

How to Create a Quality Internship

Tips for Businesses

Creating and maintaining a quality internship is much easier than you think it is. Below are a few tips/guidelines on how to make the internship not only beneficial to your business, but also for the interns that will be working for you.

Decide on the Parameters:

Establish up front the parameters of the internship. Will it be paid or unpaid, full time or part time, summer only or any time during the year?

Goal Setting:

Have a set list of responsibilities, goals, and assignments that are to be accomplished in the internship by you and your intern.

Communication:

Schedule regular meetings with your intern to talk about their progress and give feedback. As the supervisor, you should share your experiences and thoughts about their work with the interns. Feedback is important to the growth and education of your intern, and they will value these sessions as much as you value their help. This is also a time for the intern to ask questions and to share with you their thoughts about the internship.

Company Inclusion:

The interns want to learn as much as possible about the company while they are there. One way for them to achieve this is to include them in anything company related. Anything that you, their supervisor, is attending (meetings, functions, picnics), an invitation should also be extended to the interns. This will allow them to see the inner workings of the company and also teach them about all of the work that goes into making the company run smoothly.

Mentorship:

Encourage your interns to find a mentor within the company. This could be you, but also could be someone else in the company that holds a different position and can offer differing opinions and advice to help the intern. This is another great way for the intern to learn useful skills for working in a professional environment and also give them tips on how to accomplish their goals and assignments with greater ease and efficiency. Whereas the supervisor plays the boss role, the mentor is more of an aid/guide.

Excitement:

Keep the internship as exciting as possible. The more fun and exciting that the internship is the more positive and engaged your intern will be. This is especially important for smaller businesses, as the name might not carry as much weight as a Google, Microsoft or Amazon would on their resume. Use this to your advantage by telling them that at a smaller business they will have more responsibilities and gain more experience.

Meaningful Work:

Finally and most importantly, give the interns real/challenging work. The interns want to use their time with you to show off what they can do and prove their worth. That is what's most important to them, proving that they are capable of working in the "real world." This is not only proof for the people they are working with, but also to prove to themselves that they are ready and on the right track to a promising career in whatever they do.

