about the number of hours expected; 15-20 hours/week is reasonable, and is often the most that can be maintained. Hours may be added during holidays or term breaks. Discuss time off with the student up front. Interns need to know that taking a 2-week summer vacation or spring break in the middle of their internship needs to be negotiated upon acceptance of the internship. Missing work every Friday or Monday is unacceptable.



LEGAL ISSUES



■ Do you have to pay interns?

The U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which applies to all companies that have at least two employees directly engaged in interstate commerce and annual sales of at least \$500,000.00, severely restricts an employer's ability to use unpaid interns or trainees. It does not limit an employer's ability to hire paid interns.

Paid interns make ideal workers.

- Hungry to learn, eager to make a good impression, and willing to perform a multitude of tasks
- The relatively small amount of money employers spend on intern wages and benefits is a good investment, because it often produces future, long-term employees.
- For highly in-demand majors, employers should research pay rates to ensure competitiveness.

You don't have to pay interns who qualify as leaders/trainees. The U.S. Department of Labor has outlined six criteria for determining trainee status:

- Interns cannot displace regular employees
- Interns are not guaranteed a job at the end of the internship (though you may decide to hire them at the conclusion of the experience)
- Interns are not entitled to wages during the internship
- Interns must receive training from your organization, even if it somewhat impedes the work
- Interns must get hands-on experience with equipment and processes used in your industry
- Interns' training must primarily benefit them, not the organization.

Even if a student is working through a school program for which he or she is being "paid" in college credits, the student still has the right, under the FLSA, to be paid unless the employer is not deriving any immediate advantage by using him/her.

■ Conditions of Employment

The employer should identify the specific terms and conditions of employment as an intern so that there is no misunderstanding regarding the relationship. It may make good sense to document a discussion with a written agreement setting forth both parties' understandings, and have it signed by both the employer and the intern. Any such writing, however, should include "at-will employment" language.

- The date the internship will begin and end
- Compensation
- Organizational and/or reporting relationships
- Principal duties, tasks or responsibilities; working conditions
- Any other expectations of the employer should be discussed with the prospective intern

■ Harassment

If an intern is harassed while working for your organization, your organization may be open to the risk of lawsuits. Interns, whether paid or unpaid, are entitled to the same protections as any other employee. Take time to advise your interns of appropriate workplace behavior, as well as your organization's policy against harassment and your reporting and complaint procedures. Make certain your regular employees also understand the intern's place in your workforce, and that interaction between employees and interns are governed by the same guidelines as would apply with any other co-worker.



Workers' and Unemployment Compensation

Workers' compensation boards have found that interns contribute enough to a company to make them employees. It is therefore recommended that you cover interns under your workers' compensation policy. Paid student interns are not generally eligible for unemployment compensation at the end of the internship, unless they will be graduating at the end of the program or if there has been a promise of continued future employment that is later rescinded.

■ **Minority Recruiting**

You must follow the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, as well as the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and any local human relations ordinances and not discriminate against students based on race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, age, disability, and in many areas, including Erie County, sexual orientation. Also, a student may not be hired solely based on the desire to diversify your workforce. Although you may target underrepresented groups and request that the information specifically be given to minority student organizations through marketing, or encourage application by underrepresented groups (a statement like “Women and Minorities are encouraged to apply,” may also help), students should be interviewed and hired based on their qualifications and ability to perform the job.



International Students

The most common visa types that employers will see on college campuses, when recruiting international undergraduate or graduate students for either full-time or internship positions, are the F-1 and J-1 visas.

- An F-1 visa is granted to a person coming to the United States to attend a college, university, seminary, conservatory, academic high school, elementary school, or other academic institution or language training program approved by the U.S. Attorney General for study by foreign students. The visa holder plans to return home after completing studies. This is the most common non-immigrant visa for an international student attending undergraduate and graduate school. Students are granted F-1 status until the completion of the academic program and 12 months of post-program practical training. The purpose of the F-1 visa is to provide an opportunity for study in the United States. Anything outside of study, including employment, is an exception to the visa. Authorization for employment is strictly limited to certain situations.

The student holding F-1 status for a full academic year and in good academic standing may work off campus. Such work authorization is granted when the student has sustained unforeseen economic hardship. Also, the student may not work for more than 20 hours per week when school is in session, but may work full-time during holidays and vacations, including breaks between terms, provided the student intends to register for the next school term.

- Curricular Practical Training: An F-1 student may perform curricular practical training prior to the completion of the educational program as part of his or her educational experience. The INS defines this type of training as ‘alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum that is offered by sponsoring employers through agreements with the school.
- Post-Completion Practical Training: This is temporary employment directly related to the student’s major area of study that takes place after the student completes a full course of study. Authorization for this training may be granted for a maximum of 12 months of full-time or part-time work. Those on a student visa can only gain authorization once for this type of training.

The above information is adapted from a Web article by Rochelle Kaplan, General Counsel for the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). Reprinted with permission of the National Association of Colleges and Employers, copyright holder. For more information on these and other legal issues related to hiring, see NACEWeb at www.nacweb.org.

Immigration and visa laws change. Employers can take advantage of a nationwide service provider who handles all the necessary paperwork and processing for international students to work in an organization. The largest provider is the Immigration Support Services. (See Appendix C.)



ORIENTING AND TRAINING INTERNS



Many students are unfamiliar with the activities, environment, and objectives of business and industry. Even though your interns may have worked part-time to support their education, these experiences may not have exposed them to organizational politics, the need for confidentiality, the importance of team-work, or the profit-making orientation of business. It is this orientation and training dimension of the internship experience that emphasizes the partnership role of the sponsoring organization.

■ The Success of an Internship

- The success depends on the partnership between representatives of the organization (especially that supervisor who does not have mentoring on her/his list of priorities), the educational institution, and the student.
- These parties need to agree on the conditions of the internship, the responsibilities and involvement of each party, and the reporting requirements.
- The supervisor is the critical link. Guide the intern by providing involvement, direction, and feedback.
- If a problem occurs, counsel the student, and contact the faculty supervisor or school's intern office. (In cases where a student is completing an internship for the experience and not for credit, a faculty supervisor probably won't be involved.)

■ Personnel Structure

The sooner the intern understands what the organization does and how it operates, the sooner they can assume assigned responsibilities and become productive. This process can be facilitated by providing the following kinds of information:

- Company organization
- Specific work standards, policies, and procedures (this would include safety regulations)
- Special industry jargon
- Specific work standards and procedures
- Reporting relationships
- Access to the supervisor (days, times, and duration)
- Mail and telephone systems
- Maintaining the premises and work station
- Safety regulations
- Work processing requests and timeliness
- Approved form(s) for correspondence
- Procedure for signing off completed work
- Periodic forms or reports to be completed
- Security and confidentiality issues, if relevant
- Acceptable dress and appearance
- Productive interactions with others at the work site
- Personnel who can answer different kinds of questions
- How the organization wants the intern to deal with clients, customers, and vendors
- Tasks that can be completed without supervisory approval
- Encourage your interns to spend break and lunchtimes in places where employees gather

■ KEY POINTS

- Work with faculty to establish specific learning objectives for students.
- Identify outcomes or expected products.
- Be willing to incorporate the students' particular strengths.
- Show how this work relates to the overall efforts of the department or organization.

ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

Experience shows that employers who take adequate time at the beginning of the internship to orient the student reap productivity and effectiveness more quickly than those who don't.

■ Orientation and Training Plan

- Is there a thorough orientation and training plan to be implemented before they arrive?
- Has supervisory time been scheduled to establish an important bond with interns and set a crucial tone for the internship experience? See mentor/supervisor comments on pages 4 and 11.
- How will the intern be oriented to his/her new workplace? A conventional orientation program or merely a walk around the office? Even though they may not be permanent employees, they'll be spending a great deal of time in your workplace.
- Don't forget basics like parking, restrooms, and where to go for lunch, etc.
- If the intern lives out of town, how will he/she find and pay for housing?

■ Explain the Mission of the Organization

- How did the organization start? Why? Some companies give talks or hand out information about the company's history, vision, goals.
- What is unique about your product or service?
- Who benefits from your product or service?
- What are the organization's current objectives?
- How may the intern contribute to those objectives?

■ Explain the Organization Structure

- Who reports to whom? What are their duties?
- Introduce him or her to co-workers and give a complete tour of the facility. Schedule time for the intern to meet and talk with key people in the organization.
- Provide company materials to read such as newsletters, annual reports, an organization chart, or memos from the CEO.
- Who, specifically, is the intern's supervisor? Mentor?
- What is the function of the intern's department?
- How are decisions made?
- Which personnel can answer different kinds of questions?
Encourage the interns to walk around and observe others at work. Encourage interns to spend break and lunchtimes in places where employees gather and interview company personnel.

■ Outline Organizational Rules, Policies, Decorum, and Expectations

- By what safety regulations must they abide?
- Is there special industry jargon?
- What are the specific work standards and procedures?
- What access to the supervisor (days, times, and duration) does the intern have?
- How should they process requests?
- How do the mail and telephone systems work?
- What are the approved forms for correspondence?
- Is there a procedure for signing off on completed work?
- What periodic forms or reports need to be completed?
- Are there security or confidentiality issues of which the intern should be aware?
- What is acceptable dress and appearance?
- How should the premises and work area be maintained?

■ Give your Intern the Resources He/She Needs to Do the Job

- Many companies put interns in the hallway or transfer them from desk to desk. This sends a strong message: Interns aren't important; we don't want you here.
- If possible, give the intern a desk, point out the supply room, and introduce the tech support people. If you intimidate your interns into silence, you could miss out on valuable contributions to your projects—or warnings about impending problems.
- Define the Intern's Responsibilities
- What is the intern's role?
- What projects will be assigned?
- What training is necessary?
- How does the organization want the intern to deal with clients and vendors?
- What tasks can be completed without supervisory approval?
- Do other employees understand the intern's role?

■ Monitor the Intern's Adjustment and Understanding of What is Expected

- Assign someone who can periodically "check-in" with the intern if you cannot.
- Encourage the intern to ask questions and make suggestions.

DEVELOPING WORK ACTIVITIES AND MEASURABLE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Producing effective position descriptions involves the development of challenging work assignments that complement students' academic programs. Design a preliminary list of work activities that will meet the goals of the department. Developing challenging work assignments relative to the students' abilities is an important part of the position description. The final job description will incorporate the needs of your organization as well as the abilities and academic goals of the students you employ. Work activities are based on the goals listed on page five.

■ A detailed description of typical tasks should evolve from the plan.

- It will help to promote your internship, and to screen the right candidates.
- When interns join your team, you can review the work activities and modify them according to the interns' knowledge and personal work/learning goals.
- Provide interns with a variety of tasks. Some of the interns' responsibilities will involve repetition, because all work involves repeated activity. However, the program should be designed to maximize the scope of the students' experience.

■ Describe challenging, but realistic tasks students can accomplish in a three-month period.

- As part of the educational process, internship work activities should focus on projects specifically related to the academic major and the degree the interns expect to receive. Students who perform menial tasks may become demoralized and won't learn to apply their expertise to a business environment.
- An internship does not always fall into the category of a job. It is often part of their academic program and should offer every opportunity to link classroom learning to workplace experience.

■ Give clear direction regarding what is expected.

- Students expect and appreciate knowing what is expected of them. They also need frequent feedback concerning what and how they have done. In their academic environment, clear direction and periodic feedback is the way of life. (See page 11 for Feedback suggestions.)
- It is important that the interns perceive their work is making a useful contribution to the sponsoring organization.

■ **Sample tasks that undergraduate students have provided for their sponsoring organizations:**

- Perform laboratory tests
- Design posters, charts, graphs
- Conduct research studies and surveys
- Compile technical reports
- Generate marketing plans
- Conduct training packages
- Program and create databases and websites
- Write handbooks or manuals
- Perform software/hardware modifications
- Develop slide/sound presentations
- Create academic lesson plans
- Prepare budgets and financial reports
- Generate financial forecast/cost recovery reports

SUPERVISING AND EVALUATING THE INTERN AND INTERN PROGRAM

The beginning days of the internship program are often its defining days. The first on-the-job discussion should confirm the overall program goal and clearly show how the first task is a step toward that goal. However, many times the intern can bring a fresh perspective to the program. Encourage the intern to evaluate the anticipated tasks and make suggestions for improvement. From this very first discussion, treat the intern as a knowledgeable working professional and not as a subservient worker. The interaction of the mentor and the intern will be an important influence on an intern's impression of the organization.

So how do you “take action to ensure success?” Consider the goals of your program. The nature of the program and the activities that you choose to undertake should directly relate to your program goals.

■ **Keep an eye on the intern.**

- Don't watch their every move, but make sure you know what's happening with their daily tasks. Watch for signs that the intern is confused or bored. As often as silence means that an intern is busy, it also could mean that he or she is confused and shy about telling you. It's easy to be shy in a workplace full of older strangers who all know each other.
- Schedule regular sessions with your intern to review projects and answer questions. Ask the intern's opinion of how frequent the review sessions should be. They might be more often at the beginning of the internship. This courtesy of involving the intern also sends the message immediately that you are there to help them succeed and are making them a partner in that success. Ensure that the intern is clear as to your personal open door policy.
- Explain to the intern how to achieve results through the input of others. Working with others is an important learning experience and one of the key factors in career success.

■ **As an intern supervisor, you'll use all the skills necessary in any effective supervisory relationship:**

- Providing leadership
- Delegating
- Developing and training
- Listening
- Motivating
- Communicating
- Evaluating
- Rewarding

■ **Since the internship is an extension of the learning process, you will need to provide opportunities to bridge the classroom and the work environment. You will have an opportunity to coach, counsel, and reinforce positive attitudes and performance. During these meetings, the students can:**

- Participate in an evaluation of their strengths
- Discuss areas needing growth and development
- Understand what kind of work will follow
- Learn how their work is contributing to the organization
- Report on the status of a project
- Ask questions

■ **Give them feedback!** If your interns have never done this kind of work before, they'll want to know if their work is measuring up to your expectations. No matter what the level of experience, they need you, as a more experienced worker, to let them know if their work is officially “okay.” Periodically, examine what your intern has produced and make suggestions.

■ **Anticipate some interaction with your students' internship coordinator** through telephone calls, on-site visits, and written evaluations. They will help you find a solution if difficulties occur (intern attendance or punctuality problems, low motivation, unsatisfactory work, or personal conflicts). Also, you should contact the educational institution if the internship conditions must be altered,

such as a change in supervisors, delays in the availability of data needed by the students to complete an assignment, a strike by unionized employees, transfer or termination of an employee involved in the interns' work, or other unanticipated changes.

■ **Encourage interns to keep a portfolio of work accomplished.** This will be a basis to discuss their professional growth and help them to fulfill academic requirements. Documents included can be:

- Job Descriptions
- Legislation
- Proposals
- Manuals
- Citations & Awards
- Contracts
- Program Outlines
- Company Newsletters
- Performance Appraisals
- Charts/Graphs
- Correspondence
- Press Releases
- Certificates
- Research Reports
- Financial Reports
- Displays & Exhibits
- References
- Survey Reports
- Cost Analyses
- Computer Print-outs

■ **Evaluate the intern's progress periodically.**

Remember the goals you outlined? A few weeks after the internship begins, it's time to see how well you and the intern are meeting those goals.

- Evaluation processes differ from: the supervisor giving formal, written evaluations every three weeks to the supervisor or mentor and the intern having occasional informal lunches. Some companies have the intern evaluate the experience and the company. Some schools will have an intern coordinator/supervisor observe for a day. Structure is largely up to your corporate culture and needs. These evaluations will be useful later if you decide to interview a former intern for full-time work, or to publicize how successful your program has been. (See Appendix A.)
- The evaluation process will vary from school to school. Some schools will have you complete evaluations of the students who completed the internship for credit; others will require that evaluations be completed on all interns. In some cases, the school will send the form directly to the supervisor; in other situations the student will be responsible for providing the form to their site supervisor.
- In addition to spontaneous and informal meetings, discuss and review the form provided by the intern's school to evaluate performance at the midpoint of the internship, so the students know where they stand. This information will provide data for the final evaluation and serve as a reference point for the students' subsequent performance. Consider the quality and timeliness of the work produced, ability to take and follow direction, work habits, and areas needing development. Frequent feedback, especially early on, gives the intern the ability to correct perceived deficiencies or differences in approach. The common goal is for the intern to be successful. This information will provide data for the final evaluation and serve as a reference point for the students' subsequent performance.
- Maintaining program popularity will require hard evidence that the organization is getting a return on its investment. Some organizations have adopted a process of formal exit interviews. Through this process they can determine if interns are leaving the company having had a good experience, and it provides valuable feedback to managers for program planning in the following year. An evaluation process should not just provide feedback to the student; hopefully, it is a means of dialogue where both parties come to a better understanding of their roles. The exit interview helps to measure if both parties have been successful in meeting those goals.
- In addition to qualitative measures, quantitative measures have also been adopted. Common measures include the number of interns who become full-time employees, repeat requests for interns from managers, and growing numbers of intern applicants. To successfully measure your own program outcome, return to the stated program goals, and address those outcomes.

■ **KEY POINTS**

- Maintain an open channel of communication with formal and informal meetings.
- Keep the interns busy and directed towards their learning objectives. Students rarely complain of overwork, but they do complain if they are not challenged.
- Provide opportunities for increasing responsibility.
- Encourage professionalism by assisting the interns in developing human relations skills, decision-making abilities, and managing office politics.
- Remember that you are a role model.



APPENDIX A: SAMPLE FORMS



INTERNSHIP POSITION DESCRIPTION

(This form will be made available to students. Please review and complete as necessary.)

Position:

Organization:

Address 1:

Address 2:

City:

Contact:

Title:

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

Web site:

**Majors and Class
Standing Desired:**

GPA Desired:

We will accept the following types of students: Credit Non-Credit

Is free and safe parking available? Yes No

If not, do you provide reimbursement for parking? Yes No

What is the start date? _____

Time Preference:
 Part Time _____ Hrs/Week
 Full Time
 No Preference

Compensation:
_____ Per Hour
_____ Stipend
_____ Other

When Available:
 Fall
 Spring
 Summer

Job/Project Description:

Experience/Skills Desired:

This internship is open to the following (please check all that apply):

- High School Junior
- High School Senior
- Community College
- Technical School
- College/University
- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

Inquiry Deadline:

EMPLOYER EVALUATION OF STUDENT INTERN

Student: _____ Organization: _____

- | | | |
|---|-------------------|--|
| 1 | Not Acceptable | (Never demonstrates this ability/does not meet expectations) |
| 2 | Needs Improvement | (Seldom demonstrates this ability/rarely meets expectations) |
| 3 | Acceptable/Good | (Sometimes demonstrates this ability/meets expectations) |
| 4 | Superior | (Demonstrates this ability/often exceeds expectations) |

If any criteria are not applicable to this internship experience, please leave the response blank.

A. Ability to Learn

- | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Asks pertinent and purposeful questions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | Seeks out and utilizes appropriate resources | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | Accepts responsibility for mistakes and learns from experiences | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

B. Reading/Writing/Computation Skills

- | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Reads/comprehends/follows written materials | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | Communicates ideas and concepts clearly in writing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | Works with mathematical procedures appropriate to the job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

C. Listening & Oral Communication Skills

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Listens to others in an active and attentive manner | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | Effectively participates in meetings or group settings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | Demonstrates effective verbal communication skills | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

D. Creative Thinking & Problem Solving Skills

- | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Breaks down complex tasks/problems into manageable pieces | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | Brainstorms/develops options and ideas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | Demonstrates an analytical capacity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

E. Professional & Career Development Skills

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Exhibits self-motivated approach to work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | Demonstrates ability to set appropriate priorities/goals | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | Exhibits professional behavior and attitude | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

F. Interpersonal & Teamwork Skills

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Manages and resolves conflict in an effective manner | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | Supports and contributes to a team atmosphere | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | Demonstrates assertive but appropriate behavior | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

G. Organizational Effectiveness Skills

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Seeks to understand and support the organization's mission/goals | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | Fits in with the norms and expectations of the organization | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | Works within appropriate authority and decision-making channels | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

H. Basic Work Habits

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Reports to work as scheduled and on time | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | Exhibits a positive and constructive attitude | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | Dress and appearance are appropriate for this organization | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

I. Character Attributes

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Brings a sense of values and integrity to the job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | Behaves in an ethical manner | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | Respects the diversity (religious/cultural/ethnic) of co-workers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

J. Open Category: Industry-Specific Skills

Are there any skills or competencies that you feel are important to the profession or career-field (represented by your organization) that have not been previously listed in this evaluation? If so, please list these skills below and assess the intern accordingly.

1.		1	2	3	4
2.		1	2	3	4
3.		1	2	3	4

K. What are the student's strongest assets?

L. What qualities and characteristics should the student strive to improve?

M. Does it appear that the student's academic program is oriented to the particular needs of your organization? Please explain.

N. Comments: (Please attach additional comments if necessary.)

Overall Performance (if I were to rate the intern at the present time)

Unsatisfactory	Poor		Average			Good		Outstanding		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
(F	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A)

This assessment was reviewed with the intern on (Month/Day/Year) _____.

Evaluator's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Title/Position: _____ Telephone: _____

STUDENT EVALUATION OF INTERNSHIP

Please respond to the following questions regarding your internship experience.

The purpose of this form is to provide opportunity for an honest appraisal of the internship site and supervisor, and its contribution to your school's experiential education program.

Organization: _____ Semester/Year: _____

Location: _____ Supervisor: _____

1. Please rate the following aspects of your internship placement on the basis of this scale:
(0) No Observation, (1) Poor, (2) Fair, (3) Good, (4) Excellent

- ___ Work experience relates to my area of study
- ___ Adequacy of employer supervision
- ___ Helpfulness of supervisor
- ___ Acceptance by fellow workers
- ___ Opportunity to use my training
- ___ Opportunity to develop my human relations skills
- ___ Provided levels of responsibility consistent with my ability and growth
- ___ Opportunity to develop my communication skills
- ___ Opportunity to develop my creativity
- ___ Cooperativeness of fellow workers
- ___ Opportunity to problem solve
- ___ Opportunity to develop critical thinking skills
- ___ Provided orientation by the organization
- ___ Attempt to offer feedback on my progress and abilities
- ___ Effort to make it a learning experience for me

Feel free to explain any of your responses to the above criteria here (use other side if necessary):

2. Would you work for this supervisor again? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Uncertain
3. Would you work for this organization again? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Uncertain
4. Would you recommend this organization to other students? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Uncertain
Why or why not?
5. What one suggestion would you make to help improve this internship experience?
6. Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to your Career Center or Internship Office.



APPENDIX B: EDUCATION CONTACT LIST



Allegheny College
Melissa Barnes, Director of Career Services
520 North Main Street
Box 37 Meadville, PA 16335
814-332-2381
814-332-2340
mbarnes@allegheny.edu

Business Institute of PA/Meadville
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814-724-0700
814-724-2777
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Business Institute of PA/Sharon
Chris Stockner, Director of Career Services
335 Boyd Drive Sharon, Pa 16146
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724-983-8355
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CAMTech
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814-897-0391, ext. 222
814-897-1441
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CAMTech - Warren
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Clarion University of PA - Venango Campus
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Denise Ohler, Ed.D, Director of Career Services
Center for Career Services
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Erie Business Center
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814-456-4882
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Erie Institute of Technology
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814-868-9977
GeriC@ErieIT.edu

Gannon University
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Center for Experiential Education
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Erie, PA 16541-0001
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814-871-7220 (fax)
Email: RINK001@gannon.edu

Great Lakes Institute of Technology
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Jamestown Community College- Warren Center
Terrie Ericson, Center Director
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814-723-3951
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Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine
Susan Lazzaro, Director of Student Affairs
1858 W. Grandview Blvd. Erie, PA 16509
814-866-6641, ext. 8116
814-866-8123
slazzaro@lecom.edu

Mercyhurst College
Robert J. Hvezda
Director, Career Services & Cooperative
Education/Internship Programs
(814) 824-2426
fax (814) 824-2070
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Mercyhurst College - Northeast Campus
Dr. Robert Towsey, Dean of Academic Affairs
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814-725-6112
rtowsey@mercyhurst.edu

Northwest Regional Technology Institute
William Peck, Career/Recruitment Director
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814-455-4446
814-455-6020
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Penn State Erie - the Behrend College
Carrie Payne
Assistant Director, Career Development
Penn State Erie, The Behrend College
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Thiel College
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724-589-2010
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Tri State Business Institute
Ann Marie Philips, Career Resource Center
5757 N. 26th Street Erie, PA 16506
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University of Pittsburgh At Titusville
Dr. Margaret H. Peaslee, PhD., V.P. of Academic
Affairs
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16354
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814-827-5574
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Westminster College
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724-946-2542
meadelb@westminster.edu



APPENDIX C: RESOURCES AND CONTACTS



Technology Council of NWPA
915 State Street
Erie, PA 16501
Phone: 814-451-1172
Fax: 814-451-1150
Web: www.techcouncilnwpa.org

PHEAA
State Grant & Special Programs Division
Work-Study Programs
1200 North Seventh Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102-1444
Web: www.pheaa.org/employers/index.shtml

National Association of Colleges and
Employers (NACE)
62 Highland Avenue
Bethlehem, PA 18017-9085
Phone: 800-544-5272
Fax: 610-868-0208
Web: www.naceweb.org

National Society for Experiential Education
(NSEE)
9001 Braddock Road, Suite 380
Springfield, VA 22151
Phone: 800-528-3492
Fax: 800-803-4170
Web: www.nsee.org

Immigration Support Services
1300 Bent Creek Blvd.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
Phone: 800-437-7313
Web: www.immigrationsupport.com

Cooperative Education and Internship
Association (CEIA)
4190 S. Highland Dr., Suite 211
Salt Lake City, UT 84124
Phone: 800-824-0449
Fax: 801-984-2027
Web: www.ceiainc.org