



Employers Internship Toolkit



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InterninMichigan.com

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	Page 3
Types of Internships.....	Page 3
Importance of Internships.....	Page 4
Developing a Quality Internship Program.....	Page 4 - 7
Legal Issues.....	Page 8
International Students.....	Page 9
Frequently asked Questions	Page 10
Resources.....	Page 11 -23

Additional resources provided by:

'Starting and Maintaining an Internship Program' – Michael True, Director – Internship Center, Messiah College

'SHRM Guide to Organizing an Internship Program' – Letty Klutz, PHR, and Chuck Salvetti

Amway Internship Program – Kevin Douglas, Internship Program Manager

Introduction

The Employers Internship Toolkit is designed to assist your organization in the development of a successful internship program. This toolkit will give you information and templates designed to help you create internships that meet the needs of your organization.

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 he/she is learning throughout the experience. Internship circumstances vary widely. Common characteristics include:

- A typical duration of three to nine months
- A part time or full-time commitment
- Paid or unpaid opportunities
- Connection to an educational program with academic credit, or not connected to earning credit

Types of Internship Programs

Internship: A one-time curriculum-related work assignment, which may be paid or unpaid depending on the employer and what is required of the student for the position. Most internships offer a stipend and/or academic credit.

Cooperative Education (Co-Op): Experienced based learning through paid employment in practical, curriculum related work assignments that can be tailored to a student schedule:

- Students may attend classes and work
- Students may attend school full-time one semester, then work full-time the next semester, alternating periods of work and school until their college program is completed

Summer Employment: Paid work experience however, this type of position may or may not be directly related to the student's curriculum and may or may not be integrated into the academic program.

Importance of Internship Programs

Benefits for Employers from an Internship Program

- An inexpensive recruiting tool and an opportunity to train future employees. The opportunity to evaluate prospective employees while they are working for the organization can reduce significant costs in finding new talent;
- Interns bring current technology and ideas from the classroom to the workplace and therefore increase an organization's intellectual capital;
- Interns can be another source for the recruitment of diverse employees into your workforce;
- An internship program can supply an easily accessible source of highly motivated pre-professionals;
- Interns provide an opportunity for mid-level staff to manage.

Five-Steps to Developing a Quality Internship Program

Step 1: Set Goals and Policies for the Internship Program

Step 2: Write a Plan for the Internship Opportunity

Step 3: Recruit a Qualified Intern

Step 4: Manage the Intern

Step 5: Conduct Exit Interviews and Follow-up

Step 1: Set Goals and Policies for the Internship Program

What is the main goal for your company's internship program?

- Look at current business activities and consider what ongoing work you would like to expand or projects you would like to initiate or complete.
- Consider projects that are beneficial to your organization and provide challenging learning experiences for students.
- Examine your company's recruiting needs (i.e. employees retiring or departments that are expecting growth).

Who will supervise and mentor the intern?

- A supervisor should be selected because he/she likes to teach or train and has the resources to do it. The supervisor will help the intern keep their project on time and on budget.
- The mentor may be a department head, project leader, long-time employee or acting supervisor who is knowledgeable on the project where the intern will work and can provide some orientation and wisdom to the student.

Will you pay the intern?

Internship opportunities can be paid or unpaid. Determine ahead of time if you will be able to compensate your intern. This could be in the form of an hourly wage or a stipend (see InternInMichigan.com FAQs for more information on typical compensation).

Step 2: Write a Plan for the Internship Opportunity

- Identify goals, timelines, workspace and a general description of the project, which will become your work plan, so that everyone understands the purpose and expectations involved. There is an outline to help you create this work plan along with examples of completed job descriptions under *Resources* – pages 11-13.
- After the work plan has been established, create a job description for the position.

Can you involve the intern in experiences beyond the actual work of the internship?

Yes, this could include training programs, social events and opportunities to network with executives. Best practices for social events include encouraging interns to network among themselves to share their experiences. Invite your intern to company sponsored events. Some companies host an end of the program experience, such as participation in a golf outing or a lunch/reception with upper management.

Step 3: Recruit a Qualified Intern

Logon and register at InternInMichigan.com:

- ***Dashboard:***
Welcome to Intern In Michigan.
- ***Profile:***
Enter company and contact information. The information entered here is used to pre-populate all the job postings that you create. You can also allow candidates to view your information directly.
- ***Internships:***
Use the information from the plan you developed in Step 2 to create a new internship.
- ***Search:***
You can load a previously saved search or you can click the “start new search” button.
- ***Get Smart:***
Videos and best practices to assist in the design of your internship program.
- ***Lifestyle:***
Information on cities around the State of Michigan.

- **Feedback:**
Give feedback on InternInMichigan.com.

Begin searching three to four months before you expect a student to start working:

The longer you accept applications, you will increase your chances of finding the best person for the job.

Choose interns just as carefully as you choose permanent employees:

On average, up to 45% of the students stay on full-time upon graduation from college. Once you have determined your top candidates, arrange an interview in a timely manner (best practices: 3-5 days). A sample interview structure can be found under *Resources* – page 14.

Extend an offer to the intern of your choice:

You will find examples of a Memorandum of Understanding and an Offer Letter under *Resources* – page 15-16.

Notify candidates who were interviewed, but not chosen for the position:

There are sample rejection letters under *Resources* – pages 17-19.

Step 4: Manage the Intern

Getting started on the right foot is important. This will lay a good foundation for the intern's experience. Using the work plan you have developed for the internship opportunity, setup an orientation for your new intern. A sample orientation outline is included under *Resources* – page 20.

Give your intern the resources he or she needs to do the job:

A proper workstation, telephone with voicemail, computer and email account is vital to your interns' success. Point out the supply room and introduce any appropriate personnel.

Monitor the intern's progress:

- Make sure you are aware of what's happening with their daily tasks.
- Keep in mind this could be a first work experience for this person. When work is assigned make sure it is given with detailed explanation. A few extra minutes of explanation will pay off later when the intern produces good work independently.
- Help your intern set goals for completion of various tasks, including daily, weekly and monthly goals. This will help establish a solid work ethic for the intern.

Evaluate the intern's progress periodically and give feedback:

- Evaluations are important for the success of your interns' experience. Evaluation processes differ and yours might be a formal written review given at the halfway point and at the end of the program, or it may be delivered over an occasional lunch with the intern.

- Educational institutions may require onsite visits on conference calls during the internship to facilitate the evaluation process for grading purposes. The student intern should be able to share with you what is expected and a representative from the school will probably contact you if this is a requirement for credit.

Step 5: Conduct Exit Interviews and Follow-up

Proving the value of your internship program will require hard evidence that your organization is getting a return on its investment:

- Use the evaluation forms found under *Resources* – pages 21-23 for both interns and employers to evaluate each other.
- Conduct an exit interview to determine if interns are leaving the organization having had a good experience. This provides valuable feedback to upper management for future program planning.

In addition to qualitative measures, a number of quantitative measures can be developed:

- Common measures may include the number of interns that become full-time employees, the number of requests for interns in the company and growing numbers of qualified intern applicants.
- In order to successfully measure your program outcome, you should return to the stated program goals and address those outcomes.

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.

You do not have to pay interns who qualify as leaders or trainees. The U.S. Department of Labor has outlined six criteria for determining trainee status:

1. Interns cannot displace regular employees
2. 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)
3. Interns are not entitled to wages during the internship
4. Interns must receive training from your organization, even if it somewhat impedes the work
5. Interns must get hands-on experience with equipment and processes used in your industry
6. Interns' training must primarily benefit them, not the organization

Workers' and Unemployment Compensation- Workers compensation boards have found that interns contribute enough to a company to make them employees. It is wise to cover interns under your workers' compensation policy even though you are not required to do so. Student interns are not generally eligible for unemployment compensation at the end of the internship.

Keep in Mind- 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.

The employer should identify the specific terms and condition of employment (e.g., dates of employment as an intern, including the date the internship will end; compensation; organizational and/or reporting relationships; principal duties; tasks or responsibilities; working conditions; confidentiality; any other expectations of the employer), and should discuss these with the prospective intern, so that there is no misunderstanding regarding the relationship. Also, it may make good sense to document such a discussion with a written agreement. This should be made in consultation with the educational institution.

If an intern is harassed at your organization and you don't do anything about it, your organization opens itself to the risk of lawsuits. Take time to advise your interns of appropriate workplace behavior, the organization's harassment policy and the complaint procedure.

International Students

The most common visa types employers 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 fulltime 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.naceweb.org.

Also see the website of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services:

<http://uscis.gov/graphics/lawsregs/index.htm>

Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 214.2 (f)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: *What level of compensation is typical for an internship?*

A: In planning to allocate resources for your internship program, compensation may be a consideration. An hourly wage can vary depending upon experience; typically the hourly wage for an intern ranges from \$8.00 to \$20.00 per hour. If you are unable to budget an hourly wage, consider offering a monthly or semester based stipend to the student.

Q: *Is my organization responsible for providing insurance or benefits to the intern?*

A: No, normally only full-time employees are eligible for benefits provided by the employer. Interns are short-term employees and are therefore ineligible.

Q: *Do interns work 40 hour work weeks? Do they typically work five days a week?*

A: Internships are flexible; students often plan their internship schedules around their class schedules on campus. A part-time internship can involve anywhere between 10 and 30 hours per week. Once you identify an intern candidate you will need to discuss his/her availability and agree on a schedule that will work for both parties. Students enrolled in a school with a co-op program may be able to work 40 hours a week for a semester.

Q: *When do internships typically begin? How long do they last?*

A: Internships usually follow the starting and ending dates of the academic semester. They can take place during summer breaks (typically May-August), during the fall (September –December) or the spring (January-April). An internship is generally between three to nine months and can begin either in summer, fall or spring.

Q: *When should I start looking for an intern if I want them to start work in the summer?*

A: Typically internship descriptions are posted at least two-months prior to the proposed start date to allow for a one-month window for candidates to submit applications.

Q: *How does a student obtain academic credit for internship experience?*

A: Credit requirements for internships vary by school. It is the student's responsibility to manage this.

Q: *What if my intern does not work out? Are there rules for terminating interns the same way as there are for full or part time positions?*

A: In most cases, interns are treated as employees and therefore the same laws apply. It is advised that you consult with your Human Resources department and/or seek legal counsel for further information and specific Department of Labor requirements.

Q: *I like my intern and would like to extend the internship, how do I go about this?*

A: This is at your discretion and you may continue an internship and/or extend an offer for future full-time employment once the internship has been completed.

Q: *Can full-time employment be offered after the internship program has been completed?*

A: Yes, if your organization and the intern can come to an agreement about full-time employment that is the ultimate win for InterninMichigan.com and for our state!

Resources

Internship Work Plan

Intern Name: _____
Phone Number: _____ **Email:** _____

Supervisor Name: _____
Title: _____ **Email:** _____
Phone Number: _____

Mentor Name: _____
Title: _____ **Email:** _____
Phone Number: _____

Company Name: _____
Company Address: _____

Contact: _____
Title: _____ **Email:** _____
Phone Number: _____
Description of Company: _____

Internship Job Title: _____
Description of Internship: _____

Goal (s) of Internship: _____

Wages:
Hourly Wage _____
Stipend _____
Bonuses _____
Assistance with housing _____
Unpaid _____

Timeline: _____ **to:** _____

Supplies:
_____ Desk
_____ Telephone with voicemail
_____ Work station
_____ Network log in
_____ Email account

Sample Intern Job Description #1

Position: PC Support Analyst Intern

Date: 05/02/09

Organization: ABC Company

Location: Holland, MI

Department: Information Systems

Salary: 12.00/hour

Cycle: School year

Start Date: 09/01/09

Time Requirements: Part time 15-20 hours/week

Major(s) Requested: Computer Science/information Systems

GPA Desired:

Number of Openings: 1

Job Description:

- Responds in a timely and courteous manner to helpdesk calls from end-users with software and hardware questions
- Provides support for office products such as e-mail, electronic calendaring, word processing, and spreadsheets
- Performs hardware and software installations
- Performs routine maintenance on PC's and peripherals.
- Goes to end-users' desks and provides tutoring for PC applications such as WordPerfect, Word for Windows, Excel, Lotus 1-2-3.

Qualifications:

- Knowledge of Windows, WordPerfect, Word, Lotus 1-2-3, cc: mail preferred.
- Familiarity with PC's and Macintosh preferred
- Must have own transportation
- Must be incoming Junior or above

Application Procedure:

Please forward resume to:

Contact

Title

Company name

Company address

Phone number

Fax

Email address

Website

Sample Intern Job Description #2

Position: Accounting Intern
Organization:
Department: Accounting & Control
Cycle: Summer
Start Date: 05/01/09
Time Requirements: 35-40 hours/week
Major(s) Requested: Accounting, Finance, or Business Administration
GPA desired:
Number of Openings: 2

Date: 1/02/09
Location: Ann Arbor, MI
Salary: 10.00/hour

Job Description:

- Prepares and consolidates results and budgets
- Coordinates and issues actual and forecast reporting requirements
- Analyzes monthly budget variances
- Analyzes various General Ledger accounts
- Prepares monthly financial reports
- Participates in special projects

Qualifications:

- Minimum of 2 Accounting courses
- Proficiency in PC environment, preferably in Windows, required
- Familiarity with Wordperfect and Excel or Lotus 1-2-3 preferred
- Must be incoming Junior status or above

Application Procedure:

Please forward resume to:

Contact
Title
Company name
Company address
Phone number
Fax
Email address
Website

Sample Interview Structure

Stages of the Interview

1. Prepare questions about:
 - Specific coursework related to the position
 - Knowledge or familiarity of equipment, techniques, computers, etc.
 - Previous experiences related to the position
 - Career interests, goals
2. Analyze resumes
 - Check for signs of organization, clarity, and accuracy
 - Trace chronology and look for time gaps
 - Note involvement and roles in campus and community organizations
 - Check grade average overall and in major
 - Look for accomplishments, patterns of progression, and growth
3. Open the Interview (1-2 minutes)
 - Build friendly rapport through small talk
 - Provide an overview of the interview
 - Indicate that the student will have an opportunity to ask questions later
 - Explain that you will be taking notes and invite the student to do so
4. Ask Questions and Gather Information (15 minutes)
 - Use behavioral type questions as well as open ended questions
5. Allow for Questions and Comments (5 minutes)
 - Answer honestly and illustrate with your own experiences if possible
 - Assess the quality of the student's questions
 - Avoid giving answers that indicate a commitment to a position
 - Be prepared to answer questions about the position, expected training, company structure, company products
6. Give Information (1-2 minutes)
 - Briefly recap information about the position.
 - Discuss candidate's availability for the internship to ensure your needs are met
 - Discuss any academic requirements for course credit
7. Wrap-Up (1 -2 minutes)
 - Close on a positive note
 - Briefly describe the next steps
 - Give an estimate of when the student will hear from you
 - Avoid making statements that may be interpreted as a promise of employment
8. Evaluate the candidate against the requirements for the position.
 - Review your notes before your next interview
 - Be objective and base your decision on the evidence
9. Follow up with candidates promptly.
 - Send rejection letters to students who do not match your requirements
 - Offer the position to the candidate that you have chosen

Internship Memorandum of Understanding

The following is designed to assist in providing a high-quality internship experience for both the intern and the employer. This form should be completed together by the intern and the immediate supervisor or mentor. Both parties should provide input into the completion of the form and agree to the terms outlined. Please note: this is not a legal contract.

Student Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

College/University: _____

College/University contact: _____

Internship Information

Company Name: _____

Company Address: _____

Immediate Supervisor: _____

Supervisor Phone: _____ Email: _____

Internship Description

Student internship will begin on _____ and end on _____

Internship title: _____

Goals to accomplish during internship: _____

What do you want to experience or learn during this internship? _____

List the projects that will be assigned to the intern. _____

Other goals: _____

Intern signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of this form should be given to the intern and the supervisor/mentor

Sample Internship Offer Letter

Date:
Student Name
Student Address

Dear (Student's first name):

I am pleased to confirm your acceptance of an internship position as (Title) in the (Department Name) at a pay rate of (Hourly wage/stipend). Your first day of work will be (Date). Your duties and assignments for this position will be those described to you in your orientation with (Supervisor's Name).

This offer is contingent upon completion of a physical examination, including a drug screen, and completion of employment processing procedures. Please report to the Human Resources Department at (Time) on (Start Date) with the appropriate documents and completed forms.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact (Supervisor's name) or me. We are very pleased that you have decided to join (Operating Company name). We look forward to seeing you on (Start Date) and offer a very warm welcome.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)
(Your Title)

Sample Rejection Letter on Resume Basis

Date
Student Name
Student Address

Dear (Student's First Name):

Thank you for your interest in an internship assignment with (Company Name). Although your background and qualifications are impressive, we do not have an appropriate opportunity at this time. I have forwarded your resume to our Human Resources Department. They will contact you in the event that an appropriate future opportunity arises.

Thank you again for your interest in (Company Name). We wish you success in your career.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)
(Your Title)

Sample Rejection Letter Following Campus Interview

Date:

Student's Name
Student's Address

Dear (Student's First Name):

Thank you for meeting with me recently to discuss an internship assignment with (Company Name). Although your background and qualifications are impressive, we do not have an appropriate opening at this time. I have forwarded your resume to our Human Resources Department. They will contact you directly in the event that an appropriate future opportunity arises.

Thank you again for your interest in (Company Name). We wish you success in your career.

Sincerely,
(Your Name)
(Your Title)

Sample Rejection Letter Following On-site Interview

Date:

Student's Name
Student's Address

Dear (Student's First Name):

Thank you for meeting with me to discuss an internship assignment with (Company Name). Although your background and qualifications are impressive, we have selected another candidate who more closely fits our needs.

I have forwarded your information to our Human Resources Department. They will contact you directly in the event that an appropriate future opportunity arises.

Thank you again for your interest in (Company Name). We wish you success in your career.

Sincerely,
(Your Name)
(Your Title)

Sample Orientation Outline

- Review organization vision and department missions
- Give the intern a feel for the organizational structure, provide an organizational chart or staff list with phone numbers
- Explain the need-to-know items
 - Parking
 - Work station
 - Specific work dates and times
 - Office hours, breaks and lunches
 - Intranet
 - Using office equipment, ie. Copy machine, phone
 - Dress code
 - Attendance and punctuality
- Review organizational and employee policies
- Review the internship
 - Identify and discuss main projects
 - Job description
 - Results expected
 - Action plan
- Set regular evaluation meetings
- Inform the intern of departmental or staff meetings he/she is expected to attend, and provide time during those meetings for the interns to report progress on his/her project
- Identify a back-up supervisor or support person who can answer the intern's questions if his/her regular supervisor is unavailable
- Ensure that your intern understands his/her responsibilities
- Provide a tour of the facility, introduction to staff

Sample Form Intern Evaluation of Employer

Student: _____ Date: _____

Employer: _____

1. Did you feel the work was a valuable experience in relation to your academic studies?
2. Were you given responsibilities that enabled you to apply knowledge and skills?
3. Were you allowed to take the initiative to work beyond the basic requirements of the job?
4. Did the organization and/or supervisor work with you regularly? Were they available to answer questions when necessary?
5. Briefly note new skills, techniques and knowledge gained in this position.
6. Discuss the weak points of your internship experience and ways they may be improved.
7. Discuss the strong points of your internship experience.
8. Was there anything that was not covered that should have been covered in the internship program?
9. Do you think your academic program adequately prepared you for this internship?
10. If you had any aspect of your internship to do over, what changes would you make?
11. Would you recommend this internship to other students?

Note any comments about your particular job not covered above.

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Sample Form Employer Evaluation of Student Intern

Student: _____ Date: _____
Dates of Internship: _____

1. How well was the intern prepared for this internship?
2. Can you suggest instructional areas which would benefit this intern?
3. Please provide examples in which the intern applied good judgment and had a technical competence for the assigned tasks.
4. How would you rate the intern's sense of responsibility toward his or her assignments?
5. Please provide some examples in which the intern worked quickly, thoroughly and efficiently.
6. What are the intern's strengths and weaknesses when interacting with others?
7. What are the intern's strengths and weaknesses when it comes to leadership?
8. Discuss areas where the intern has made significant improvement.
9. What are the intern's strengths and weaknesses in oral and written communication?
10. Would you recommend this intern for future employment? Why or why not?

Are there other areas involving the internship program or the intern that you wish to comment on?

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Sample Exit Interview

Schedule in advance to give the student opportunity to prepare thoughts and questions. Avoid scheduling on the student's last day on the job so that there is time to take care of any action items that come up.

Exit Interview Steps

1. Explain the purpose of the exit interview
2. Encourage the student to be as candid as possible
3. Explain that you will be taking notes
4. Begin with less sensitive questions to put the student at ease
5. Gradually move into areas of greater sensitivity
6. Ask the student if he/she has any remaining questions or suggestions for improving the internship program
7. Conclude by thanking the student for his/her time and honesty

Exit Interview Summary

Name:

Date:

Department:

Supervisor:

Company property returned:

Keys

Badge

Other

1. How similar was your actual assignment to your expectations?
2. How would you rate (company name) as a place to work?
3. How well did your experience provide information about your chosen field?
4. What was the best part of your intern experience?
5. What was the worst part of your intern experience?
6. Would you recommend (company name) to other students for an internship assignment? Why or why not?
7. What suggestions do you have for improving the internship program?

Include any other comments you would like to write down