

Essentials to A Successful and Satisfying Internship Experience

Develop a thorough orientation and training plans to be implemented when the interns begin work, so they will learn quickly and become productive members of your team. Invest supervisory time to establish an important bond with interns and set a crucial tone for the internship experience.

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. To help acclimate interns, please take time initially to:

Explain the Mission of the Organization

- How did the organization start? Why?
- 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, and who specifically, is the intern's supervisor?
- What is the intern's department responsible for?
- How are decisions made?
- Which personnel can answer different kinds of questions?

Outline Organizational Rules, Policies, Decorum and Expectations

- 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, telephone and e-mail/network systems work?
- What are the approved forms for correspondence?
- By what safety regulations must they abide?
- Is there a procedure for signing off completed work?
- What periodic forms or reports need to be completed?
- Are there security or confidentiality issues the intern should be aware of?
- What is acceptable with regard to dress and appearance?
- How should they maintain the premises and their work area?

Define the Intern's Responsibilities

- What is the intern's role?
- What projects will be assigned to him or her?
- What resources are available to the intern?
- 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

- Make yourself visibly available to the intern and encourage the intern to ask questions
- Assign someone who can periodically "check-in" with the intern
- Provide feedback and constructive criticism