

Internship Program

BEST PRACTICES

Set Expectations Early

Interns want to feel ready. Develop a clear job description and define job duties and responsibilities. Ensure interns understand expectations for their performance. Also ensure managers understand their role and support internship program goals.

Deliver Orientation

Interns want to feel welcome. Give interns a tour of the facility, make introductions, and outline the company's mission, culture, policies, working conditions, hours, dress code, etc. A smooth onboarding process can help interns acclimate and feel connected.

Assign Meaningful Work

Interns want to be productive. Assign real work (not busy work). Ensure tasks are related to their field of study and skillset, seen as challenging, and recognized by the organization as valuable. Use a mix of short-term and long-term assignments to ensure continuous productivity.

Incorporate Projects

Interns want ownership. Provide at least one meaningful project for a more engaging experience. Timebound projects expose interns to challenges that require problem-solving and critical thinking skills. A project can also be a valuable addition to an intern's professional portfolio.

Offer Learning & Development

Interns want to learn. Offer opportunities for skill and knowledge development through workshops, training, or access to online courses. It shows students you are invested in their future career and adds value to their work contributions.

Designate a Dedicated Manager

Interns want guidance. Ensure there is a direct supervisor who checks in frequently to set goals and expectations, discuss progress, address concerns, and offer support and guidance. Build in regular feedback sessions to nurture growth.

Expose to Various Departments

Interns want to network. Allow interns to spend time in different departments. This exposure provides a holistic view of the organization, helps interns discover areas of interest, and allows them to network with professionals across the organization.

Provide Compensation

Interns want to be paid. Unpaid internships can be problematic. Interns perform work and all work should be paid. It helps to attract a diverse range of candidates and leads to a more engaged and motivated workforce. Learn more at [#UnpaidIsUnfair](https://www.unpaidisunfair.org/).

