

Internships

What is it?

Often, internships are thought of simply as summer jobs offering some work experience. However, a high school student can contribute to and learn from an employer, during an internship, in more meaningful ways. Because a high school student may not have the same level of maturity or experience as a college student, it may be more difficult for a business to hire that student for a short term, full-time job experience. In contrast, high school student internships can offer participating students a venue for gaining maturity, discipline and real world job experience as they work part time, one on one with an employer, during the school year or even work in groups on specific projects related to the employer's business for an appropriate span of time. Student interns will gain valuable insights about possible career options and will gain work experience and on-the-job maturity. This can make them more marketable for paid employment later in their high school or college years.

Checklist for Success

_____ Employers should set specific goals for the internship program, including a plan outlining the details of the program.

_____ Employers should determine the basic skills sets required of students.

_____ Implement a system for managing the intern(s) to ensure that time is well spent.

_____ Measure the success of the internship to improve the experience for future interns.

Additional Resources:

- **Regional Internship Center**
 - www.ric-swpa.org
- **Sir Francis Drake High School- Employer Guide to Internships**
 - <http://drake.marin.k12.ca.us/academics/pbl/acadx/workplace/empguide.pdf>

Internships, cont.

Tips to a Successful Internship⁹

Appoint an Internship Coordinator

Choose someone within your company who you believe will have the time and leadership skills to implement the steps described on the following pages. Having an internship coordinator at your company will make it easier for interns and staff to know who to talk to regarding the intern's time at the company. It will also allow for more consistency as interns leave and new ones come on board.

Identify your company's internal needs

In what ways can your company use extra help?

Some helpful questions include:

- What day-to-day or ongoing tasks take place in my company?
- What is the present workload of my staff?

Appoint a mentor

Each intern should be appointed a mentor as a guide and supervisor. Ideal mentors should have:

- Patience
- Interpersonal Skills
- Credibility
- Interest in being a role model for the intern
- Interest in helping the intern grow professionally

Mentors should be able to:

- Work with the intern to develop objectives
- Offer feedback to the intern
- Comment on the intern's performance
- Help the intern to network
- Communicate the intern's learning role to all other employees and encourage interaction among staff and the intern
- Expose intern to all relevant aspects of the organization

Develop clear, daily tasks for the intern, as well as back-up tasks.

Develop a well defined project for the intern, as well as back-up tasks. Always have a project for the intern and have back up tasks ready upon completion of the project or during down time. Can help you develop specific projects and provide sample daily tasks for your intern.

⁹ Resource developed by the Regional Internship Center (www.ric-swpa.org)

Business and School District Partnership Building Survey

Name of Business and Address:	Contact Name:	Phone Number:				E-Mail Address		
	Classroom Speakers	Workplace Tours	Job Shadowing	Career Mentoring	Work Readiness Training	Educators in the Workplace	Graduation Project Advisors	Internships
Long Term Goal	1. 2.							
Short Term Goal	1. 2.							
Site for Activity (Business or School District Site)								
Grade Levels of Interest (8,9,10,11,12)								
Maximum Number of Students								
Month of Activity								
Length of Activity (1 Day, 1 Week, 1 Month, Summer intern)								

Dear Colleague,

I have just attended the E4 workshop for employers. The morning meeting focused on building partnerships with local school districts in our region to prepare our youth for future employment opportunities.

Our business has made a formal commitment to support the workforce preparation efforts of the schools. We have the opportunity to partner in several ways. Activities include the following which may take place at the school or here at our facility. Below is a list of possible activities you may wish to consider participating in:

- Classroom Speakers
- Workplace Tours
- Job Shadowing
- Career Mentoring
- Work Readiness Training
- Educators in the Workplace
- Graduation Project Advisors
- Internships

Please indicate which activity/activities are of interest and return this sheet/ or email by (date). I will contact you with additional information.

Thank You,
(Name)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Activity of Interest: _____

E-Mail Address: _____