

Internships Made Easy

Get Started Edition



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Introduction

There are numerous benefits to beginning an internship program: It enables employers to find future employees; test-drive talent; increase productivity and employee retention rate; and revitalize an organization with fresh perspectives and specialized skill sets.

Furthermore, internship programs are not just for large companies and mega corporations. Small- and medium-sized businesses can benefit as much, if not more, from the up-to-date knowledge, boundless motivation, and extra sets of hands...whether it's one intern or a team of 10. In our survey of businesses, we actually found that small businesses used interns as frequently as large corporations.

Here are 8 great “quick” benefits of starting an internship program:

- Find future employees
- Test-drive the talent
- Increase productivity
- Increase employee-retention rate
- Enhance perspective
- Give back to the community
- Support Students
- Benefit your small business

About This Program

Internships Made Easy is a unique resource, because it is a ready-made program that represents Internships.com's own internship blueprint.

Now that you have made the decision to start an internship program, you can easily put that action plan into place following a few simple steps.

Feel free to use your own internal company policies and forms, or, if you need some inspiration – you can find a host of professional forms and sample resources in the appendix at your disposal! Edit these forms as you desire and you are on your way.

The result is a timesaving, turnkey solution that frees you from the stress of worrying about *what* to include or *how* to assemble the components.

With that said, let's get started! Continue on to put your internship program into place—section by section, step by step...

Section 1: Identifying Organizational Goals & Project Needs

Steps:

1. List organizational goals

[Complementary Resource: Appendix A, form 1]

2. Create a list of potential responsibilities and projects

Pick tasks and projects that are beneficial to your business, but also provide challenging educational experiences for students.

It can be very rewarding to recruit an intern with a particular major into a matching department and see that intern succeed in their projects. For example, a marketing intern in the marketing department completing excellent marketing projects.

[Complementary Resource: Appendix A, forms 2 and 3]

3. List possible learning exercises

Learning exercises involve taking along an intern to observe a meeting or participate in a networking opportunity, teaching an intern a new skill, or providing training in how to complete a project.

Examples of formal learning exercises include:

- ✓ Inviting an intern to observe an internal meeting, client meeting, or sales call
- ✓ Teaching an intern how to prepare a budget, report, or plan
- ✓ Training an intern in how to use a piece of equipment or software
- ✓ Helping an intern use their PowerPoint skills to create a company presentation
- ✓ Role-playing with an intern how to make client follow-up calls or close a sale

[Complementary Resource: Appendix A, form 4]

Section 2: Creating the Intern Manual

The Intern Manual is a helpful resource for your internship program. And this section will take you step by step through creating this resource. Use existing company forms and knowledge or take advantage of internships.com's ready made templates and be up and running in no time!

Steps:

1. Include a Company Profile sheet

Studies have shown that interns who are familiarized early on with their host organizations are more productive sooner than those who are not as well orientated.

Pull information from sources already likely in existence – a sales brochure, the company website, company profile, etc. and you are on your way.

[Complementary Resource: Appendix B, form 1]

2. Include a Position Profile / Intern Job description sheet

Similar to a job description, the position profile sheet will have an overview of the intern's roles and responsibilities.

[Complementary Resource: Appendix B, form 2]

3. Include Company Policies

Share your standard company policies. Include any intern specific policies you may have.

5. Discuss Intern Etiquette

Your interns may be new to the workforce or your business, and it may benefit both parties to informally (verbal) or formally (written) communicate company etiquette.

A good way to brainstorm what should be included in your company's etiquette briefing is to ask yourself the following: What do I wish someone had told *me* on my first day of work?

7. Create an Intern Timesheet form

If you do not already have a timekeeping system in place for hourly employees, use (or customize) the Appendix C template and include as part of your Intern Manual.

[Complementary Resource: Appendix B, form 7]

Section 3: Pre-arrival Preparation

Preparation *prior* to the arrival of interns is a great way to get your program off to a smooth start. Not only does it enable your staff to feel organized and in control, it makes interns feel welcome and appreciated. You probably already do this for your new hires.

Steps:

1. Send a Welcome Packet confirming start date and communicating key first-day information

This packet may include:

- a. A copy of your Internship Agreement (and any other HR documents interns need to sign ahead of time)
- b. A Welcome Letter containing any information necessary for the first day at work, etc.

You can use the sample Welcome Letter and Internship Agreement in Appendix B as templates.

[Complementary Resource: Appendix A, form 6 (sample Welcome Letter)]

2. Touch base with intern coordinator and supervisors

3. Alert employees

Send a company-wide email alerting employees to the arrival of interns. You could provide a brief, generic biography about the interns – their school and/or major.

Ask employees to make interns feel welcome by initiating introductions and answering questions when possible.

Section 4: Onboarding & Orientation

You've interviewed, hired, prepped and planned...and now your interns have arrived at the office. You probably already do this for your new hires, but here are the steps.

Steps:

- 1. Greet interns**
- 2. Tour facility and make introductions to managers and colleagues**
- 3. Turn in Internship Agreement and other employment paperwork**
- 4. Conduct intern orientation meeting**
- 5. Distribute badges, key cards, or other necessary entry items**
- 6. Instruct how to use office equipment**
- 7. Hand out additional materials**
- 8. Have interns sign, date, and turn in the Acknowledgement of Receipt of Intern Manual form**

Section 5: Formal and Informal Intern Evaluations

Your interns have been hard at work on your organization's projects (that you identified in section 1) throughout their internship and now you are ready to evaluate them. Effectively evaluating interns is a great way to insure a successful program.

Steps:

Formal

1. Fill out an Intern Competency Evaluation form

[Complementary Resource: Appendix A, form 7]

2. Conduct a one-on-one intern evaluation meeting

[Complementary Resource: Appendix A, form 9]

3. Fulfill any academic evaluation requirements

Generally academic credit is between students and their schools, and interns should let supervisors know what is required. Each academic institution is different, but more often than not it is the responsibility of the intern to present the employer with the necessary steps to fulfill the academic credit requirements and fill out the necessary forms for the institution.

Informal

1. Have informal weekly check-ins

While interns can, of course, ask questions in between check-ins, supervisors should urge them to keep a list of non-urgent issues that don't directly affect project progress. This way, interns can address these on a weekly basis.

[Complementary Resource: Appendix A, form 10]

Section 6: Offboarding

As you approach the close of the semester or cycle, it's tempting to look forward. But it's also important to look backwards and analyze the more valuable benefits of the program you've worked to implement.

Engaging in a formal offboarding process benefits the intern and your company in numerous ways:

- ✓ Provides interns with a sense of accomplishment
- ✓ Facilitates interns' professional growth and development
- ✓ Helps interns hone in on personal strengths and natural aptitude
- ✓ Aids your organization in making improvements to your internship program
 - Interns feeling valued fuels positive word of mouth. When interns believe their learning goals are important to your company, they want to give back.
 - Interns may tell their peers about the opportunities at your organization. This drives positive public opinion and perception of your company.

Steps:

1. Conduct a final formal evaluation of interns

Repeat the steps in Section 5 for conducting a formal evaluation.

[Complementary Resource: Appendix A, forms 7 and 8]

2. Fulfill any final academic evaluation requirements

3. Consider having interns fill out evaluations of program and supervisors

4. Conduct intern exit interviews

[Complementary Resource: Appendix A, form 12]

5. Consider a letter of recommendation

If a certain intern (or interns) has done an outstanding job, consider writing a letter of recommendation.

Section 7: Internal Evaluation of Employer Goals

Now that your interns have departed, it's time to reflect, analyze, and improve.

Steps:

1. Analyze feedback from intern evaluations

2. Evaluate progress in accomplishing goals

3. Brainstorm solutions and enhancements

[Complementary Resource: Appendix A, form 13]

4. Revise forms to reflect program improvements

5. Consider offering permanent or part-time employment to your former interns or brainstorm follow-up possibilities

6. Begin recruitment and outreach for next internship cycle!

Now that you've figured it all out, your program is in place, and the next time you host an intern – you'll be an expert!

For additional information on how to most effectively set up, recruit, and run an internship—including expert tips, shortcuts, Q&A, and strategies on how to avoid common pitfalls—visit Internships.com's Employer Resource section at <http://internships.com/employer/resources>.

Appendix A: Employer Manual Forms

Instructions: Customize the forms on your computer by adding to and/or replacing the sample information. Print then bind together with the appropriate section of the manual to form the Employer Manual.

Employer Manual, form 1

Organizational Goals

The following is a list of potential organizational objectives for starting an internship program:

Finding talented future employees

Increasing employee retention rate

Accomplishing clerical work

Completing projects (such as creating a social media platform or keeping your website current)

Facilitating fresh solutions to ongoing issues

Infusing the company with new ideas and current knowledge

Improving public perception of the organization

Enhancing company/product recognition among the public or potential interns

Contributing to the community

Additional goals:

Selecting from the above, we have identified the following top three goals:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Employer Manual, form 2

Potential Intern Projects

The following is a list of potential intern projects:

- Researching the viability of a new program or campaign
- Compiling and presenting statistics
- Evaluating potential social media platforms
- Proposing a social media strategy
- Building a company sales database
- Cleaning up an existing database
- Critiquing the company's website from a user perspective
- Brainstorming ideas for boosting site usability
- Evaluating some area of IT functionality
- Generating cost-cutting ideas
- Preparing budgets, reports, plans, or proposals
- Creating materials (marketing, collateral, etc.)
- Sourcing lower-cost supplies
- Developing process directions for tasks with high employee turnover
- Competitive analysis / product comparisons

Additional projects:

Employer Manual, form 4

Potential Intern Learning Exercises

The following is a list of potential intern learning exercises:

Inviting an intern to observe an internal meeting, client meeting, or sales call

Teaching an intern how to prepare a budget, report, or plan

Training an intern in how to use a piece of equipment or software

Helping an intern use their PowerPoint skills to create a company presentation

Role-playing with an intern how to make client follow-up calls or close a sale

Additional learning exercises:

Employer Manual, form 6

Sample Welcome Letter

<INTERN COORDINATOR NAME>
<TITLE>
<COMPANY NAME>
<ADDRESS AND SUITE>
<CITY, STATE ZIP>

Dear <INTERN NAME>:

Welcome aboard! On <DATE> you will be beginning <COMPANY'S> internship program.

The main purpose of this letter is to confirm the details of your internship position. The second objective is to give you an idea of what to expect as you begin your training, as well as make sure that you arrive feeling prepared for your first day.

Position Confirmation

To confirm, the details of your internship placement are as follows:

Position title: <DEPARTMENT NAME> Intern

Start date: <DAY, DATE, YEAR>

End date: <DAY, DATE, YEAR>

Compensation and benefit plan: <PAY RATE PER HOUR OR "NONPAID POSITION" AS WELL AS ANY ADDITIONAL BENEFITS SUCH AS PAID PARKING, 5 LUNCHES PER WEEK, ETC.>

Location: <ADDRESS AND SUITE NUMBER>

Parking: <PARKEING DETAILS: WHERE TO PARK AND WHETHER PARKING IS PAID>

Weekly hours: 9:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday through Friday

Supervisor: Jane Smith, Director of Marketing

Supervisor contact information: <SUPERVISOR PHONE AND EMAIL>. Feel free to contact your supervisor prior to your start date if you have any questions or concerns.

What to Bring on Your First Day

When reporting to work on your first day, make sure to bring with you the following items:

- The signed Internship Agreement included in this packet (HR will make a copy for you to keep)
- Any other signed employment forms included in this packet
- A photo I.D.
- Your Social Security card
- Proof of your U.S. citizenship (this can be an original birth certificate, original Certificate of Citizenship or Naturalization, or a U.S.-issued passport)
- A voided check from your bank for direct deposit purposes (if applicable)

Dress code: Many interns wonder what is appropriate to wear. At <COMPANY NAME>, our dress code is <BUSINESS CASUAL, CORPORATE, ETC.>. This means employees should/should not wear <INSERT EXAMPLE OF APPROPRIATE DRESS>.

In essence, your first day is a time for you to get comfortable and become orientated with the company. With that said, we are happy to have you as part of our team, and we look forward to working together.

Sincerely,

<SIGNATURE>

<PRINTED NAME AND TITLE>

Employer Manual, form 7

Intern Competency Evaluation

How to Use This Form:

- Assess the level at which the intern performed each competency.
 - Write in the appropriate assessment in the blank to the right of each category.
 - Calibrate the determine Overall Competency Assessment
-

1. Work Quality—Plans ahead to complete work thoroughly and accurately, understands requirements, sees assignments through to completion, and meets all deadlines and expectations. Displays positive attitude. _____

2. Productivity—Produces a reasonable amount of work in the time allotted. Completes activities in an organized, timely, and efficient manner. _____

3. Self-Development—Presents a professional image and reaches out to co-workers. Seeks training, instructions, and feedback. Takes initiative and ownership of own development. Is inquisitive and seeks answers. _____

4. Effort/Initiative—Seeks out new assignments and duties; wants to learn more about the job and business. Builds credibility by helping others and pitching in where needed. Suggests and implements solutions. _____

5. Effective Communication—Effectively gives and receives information, ideas, and opinions verbally and in writing. Keeps supervisor and co-workers updated on progress. Uses common courtesies and reaches out to help others. _____

6. Customer Focus—Demonstrates appropriate attention to customer needs when making decisions and taking action. Is responsive and courteous with customers. Listens and empathizes with customer concerns. Researches concerns to find solutions. _____

7. Job Knowledge—Understands job duties and responsibilities. Seeks instructions and advice from key colleagues. Sets goals and is organized. Wants to learn new things and asks questions to clarify information. _____

Employer Manual, form 7 cont.

8. Teamwork/Cooperation—Willingness and ability to work and cooperate with others. Solicits the advice and opinions of others and is open-minded. Seeks to collaborate with the team on solutions. _____

9. Problem Solving—Resolves problems effectively by considering appropriate options before making a decision. Looks for and considers alternative solutions. Open to new ideas and proactive in finding ways to avoid problems. _____

10. Modeling Company Values—Shows an approach towards people and work that is consistent with overall values of the business. Professional in appearance and demeanor. _____

Overall Competency Assessment: _____

Employer Manual, form 9

Intern Competency Evaluation: Meeting Checklist

Four steps to an effective evaluation meeting:

(Check the blank to the right of each step when executed)

1. Walk the intern through the evaluation sheet. Explain each score and why it was issued.
(Make sure to emphasize both positive and negative performance results.) _____
2. Encourage the intern to ask questions and take notes on their copy of the evaluation. This gives them a written record to look back on later. _____
3. For any areas marked as needing improvement, discuss how progress can be made. Provide explicit suggestions and make sure the intern is clear as to what they are doing that is less than expected and what actions are needed to progress. _____
4. At the end of the meeting, have the intern summarize the areas needing improvement as well as their strengths. _____

Employer Manual, form 10

Informal Weekly Check-in: Meeting Checklist

Seven steps to an effective check-in conversation:

(Check the blank to the right of each step when executed)

1. Solicit and answer intern questions. _____
2. Ask intern to identify any issues or sticking points; then provide guidance and possible solutions. _____
3. Ask intern for status reports on open projects. _____
4. Have intern provide follow-up reports on completed projects: What did they learn? What did they enjoy? What were they challenged by? _____
5. Praise intern accomplishments or areas of above-average performance. _____
6. Address any subpar performance and giving specific suggestions for improvement. _____
7. If possible, give intern a sense of upcoming projects or workload. _____

Employer Manual, form 12

Intern Exit Interview

1. Overall, how would you rate your experience at <COMPANY NAME> on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being “completely useless” and 10 being “a valuable and comprehensive learning experience that exceeded my expectations”? _____

2. How would you rate your supervisor on a scale of 1-10 in relation to the following dimensions?

- Degree of industry knowledge _____
- Willingness to train and share knowledge _____
- Organization (i.e. remembering and being on time for meetings and evaluations) _____
- Ability to clearly communicate directions and suggestions for improvement _____
- Commitment to internship program _____
- Made him/herself available to offer guidance _____
- Ability to offer meaningful feedback and constructive criticism _____
- If given a choice, would you choose this supervisor again YES NO MAYBE

3. What was the most valuable aspect of your internship?

4. What was the least valuable aspect of your internship?

5. What was the most challenging aspect of your internship?

6. In what area, or areas, do you think <COMPANY NAME> could improve its internship program? What is/are your suggestion(s) for making these improvements?

7. What, if anything, do you wish you had learned (or been exposed to) during your internship that you did not or were not?

8. If you could go back in time, knowing what you know now, would you participate in an internship with <COMPANY NAME>?

9. Were there any specific individuals who either significantly added to, or detracted from, your experience? If so, who and why? (Remember, your name will be kept anonymous.)

Employer Manual, form 13

Solutions Brainstorm List

Problem or issue: _____

Agreed upon solution, change, or implementation: _____

The person leading this change is: _____

Problem or issue: _____

Agreed upon solution, change, or implementation: _____

The person leading this change is: _____

Problem or issue: _____

Agreed upon solution, change, or implementation: _____

The person leading this change is: _____

Problem or issue: _____

Agreed upon solution, change, or implementation: _____

The person leading this change is: _____

Appendix B: Intern Manual Forms

Instructions: As a supplementary resource, you may customize these forms by adding to and/or replacing the sample information. These will contribute to the creation of an Intern Manual.

Intern Manual, form 1

Company Profile

Let's learn a little more about <COMPANY NAME>.

The following pages will help you familiarize yourself with your new employer. In order to feel a part of our team and make significant contributions, it is important you understand more about who we are, where we came from, and where we're headed.

This Company Profile will include the following:

- I. Organizational overview**
- II. Historical information**
- III. Company mission statement**
- IV. Primary product or service and positioning**
- V. Biographical consumer information**
- VI. Visual representation of business structure**
- VII. Company organizational chart**
- VIII. Information on other offices or branches**
- IX. Information on retail locations**
- X. Public perception**
- XI. Recent news**

Intern Manual, form 2

Position Profile

Position title/department: _____

Supervisor name: _____ **Supervisor title:** _____

Intern start date: _____ **End date:** _____

Compensation (if applicable): _____

Additional perks/benefits (if applicable): _____

Requirements: _____

Is academic credit being received? (circle one) Yes No

If so, name of school: _____ **Name of faculty sponsor:** _____

Faculty sponsor phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Required number of hours per week: _____

Days/times (if set): _____

General scope of responsibility: _____

Other position-specific information: _____

Intern Manual, form 7

Intern Timesheet

Intern name: _____ Supervisor: _____

Week ending (Sunday): Month: _____ Day: _____ Year: _____

Daily time log

*Log hours to nearest quarter hour (Ex: 7.25, 6.75, 0.5, etc.)

Mon.: Time in: _____ Time out: _____ Lunch in: _____ Lunch out: _____ Daily total hours: _____

Tue. Time in: _____ Time out: _____ Lunch in: _____ Lunch out: _____ Daily total hours: _____

Wed.: Time in: _____ Time out: _____ Lunch in: _____ Lunch out: _____ Daily total hours: _____

Thurs.: Time in: _____ Time out: _____ Lunch in: _____ Lunch out: _____ Daily total hours: _____

Fri.: Time in: _____ Time out: _____ Lunch in: _____ Lunch out: _____ Daily total hours: _____

Sat.: Time in: _____ Time out: _____ Lunch in: _____ Lunch out: _____ Daily total hours: _____

Sun.: Time in: _____ Time out: _____ Lunch in: _____ Lunch out: _____ Daily total hours: _____

Total weekly hours

*Log each separately

Total weekly regular hours: _____

+

Total weekly overtime hours: _____

+

Total weekly double-time hours: _____

Intern signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor signature: _____ Date: _____