

How to Create a Youth-Friendly Workplace

# An Employers Guide to Building a Quality Internship





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# Executive Summary

## About This Guide

SETA – Sacramento Works for Youth is offering this guide to help employers understand the basic principles of youth development. As you read the guide’s content, think about how your work environment currently, or potentially, engages young people as resources. We understand that each organization has unique capacities and challenges to consider when developing internship experiences. Take time to identify what is most easily adaptable to your work setting and begin incorporating youth development principles where you can.

## How to Use this Guide

This guide is divided into twelve sections. The first six sections provide general information about internships, youth development principles, working with teenagers, and workplace mentoring. Sections seven and eight explain how to design and structure elements for a high quality internship experience. Sections nine through eleven discuss managing interns and things to consider when the internship is finished. The “Tips and Tools” section provide resources to help you implement a successful program.

## SECTION 1

### The Business Case for an Internship Program

Given the proper resources and support, young people can be powerful allies to companies seeking new ways of thinking and doing business.

If your business is not directly involved with youth issues, or young people, you may at first be hesitant to include youth in your work. Although young people lack certain work and life experiences, they have valuable skills and insights that adults do not have. A well-designed internship program can benefit your company and help a young person develop the 21st century skills they need for work and life.

#### EMPLOYER

##### Internships offer Opportunities for Employers to:

- Expand Capacity and complete special projects
- Tap into new ideas, innovation and enthusiasm
- Generate good public relations
- Pre-Screen potential employees
- Diversify your workforce
- Provide an intern with a positive mentoring experience

#### INTERN

##### Internships offer Opportunities for Youth to:

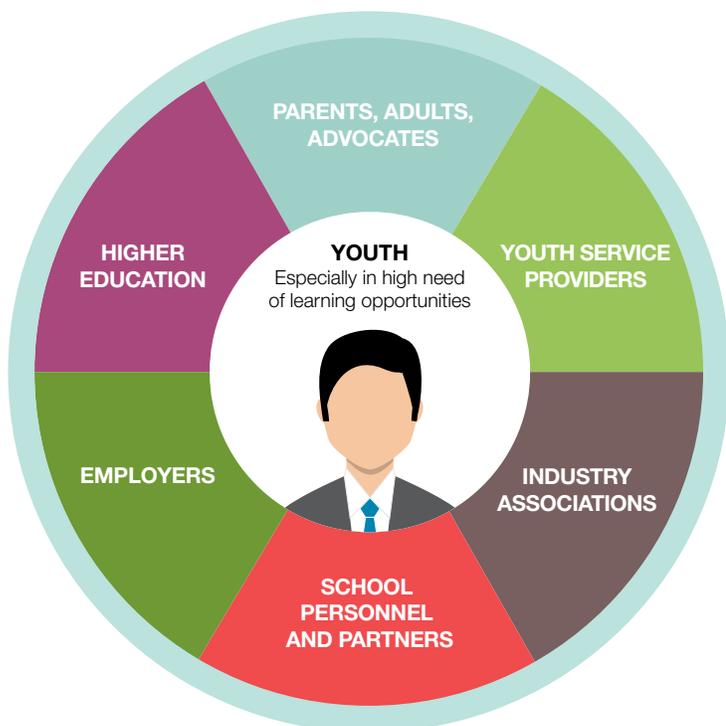
- Learn 21st century workplace skills
- Learn about the demands of the workplace
- Identify potential career options
- Learn how to build relationships with professional adults
- Experience new things
- Gain technical skills
- Get inspired

## What is an Internship?

An internship is a period of practical training carried out by a student within a company or organization.

An internship can be offered by any type of organization or company and come from any industry or economic sector. An internship can provide many benefits to your organization. Several of these benefits include:

- Top quality work product from any intern you hire.
- An early start on the training of possible future employees.
- New technology and innovative ideas that students bring from the classroom into your organization.
- Diversity within your organization's workforce a chance to tell students what your organization is all about.
- Exposure for your company as peers network.



*This diagram shows the core partners needed to implement successful internship experiences.*

**“Successful high school internships occur when key partners are working together to maximize outcomes for all involved.”**

### The Internship

Internships are flexible, and you should develop your internship around the needs of your organization. For example, you may want to consider:

- Roles within your organization when you employees are frequently in demand.
- Skills required for various roles within your organization.
- Unique features about your organization or industry.

This handbook provides you with step-by-step instructions for starting your internship, including planning, implementation, and evaluation. Additionally, you will find answers to frequently asked questions.

Internships or a win-win situation for both employees and students. It is our hope that with your experience and vision, the motivation of your intern, and this handbook as your guide, this internship will be an enjoyable and highly productive experience.

Internships may be coordinated in partnership with an employment agency, industry associations, or educational programs. These experiences can be paid or unpaid, reflect a wide range of hours per week, and may last from one week to one year. The way an internship is structured really depends upon partnership agreements, program goals and existing capacities to support youth interns.

## SECTION 3

### How an Internship Differs from a Job

In a typical entry-level job, an employee receives training to perform the tasks necessary for the position, and then the employee is expected to carry out the duties as assigned, preferably with little supervision.

In an internship, however, the intern and supervisor work together to establish “intentional learning goals” that support the intern’s development and career interests. This means that an intern will often have more questions than a typical employee before, during, and after the internship.

The supervisor typically plays the role of mentor and coach whose goal is to develop the career interest of the youth. With a SETA – Sacramento Works for Youth intern, a case manager is available to work in partnership with the employer to support the youth in being successful.

Whether a company develops computer systems or provides catering services, it is essential that the intern learns how work relates to his or her life and interests, and to the work of others. Internships can also teach valuable lessons about how different careers affect the community, the economy, and the environment.

## SECTION 4

### Youth Development Principles

Employers can play a critical role in helping a youth develop skills and create relationships he or she may not experience at school or at home. A well designed internship can have an incredibly positive impact on a young person’s life.

More than 50 years of youth development research has identified the “building blocks” or conditions—called “supports and opportunities”—that contribute to youth being able to develop into self-sufficient, caring, and contributing adults. These Youth Development Supports and Opportunities are:

#### Emotional and Physical Safety

Meeting youths’ basic needs as well as building trust and respect;

#### Caring Relationships

Formed with at least one adult in each youth’s life, the existence of positive relationships with peers;

#### Youth Participation

Includes opportunities for youth to have a voice, multiple choices, leadership, and a role.

#### Community Involvement

Opportunities for the youth to connect and impact their community in positive ways;

#### Engaging Skill Building

Activities to strengthen interests and build new capacities.

The following overview provides some ideas to help you implement youth development practices in the workplace. You can also use **Tips and Tools #1: Indicators of Youth Development Features in the Internship Setting**, to assess and evaluate your progress over time.

#### Emotional and Physical Safety

Young people are often unaware of proper workplace behaviors, boundaries, and expectations that are not made explicit. When introducing young people to the workplace, it is vital to set a warm tone while clearly defining roles, setting expectations, and establishing boundaries. A brief orientation can set the conditions for a safe and positive experience for the intern.

#### QUICK TIPS

- Orient the intern to the workplace and introduce him or her to coworkers.
- Have employees address the intern by name.
- Provide reliable equipment and demonstrate how to use it safely.
- Know and uphold child safety laws and sexual/racial harassment policies.
- Identify space for the intern to work that is his or her own.
- Explain to the intern your expectations about breaks, lunch, appropriate behavior, etc.

## Relationship Building

As an employer working with an intern, you have a great opportunity to model appropriate boundaries and respectful communication, as well as demonstrate a sense of enjoyment for work. The intern will take cues from you and others in the workplace as to what is, or is not, acceptable.

Internships are most successful when employers leverage their unique expertise with workplace guidance that supports young peoples' development. Building a positive working relationship with the intern will increase productivity from the start. The intern should have at least one caring adult, the supervisor/ workplace mentor, who meets with him or her on a regular basis to address questions and concerns. Also remember to work with agency partners, such as the intern's case manager. These people can provide valuable support and guidance to you and the intern.

### QUICK TIPS

- Model respectful communication and appropriate boundaries at all times.
- Create opportunities for the intern to observe/learn professional behavior.
- Be sensitive to the individual realities of interns including youth of color; youth with disabilities; those who speak English as a second language; LGBTQ youth and teen parents.

## Youth Participation and Voice

Take time to listen to the intern. Ask questions about his or her interests, and set expectations for the internship together. Share something about yourself, like how you got into your career, or previous jobs that you have held. Identify projects that might fit well with the intern's interests. Young people thrive when they get a sense of the "big picture" and have input about their work. They really like to be productive, not simply to observe the workplace or do menial tasks.

### QUICK TIPS

- Learn about the intern's interests and expectations for the internship.
- Develop a work plan with the intern to guide the experience.
- List tasks that will be expected and define what skills the intern will learn from those tasks.
- Get regular feedback from the intern about his or her internship experience.

## Skill-Building

Discuss how 21st century skills are relevant to your profession. These skills include: problem solving; self-direction; oral and written communication; teamwork and diversity; research and technology; creativity; leadership; work ethics and social responsibility. Then, select tasks that allow the intern to develop some of these skills. Use a stair-step approach to guide the intern into increasingly more difficult tasks and responsibilities. Ask him or her to complete the 21st Century Skills Intern Self-Assessment (Tips and Tools #2) at the beginning and end of the internship to help reflect upon areas of growth.

### QUICK TIPS

- Discuss 21st century skills important to your career field.
- Design assignments incrementally to build skills, interests, and confidence.
- Provide a variety of activities and scaffold them so the intern can take on more challenging tasks as the internship progresses.
- Incorporate self-assessment and constructive feedback on a regular basis.
- If the intern's performance diminishes over time check-in to see if the intern is bored or not sure how to do the work.

## Community Involvement

Your company could be the source of inspiration that ignites a young person's passion and lifelong involvement in civic activities. Consider how your organization contributes economically and socially to the local and global communities. Allow the intern to learn about what your company values through committee work, discussions with staff, and if available, company sponsored community service projects.

### QUICK TIPS

- Provide brochures and other materials that explain your company's values.
- Discuss how your company contributes economically and socially to the local and global communities.
- Involve the intern in an employer-driven community service project.

## SECTION 5

### Working with Teens

It's fair to say that you may need to take some extra time to learn about the teen(s) with whom you will be working. Youth want to be appreciated and respected as individuals, first. It also helps to know a little about their background and culture, as well as what you can expect from teenagers developmentally.

Since the “judgment center” of an adolescent brain is still forming, setting good workplace boundaries is essential to preventing misunderstandings.

The following chart offers some workplace strategies to help you work successfully with youth:

Adolescent Characteristic	Workplace Strategy
<b>Interested in sense of independence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the intern accountable for his or her work.</li> </ul>
<b>Up-front about what he or she wants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve the intern in project development.</li> <li>• Ask the intern about his or her interests.</li> </ul>
<b>Appreciates fairness and truth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be frank, honest, and nonjudgmental.</li> </ul>
<b>Wants to do well but does not know how</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be friendly and clear.</li> <li>• Discuss project activities, and/or company expectations (e.g., objectives, agendas, dress code).</li> </ul>
<b>Prefers involvement in multiple activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve the intern in a variety of tasks.</li> </ul>
<b>Underdeveloped time management skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assign due dates; review timelines.</li> <li>• Model and explain time management skills.</li> <li>• Have the intern keep a project journal or time sheets.</li> </ul>
<b>Lacks self-direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check in with the intern to ensure he or she is clear on what is expected. Help set goals; the case manager may be able to help.</li> </ul>
<b>Knows everything; influenced by peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elicit and respect the intern's ideas.</li> <li>• Provide alternative suggestions and share reasoning.</li> </ul>
<b>Learns in short intervals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give new information in small steps.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for the intern to practice and reinforce what he or she is learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Has already had jobs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore skills the intern already has and look for ways to enhance and build on them.</li> </ul>

Matrix adapted from *Northwest National Leadership Training: Successful Strategies for Employers* by the Mid-Willamette Education Consortium.

### Handling Difficult Situations

Since the young people with whom you will be working don't have a great deal of life experience, some of them may need extra coaching about appropriate workplace behaviors. For instance, what if an intern curses, deals poorly with conflict, or is disrespectful to fellow employees? Or maybe he/she dresses inappropriately, or smokes on the premises? If an intern displays any of these behaviors, of course you must intervene.

Interventions are a great way to not only explain to the youth what is inappropriate about the behavior, but to also help him/her develop new, productive life skills. First ask yourself, “has the intern been given clear expectations and workplace rules about this behavior?” If so, take the intern aside and respectfully explain your concerns. Review company policies and their importance. Discuss that what is appropriate with friends or family may not be at the work setting, and vice versa. Explain that sometimes differences between settings are insignificant; other times, they may cause serious misunderstandings.

Assess whether the inappropriate behavior is “situational.” Was the intern aware of the expectations of the workplace? Consider the intern’s interpretation of the situation. Ask the intern what prompted the behavior, and discuss and agree upon alternatives. Let the intern know that you will be monitoring the behavior and discuss what actions will take place if further interventions are necessary. Take time to document any concerns you have and share these with the intern’s program manager or mentor. And remember to give positive feedback and encouragement as the intern uses the new workplace behaviors.

## Selecting the Right Youth Intern for Your Business

Selecting an intern will depend upon agreements that you make with partnering agencies. It is important to discuss how interns will be screened and selected with your partners. Determine what you need from an intern, as well as how you can accommodate the intern’s needs. Interviewing interns referred to your organization increases the likelihood of a successful match and allows you time to determine what employee may be an appropriate supervisor/workplace mentor for the intern.



READ MORE ON PAGE 22

### TIPS AND TOOLS #3

Supervisor/Workplace Mentor Strategies for Handling Different Situations

## SECTION 6

### Workplace Mentoring

Mentoring is usually a formal or informal relationship between two people—a senior mentor and a junior protégé.

Mentoring has been identified as an important influence in professional development in both the public and private sector. Successful mentoring programs require proper understanding, planning, implementation and evaluation.

While many models for mentoring exist, there are essentially two approaches.

**Instrumental:** The goal in this approach is to foster learning

**1** and competent workplace behaviors. Instrumental mentoring might include advising the intern about appropriate work attire, teaching phone etiquette, and helping the intern understand the demands of the workplace. Most programs with an instrumental focus identify workplace readiness or, more broadly, career development as the primary goal;

**Developmental:** Programs like Big Brothers Big Sisters of America that help build self-esteem and personal efficacy by pairing a young person with a caring adult fall into this latter category.

**2**

Flexibility is an essential quality for supervisor/ workplace mentors to model as they navigate the dual roles of mentoring and supervising. The challenge is to remain clearly and consistently “the boss” while fostering the mentoring aspects of the relationship. Supervisor/workplace mentors need all the usual skills necessary to effectively supervise.

### Why Organizations Implement Mentoring Programs

From increased morale to increased organizational productivity and career development, the benefits of an organization that actively supports mentoring are numerous. However, successful mentoring programs do not just happen

Organizations must first make a strong business case to demonstrate why the organization should devote the time, attention and resources required to make a formal mentoring process work. Reasons for establishing a mentoring program must be linked to the organization’s business goals.

- **Skills Enhancement** – mentoring enables experienced, highly competent staff to pass their expertise on to others who need to acquire specified skills;
- **Professional Identity** – when younger employees are early in their careers, they need help understanding what it means to be a professional in their working environment. Professionals embody the values of the profession and are self-initiating and self-regulating. Mentors play a key role in defining professional behavior for new employees.

- **Leadership and Management Development** – mentoring encourages the development of leadership competencies. These competencies are often more easily gained through example, guided practice or experience than by education and training;
- **Education Support** – mentoring helps bridge the gap between theory and practice. Formal education and training is complemented by the knowledge and hands-on experience of a competent practitioner;
- **Customer Service** – mentoring assists in modeling desired behaviors, encouraging the development of competencies in support of customer service, and above all, cultivating the right attitudes;
- **Knowledge Management/Knowledge Transfer** – mentoring provides for the interchange/exchange of information/knowledge between members of different organizations.

### Orientation of Supervisors/Mentors

Orientation and training provides an opportunity for the supervisor/workplace mentor to clarify roles and responsibilities for creating a safe and high quality experience for the intern. If multiple partners are working on developing the internship program, discuss what aspects of the training each can provide.

The orientation needs to cover required policies and procedures related to workplace safety; confidentiality; equity; and sexual harassment. Participants should receive tips for creating a “youth-friendly” workplace, how to work with teenagers from diverse cultural backgrounds, and characteristics of adolescent development. The training should also emphasize the importance of setting good boundaries and how to keep the intern on track using a work plan.

- **READ MORE ON PAGES 23 & 24**  
**TIPS AND TOOLS #5**  
 Supervisor/Workplace Strategies for Success  
**TIPS AND TOOLS #6**  
 Sample Agenda

### Types of Mentors

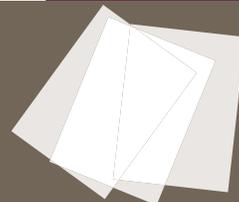
The remaining four types of mentors:

- **Career Guide** – promotes development through career guidance, counseling and visibility;
- **Information Source** – provides information about formal and informal expectations;
- **Friend** – interacts with the protégé socially and provides information about people; and
- **Intellectual Guide** – provides an equal relationship, collaborates on research projects and provide constructive feedback and criticism.

As a result of being a mentor, the person:

- Renews their enthusiasm for the role of expert;
- Obtains a greater understanding of the barriers experience at lower levels of the organization;
- Enhances skills in coaching, counseling, listening, and modeling;
- Develops and practices a more personal style of leadership;
- Demonstrates expertise and she has knowledge, and;
- Increases generational awareness.

- **READ MORE ON PAGE 23**  
**TIPS AND TOOLS #4**  
 Supervisor/Workplace Mentor  
 Qualities and Responsibilities



## Designing an Internship Program Plan

Carefully plan and write out your internship program and goals. The internship program and goals will be measured by your company's management team and others in your organization.

Structuring the internship ahead of time will provide you with tangible goals and objectives that will enable you to prove to your organization's decision-makers the importance and value of a well-developed internship program.

In creating your internship program plan, include specific ideas, proposals and logistical information. Construct your plan based on your organization's needs and resources. The questions that follow may assist you in formulating an internship program and plan.

- **Do you want someone for a specific project?**  
If so, what are the tasks and objectives of the project? What are the deadlines for completing the tasks and objectives?
- **What about general support around the workplace?**  
Does your company need an intern to perform administrative and support functions including data entry, answering telephones, filing, etc.? If so, approximately what percentage of the intern's time will be spent on these activities?
- **Do you want to give the intern a taste of everything your company does?** How will cross-training be structured into the intern's schedule? How much time will need to be devoted to each department/area? Have employees from each department been designated to mentor the intern on their particular department functions?
- **Will you pay the intern?** If so, how much? Wages vary widely from field to field, so be sure yours are competitive or offer competitive incentives.
- **Where will you put the intern?** Do you have adequate workspace for them? Will you help make parking arrangements, living arrangements, etc.?
- **What sort of academic background and experience do you want in an intern?** Decide on standards for quality beforehand — it'll help you narrow down the choices and find the best candidates.
- **Who will have the primary responsibility for the intern?**  
Will that person be a mentor or merely a supervisor? The assignment of a mentor who will work closely with the intern can be essential in creating a successful experience for the organization and the intern. Ideally, the mentor should be someone from the department where the intern is working and who is very familiar with the projects and tasks the intern is working on.
- This person doesn't have to be a teacher per se, but should be selected because he or she likes to teach or train and has the resources to do it. If the person you select has never mentored an intern before, providing basic supervision and mentoring guidelines and training may enhance the experience for both the mentor and the intern.
- **What will the intern be doing?** Be as specific as possible. Interns, like others in the process of learning, need structure so they don't become lost, confused or bored.
- **Do you want to plan a program beyond the work you give your interns?** Will there be special training programs, performance reviews, lunches with executives or social events? Keep in mind that your interns are walking advertisements for your company. If they have a good experience working for you, they're likely to tell their friends — word gets around. A bad internship, by contrast, can only hurt your chances of attracting good students for next year.



READ MORE ON PAGE 25

TIPS AND TOOLS #7

Designing an Internship Program - Questions to Get Started

## Elements of a Structured Internship Program

A well organized internship sets the conditions for a safe, productive, and positive experience for the intern and the supervisor/workplace mentor. Once you have defined these aspects of your internship, you will be able to post a description of the program and begin the recruitment process.

### Step 1: Define Your Organizations Needs

The internship coordinator should work with staff to assess current projects and workload to determine appropriate situations where an intern may be able to contribute. Each staff member should consider:

- What ongoing tasks are taking place in my department or organization?
- What is the current workload of my department or organization?
- What projects are currently on the “back burner”?

For example, do you have materials you would like to develop or update? Would you like to redesign your organization’s website but just don’t have the time? Given proper supervision, an intern can be a great source of assistance with these labor-intensive tasks. Similarly, an intern may conduct research for a report that another staff member will write.

*What does the company need? Are there certain tasks or projects that will be most beneficial to the company?*

### Step 2: Allocation of Resources

Long before your intern arrives on the job, the allocation of resources will need to be considered. You will need to allocate financial, time, and material resources in order to create an environment in which your intern can succeed.

#### FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- How will the intern be paid?
- Will it be a stipend amount or an hourly rate?
- If a stipend is offered, is this for a project or the entire internship program?
- Are you conforming to state and federal compensation regulations?

- Will the intern be required to pay for parking?
- Will the organization provide a parking pass?
- Will the organization reimburse the intern for parking costs?
- Will the organization pay for mileage if the intern needs to travel?

#### TIME RESOURCES

It will also be necessary to devote a fair amount of time to the intern. This will also involve activities such as participating in a new employee orientation session, attending scheduled staff meetings, scheduling meetings with the mentor and supervisor, and the intern’s work schedule. For example, will the intern work 5 days a week or on an alternate schedule? Will the intern be allowed to work a “flex” schedule, only working a set number of hours each week? It also must be determined how much “face to face” time is needed between the intern and the other employees to complete a project. All of these possibilities need to be considered when designing your internship.

#### MATERIAL RESOURCES

Your organization will need to provide a number of material resources to enable your intern to succeed. You should allow time to plan for the availability and acquisition of these resources so that your intern can begin work immediately upon arrival. Some of the resources that may need to be supplied include:

- Computer with special software installed;
- Workspace: cubicle, office, desk;
- An e-mail account;
- A telephone extension;
- Voice mailbox;
- General office supplies: pens, pencils, tape, stapler, paper clips;
- Work rules and company policies; and
- How the intern needs to record their work time.

Planning ahead and providing these materials will allow your intern to start off on the right foot and maximize the time they will spend working for you.

*What resources (financial, time, materials, etc.) will need to be allocated?*

### Step 3: Assignment of a Mentor

Each intern should be assigned a mentor within your organization. Throughout their internship experience, the mentor will be the intern's first stop for questions or to solicit guidance regarding project tasks and responsibilities. The mentor should also be available for general questions pertaining to:

- The company or industry (where the intern may learn from the mentor's experience).
- Operational questions (ranging from use of the photocopier to the location of a local lunch spot).

The role of mentor should involve a commitment of time to the intern. The mentor may be a department head, project leader, or long-time employee who is knowledgeable of the project on which the intern will be working. The mentor's role should include:

- An initial orientation for the intern (conducting a tour of the facility, showing the intern where the office equipment is located (photocopier, fax machine);
- Introducing them to others in the department with whom they will be interacting;
- Development of an ongoing relationship.

Some mentors may choose to offer an "open-door" policy to the intern, encouraging the intern to stop by anytime with questions. Other mentors may prefer the structure of a weekly meeting, where the intern is encouraged to bring a list of questions they may have from the past week. Either way, it is important that every intern know that someone is available to answer their questions.

*Who will provide orientation and guidance (be a mentor) to the intern?*

### Step 4: Identifying a Department or Project Team

The primary goal of each student seeking an internship is to gain "real world" and practical experience in their chosen career field. It is beneficial for each intern to be integrated into a department or project team, where they will not only learn from completion of their own assigned tasks, but also develop a sense of the "big picture". A large portion of the internship should be focused on how the intern's own tasks contribute to the outcome of the project as a whole. By integrating the intern into a professional department or project team, the intern will be able to improve their teamwork and communication skills. Other team members will be able to provide:

- Guidance through experience related to specific project tasks;
- Guidance on professional work ethic (such as time management and meeting deadlines);
- Stories about learning from mistakes;
- Advice on handling difficult customers.

An intern can benefit greatly from the experiences of others on the team. Remember, an intern is looking to build skills that will add to what they have already learned in their coursework. This real world experience is an opportunity for the intern to build a connection between theory and reality. Therefore, it is important to assign the intern meaningful project work, in addition to the routine tasks.

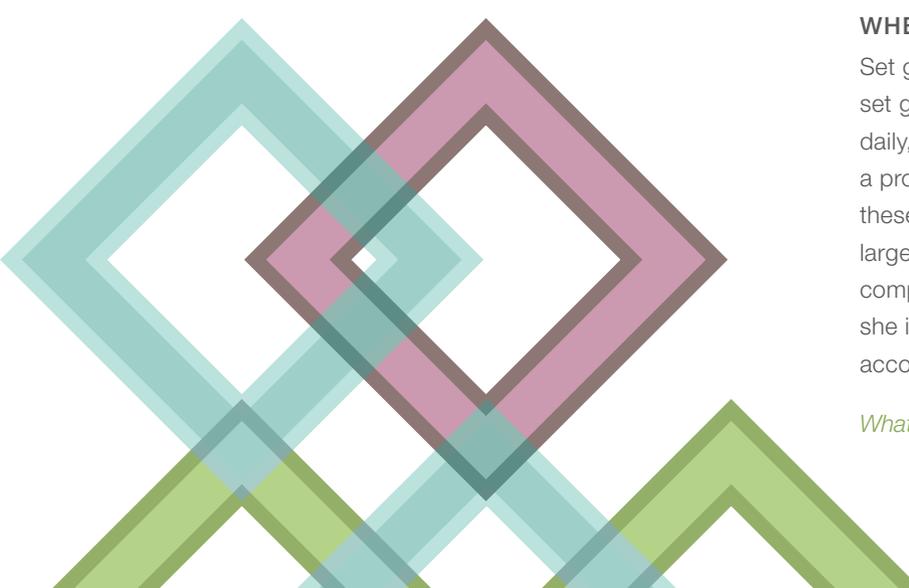
#### WHAT IS MEANINGFUL PROJECT WORK?

Consider tasks within the scope of your project with which an intern will be challenged to apply their knowledge and improve their skills. Remember, the intern is there to learn and gain experience. Consider the skills of the intern, and give the intern the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the project.

#### WHEN CAN I EXPECT COMPLETED PROJECTS?

Set goals for the intern's progress. You can help the intern set goals for the completion of various tasks, including daily, weekly, and monthly goals. If the intern is working on a project with deadlines, setting goals may help ensure that these deadlines will be met. Guide the intern in breaking larger tasks into action steps and setting goals for their completion. Set milestones so that the intern knows he/she is working toward something, and has a sense of accomplishment when each milestone has been achieved.

*What department or what project team will the intern work for?*



## Step 5: Developing an Internship Description

Now that you have answered the above questions and have thought about how your organization can make the most of this program, it is time to develop a detailed description of your internship. As is the case with any job description, the more detail you can provide for each section, the easier it will be for you to select the right candidate for your internship. Elements that should be included are:

- Information about your organization and/or project;
- A description of the qualifications or skills required of the intern;
- Preferred majors and/or fields of study;
- Compensation;
- The number of hours of work per week;
- Starting and ending date.



## EVALUATING THE INTERNSHIP

Evaluation will help you improve your program by finding out what works and what doesn't. Creating mid and end-of-term opportunities for the intern to reflect upon the internship is critical to his or her development. A midterm and end-of-term performance review will also provide you the chance to offer constructive feedback to the intern. The intern should complete an evaluation of the program after the internship is completed. The final evaluation will help you gain feedback about the overall quality of the experience from the intern's perspective.

 **READ MORE ON PAGE 27**  
**TIPS AND TOOLS #8**  
Sample Job Description

## SECTION 9

### Managing Interns

The beginning days of an internship are often its defining days. When you give interns their first tasks, you are signaling what can be expected in the future. If you give them nothing or very little to do, it sends a message that this job will be easy — and boring.

Interns don't want that, and of course, neither do employers. The organization of your internship program will probably be the single most important influence on an intern's impression of your organization, and thus the chances that he or she will come back. So how do you "plan for success?"

Many students are unfamiliar with the activities, environment, and objectives of business and industry. Even though your interns may have worked part-time to support their education, these experiences may not have exposed them to organizational politics, the need for confidentiality, the importance of teamwork, or the profit-making orientation of business. Including an orientation session as the beginning of the intern training process emphasizes the partnership and commitment to internships in your workplace.

The sooner your student interns understand what your organization does and how it operates, the sooner they can assume assigned responsibilities and become productive. You can communicate this information in several ways:

- Take your interns on a tour of the facilities and introduce them to the other employees
- Give your interns company materials to read such as newsletters, annual reports, an organization chart, or memos from the CEO
- Encourage your interns to spend break and lunchtimes in places where employees gather
- Schedule regular one-on-one meetings with them
- Give the interns opportunities to observe (or participate in) professional meetings
- Allow the interns to interview company personnel
- Encourage the interns to walk around and observe others at work

The success of an internship depends on the partnership between representatives of the organization, and the student. These parties need to agree on the conditions of the internship, the responsibilities of each party, and the reporting requirements. The site supervisor is the critical link. You guide your interns by providing direction and feedback. If a problem occurs, you counsel the students and contact the faculty supervisor, when necessary.

Review your program goals. The nature of the program and the activities should directly relate to your these goals and will assist you in creating and maintaining a structured meaningful internship experience.

### Orientation Checklist

Experience shows that employers who take adequate time at the beginning of the internship to orient student interns reap productivity and effectiveness more quickly than those who do not. In acclimating interns, please take time initially to:

#### EXPLAIN THE MISSION OF THE ORGANIZATION

- How did the organization start? Why?
- What is unique about your product or service?
- Who benefits from your product or service?
- What are the organization's current objectives?
- How may the intern contribute to those objectives?

#### EXPLAIN THE ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

- Who reports to whom?
- Who, specifically, is the intern's supervisor?
- What is the intern's department responsible for?
- How are decisions made?
- Which personnel can answer different kinds of questions?

#### OUTLINE ORGANIZATIONAL RULES, POLICIES, DECORUM AND EXPECTATIONS

- Is there specific industry jargon?
- What are the specific work standards and procedures?
- What access to the supervisor (days, times, and duration) does the intern have?
- How should they process requests?
- How do the mail and telephone systems work?
- What are the approved forms for correspondence?
- By what safety regulations must they abide?
- Is there a procedure for signing off completed work?



- What periodic forms or reports need to be completed?
- Are there security or confidentiality issues the intern should be aware of?
- What is acceptable with regard to dress and appearance?
- How should they maintain the premises and their work area?

#### DEFINE THE INTERN'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- What is the intern's role? Provide a clear job description.
- What projects will be assigned to him or her?
- What resources are available to the intern?
- What training is necessary?
- How does the organization want the intern to deal with clients and vendors?
- What tasks can be completed without supervisory approval?
- Do other employees understand the intern's role?

#### MONITOR THE INTERN'S ADJUSTMENT AND UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS EXPECTED

- Make yourself visibly available to the intern
- Assign someone who can routinely "check-in" with the intern
- Provide feedback and constructive criticism
- Encourage the intern to ask questions

#### KEY POINTS

- Develop a thorough orientation and training plan to be implemented when the interns begin work, so they will learn quickly and become productive members of your team.
- Provide a clear job description for the intern.
- Invest supervisory time to establish an important bond with interns and set a crucial tone for the internship experience.



#### READ MORE ON PAGE 28

**TIPS AND TOOLS #9**  
Intern Orientation Sample Agenda  
**TIPS AND TOOLS #10**  
Intern Orientation - Checklist

## SECTION 10

### Considerations after the Internship

If you determine that an intern is a great match for your company why not consider hiring him or her as an employee? If the intern is in school, invite him or her to do work intermittently, or on a particular project, as scheduling permits. If hiring the youth is not a possibility, simply expressing your desire for the intern to “keep in touch” will send the important message that you care. You may also consider other professional contacts that you know who could continue to support the youth in his or her personal and professional growth.

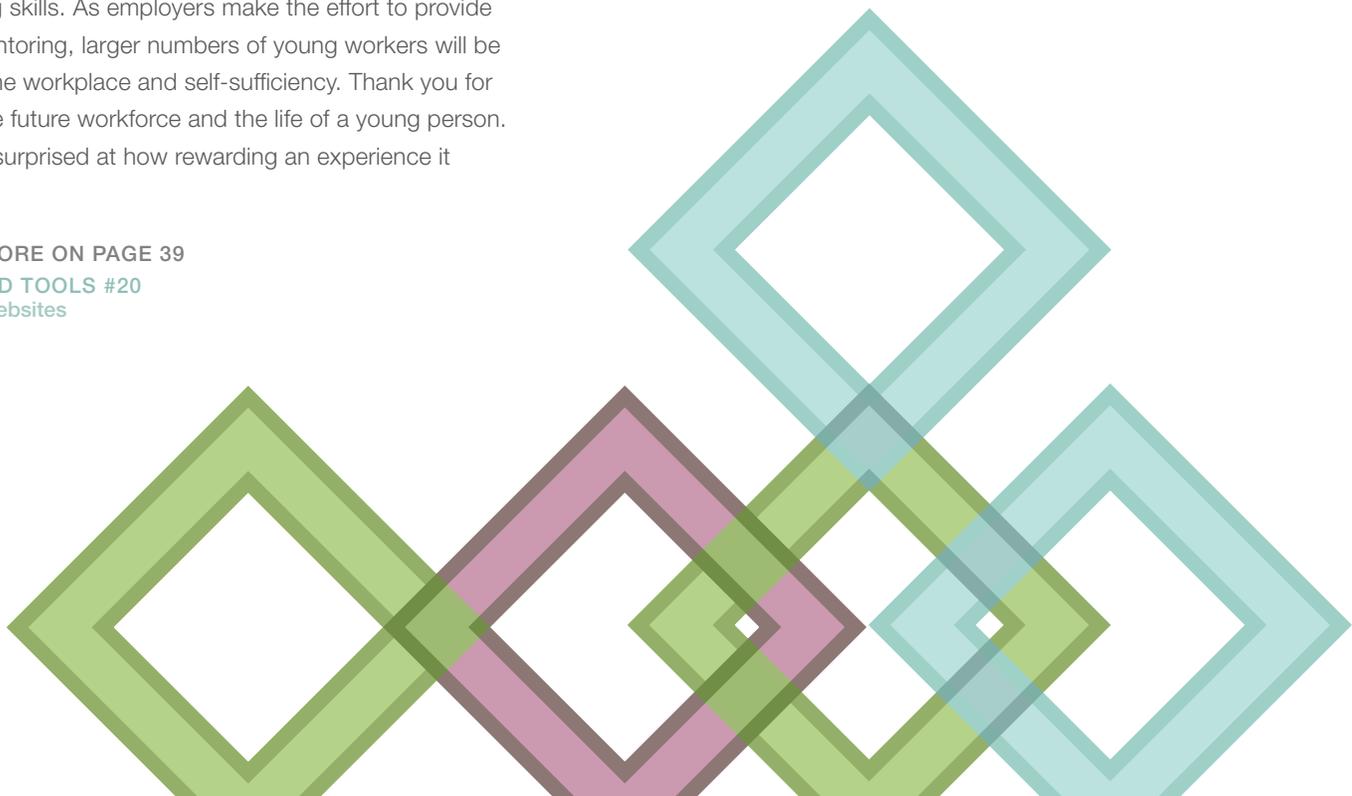
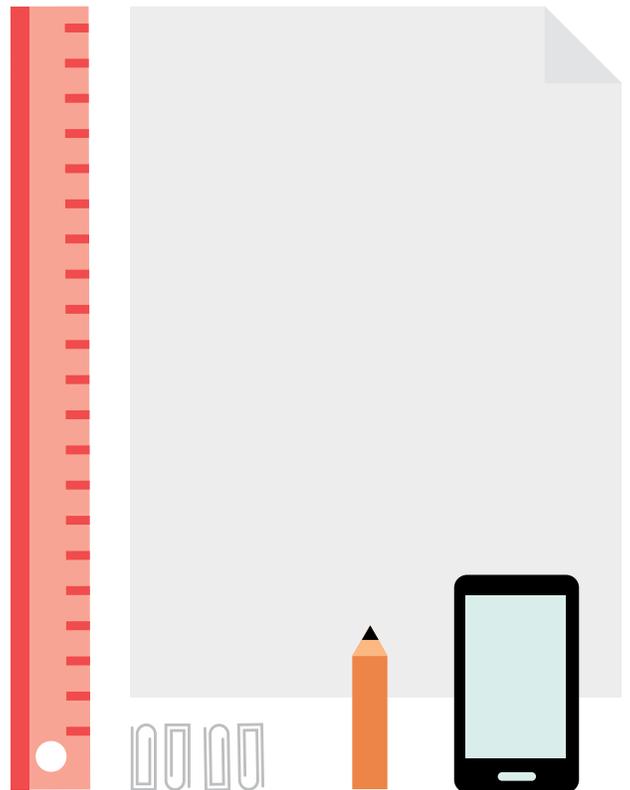
## SECTION 11

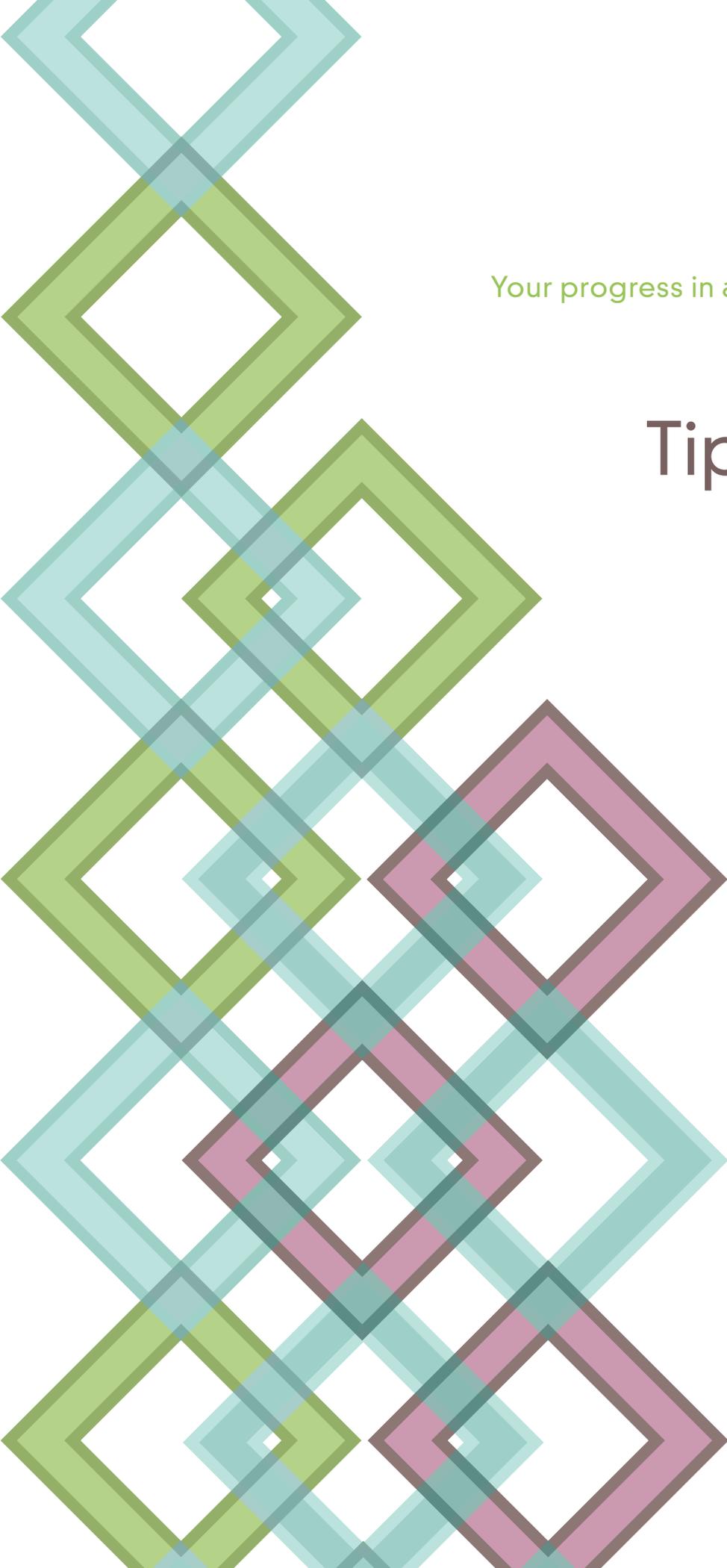
### Investment in the Future Workforce

You now have some basic tools to help you build a star program within your company. Even if you are starting with one intern and you are a small business, intention is everything. Both you and your intern will greatly benefit by taking small, meaningful, and consistent steps towards creating a developmentally rich internship experience.

Now more than ever, we need companies willing to demonstrate professionalism, communication, teamwork, innovation, and critical thinking skills. As employers make the effort to provide workplace mentoring, larger numbers of young workers will be prepared for the workplace and self-sufficiency. Thank you for investing in the future workforce and the life of a young person. You might be surprised at how rewarding an experience it can be.

 **READ MORE ON PAGE 39**  
**TIPS AND TOOLS #20**  
Useful Websites





Your progress in applying youth development

# Internships: Tips and Tools



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## Indicators of Youth Development Features in the Internship Setting

This table is adapted from the Youth Internship Network Mentoring Guide. The following indicators will help you determine your progress in applying youth development principles to your work setting and internship program.

### Key

- 1** We are just beginning to work in this area.
- 2** We have done some work, but have a long way to go.
- 3** We have made significant progress and are doing reasonably well.
- 4** We have achieved a high level of success in this area.
- 5** We are doing extremely well in this area.

Safety	
<b>PHYSICAL</b>	
Policies and procedures ensure the physical and emotional safety of a participating intern.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern is provided an orientation and tour of the workplace setting and is given an employee manual that outlines his or her rights, office policies and procedures.	1 2 3 4 5
Adequate space, resources, and reliable equipment are allocated to the intern.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern hours of employment (safety to and from work) are taken into consideration.	1 2 3 4 5
<b>EMOTIONAL</b>	
Intern is welcomed by management and employees.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern is known by name, by the staff in the unit where he or she works.	1 2 3 4 5
Employees are briefed prior to the intern starting employment.	1 2 3 4 5
The workplace climate emphasizes warmth and respect of all ages and cultures.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern is viewed as a resource by management and employees.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern is recognized for his or her contributions.	1 2 3 4 5
<b>CLEAR AND HIGH EXPECTATIONS</b>	
Agreement is developed about what is expected of the intern and is communicated to all employees.	1 2 3 4 5
Interns is provided a clear job description and set of expectations. Intern is asked his or her expectations.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern and all employees are expected to perform well and hold themselves to high standards of behavior.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern receives consistent and respectful feedback about how he or she is doing on work assignments. (Weekly check-ins and a midterm review are held with the supervisor/workplace mentor).	1 2 3 4 5
<b>APPROPRIATE STRUCTURE AND CONTINUITY</b>	
Workplace rules and guidelines are explicitly discussed with the intern.	1 2 3 4 5
There is continuity and predictability in supervisor/intern relationships, clear boundaries are established, limits of authority described and age-appropriate information on workplace rules provided.	1 2 3 4 5
Relationship Building	
<b>GUIDANCE</b>	
Intern is matched with at least one supportive supervisor/workplace mentor to guide him or her throughout the internship experience and who meets with him or her on a regular basis (weekly).	1 2 3 4 5
Mentors are trained in their roles and limits.	1 2 3 4 5

## TIPS AND TOOLS #1, CON'T

### EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Employees model a sense of fun, good communication, support, and appropriate boundaries.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern is assigned to work with various people within the workplace and/or community.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern has opportunities to interview employees and learn about different jobs in the work site.	1 2 3 4 5

### PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Intern is encouraged to participate in relationship building activities, such as employee lunches, job shadows, intern only events, meet and greets, and meetings with staff to learn about issues and business operations etc.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern is provided coaching and training as needed to ensure he or she has the skills to work effectively in a work setting.	1 2 3 4 5

### KNOWLEDGE OF YOUTH

Information/training is provided to help employees understand the developmental needs of an adolescent, the culture the intern comes from, and how to effectively engage intern in the workplace setting.	1 2 3 4 5
---	-----------

### Youth Participation and Voice

### INPUT AND DECISION MAKING

Intern is provided with opportunities to provide input into what he or she is assigned, how work gets accomplished.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern completes an expectations /interest worksheet the first week of the internship to determine what his or her goals are, what he or she wants to learn and the kinds of projects he or she might be interested in.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern is provided opportunities to share his or her ideas, passions and talents.	1 2 3 4 5

### LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Intern is given flexibility to shape his or her work experience.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern is given a range of opportunities to learn and practice leadership skills in the workplace setting.	1 2 3 4 5

### SENSE OF BELONGING

There are opportunities for meaningful inclusion of a youth intern regardless of his or her gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disabilities.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern participates in staff meetings and project committee meetings, is provided job shadows, is invited to staff lunches and employee celebrations.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern provides input and evaluation to improve the internship program.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern has at least one supervisor/workplace mentor or adult he or she can go to at the work site; and that person meets regularly with the intern and helps him or her learn about the workplace.	1 2 3 4 5

### Skill-Building

### CHALLENGING

Intern has at least one assignment that is designed to be challenging and to develop 21st century skills.	1 2 3 4 5
Menial tasks are kept to a minimum.	1 2 3 4 5
Assignments are designed so the intern can accomplish increasingly difficult tasks as skills and confidence develop.	1 2 3 4 5

### INTERESTING

Work assignments address different levels of the intern's interests and abilities.	1 2 3 4 5
Intern learns about the range of careers in the field.	1 2 3 4 5

## TIPS AND TOOLS #1, CON'T

### GROWTH ENHANCEMENT

The program provides opportunities for the intern to engage in self-assessment and reflect upon work assignments; what he or she is learning, what he or she is good at and where he or she can improve. 1 2 3 4 5

Intern obtains mid and final evaluations on his or her attitudes, skills, attendance, behaviors, and quality of work. 1 2 3 4 5

Intern is encouraged to examine careers within the field of the internship and to understand the academic and other skills needed to grow in that field. 1 2 3 4 5

### Community Involvement

#### ABILITY TO IMPACT COMMUNITY

Intern understands how he or she fits into the overall work of the company. 1 2 3 4 5

Intern feel he or she is making a difference to the organization and can articulate what that difference has been. 1 2 3 4 5

Intern develops a sense of his or her own abilities and desires to contribute to something greater than him or herself. 1 2 3 4 5

#### KNOWLEDGE OF THE COMMUNITY

Intern learns how the employer/internship site contributes economically and socially to the local and community. 1 2 3 4 5

Intern learns about the employer through interviews of staff, job shadows and work projects. 1 2 3 4 5

If the employer does community service, the intern is exposed to how this occurs and given a chance to participate in employer community service projects. 1 2 3 4 5

Table adapted from *Career Internship Network, Features of Positive Developmental Settings for Young People Network*



## 21st Century Skills Intern Self-Assessment

Intern: Place an ✓ in the box that most accurately describes your current level with the skill in the left hand column.

	I am great at this skill	I definitely have this skill	I am okay at this skill	I need work on this skill	I need help with this skill
<p><b>Problem Solving:</b> I can use knowledge and facts to solve problems and think through difficulties.</p>					
<p><b>Oral Communication:</b> I have effective speaking skills one-on-one and in front of a group. I am good listener.</p>					
<p><b>Written Communication:</b> I effectively transfer thoughts to paper and write reports.</p>					
<p><b>Teamwork:</b> I work well with others and manage conflicts within groups.</p>					
<p><b>Diversity:</b> I learn from working with individuals of different races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles and viewpoints.</p>					
<p><b>Technology:</b> I select and use appropriate technology and can use a computer to help do a job.</p>					
<p><b>Leadership:</b> I encourage the strengths of others, develop others towards a common goal, and have a positive outlook.</p>					
<p><b>Creativity:</b> I create original work, communicate new ideas, and brainstorm.</p>					
<p><b>Self-Direction:</b> I continuously gain new knowledge and skills and learn from mistakes.</p>					
<p><b>Work-Ethic:</b> I have effective work habits and time management. I am punctual, productive, and honest.</p>					
<p><b>Social Responsibility:</b> I demonstrate ethical behavior and responsible actions with interests of the community in mind.</p>					

N. Arnett, G. Cochran, N. Grout, K. Catchpole. 2007. *Jet Journal*.

## Supervisor/Workplace Mentor Strategies for Handling Difficult Situations

### What if you and the intern don't "click"?

Ask yourself, "Why?" Is a personality or cultural difference or a misunderstanding preventing you from connecting?

- Once you recognize the source of the problem, can you and the intern work through it by talking?
- If you cannot resolve your differences with the intern, is another staff person willing to mediate?
- If you and the intern are not able to resolve your differences, it is often better to terminate the internship than for you and the intern to have a long, unpleasant experience.

### What if the intern asks a question you can't or don't want to answer?

- If a question makes you uncomfortable or is inappropriate, explain why you prefer not to answer.
- If an intern asks a personal question, you can respond in general terms. For example, if an intern asks how much money you earn, you can tell them what the salary range is for people in your position with your experience.
- If an intern's question regards work-related confidential matters, explain the company's policy on proprietary information.
- If you don't know the answer to a question, suggest ways to research the answer.

### What if the intern doesn't fulfill the agreed upon work plan objectives or goals?

- Ask the intern if he or she is clear about the expectations for the experience. If not, review them and try to figure out together what was misunderstood.
- Review workplace expectations (e.g., productivity, being on time, not leaving early) and their importance.
- Review intern work plan with the intern. Pay particular attention to whether the tasks and timeline are realistic.
- Discuss ways in which the agreement could be revised to better meet the needs of both the intern and the company. What if the intern dresses inappropriately or uses inappropriate behavior/language?
- Talk to the intern. Review company policies and their importance. Discuss what is appropriate with friends or family may not be at the work setting, and vice versa. Explain that sometimes such differences between settings are insignificant; other times, they may cause serious misunderstandings.

- Assess whether the inappropriate behavior is "situational." Was the intern aware of the expectations of the workplace? Does the intern have access to appropriate workplace clothing?
- Consider the intern's interpretation of the situation. Ask the intern what prompted the behavior, and discuss alternatives.

### What if the intern seems disengaged or bored?

- Is the intern really bored or disinterested, or is it a symptom of something else (e.g., are they shy, unclear about expectations)?
- Engage the intern in conversation to learn about his or her interests. Share your interests.
- Be creative and encourage the intern's creativity. In what ways can you both think "outside of the box" to appreciate the experience? What skills will the intern be able to transfer to other jobs or experiences that are closer to his or her interests? How can the current experience be refined to include projects or activities that interest the interns?

### What if the intern is not interested in your job or industry?

- Point out the value of becoming familiar with different workplace environments and building awareness of the many ways academic, technical, and interpersonal skills are used in a variety of different jobs.
- Explain to the intern that sometimes learning about what you don't like is as powerful a lesson as learning about what you do like.
- Share stories about the different jobs you have had—what you did and did not like about them, and what you learned from these experiences. The intern may not aspire to your job, but he or she may be interested in aspects of your work.
- Ask the intern to explain why he or she is not interested in your job or industry. Is his or her opinion based on stereotypes? Does it reflect the true nature of your work? Ask what the intern finds interesting. Are there other jobs within your company or industry related to those interests?
- Is it possible for the intern to rotate between different departments in your company? Are there additional tasks the intern can take on, under your supervision, that relate to his or her interests?

## Supervisor/Workplace Mentor Qualities and Responsibilities

### Qualities of a Good

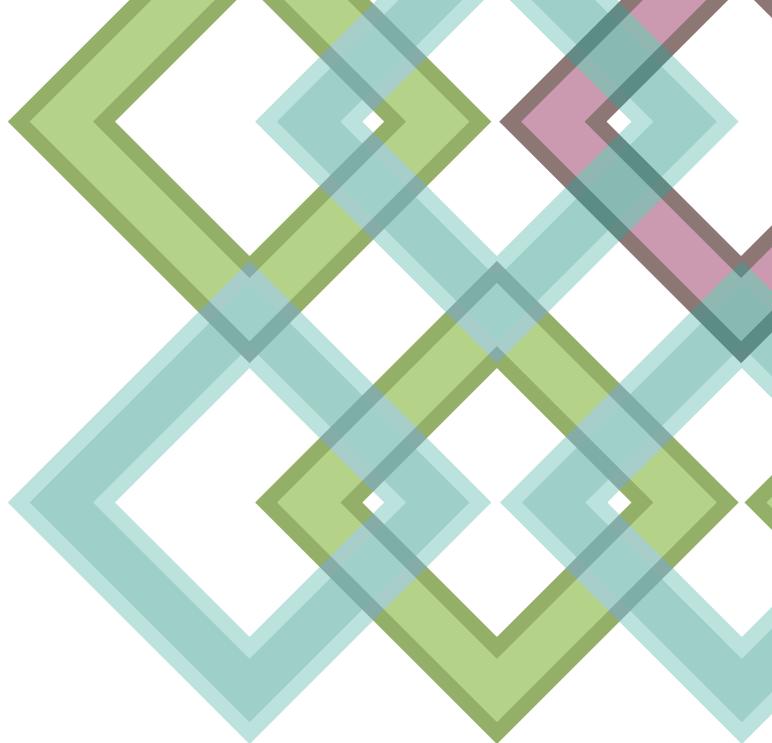
#### Supervisor/Workplace Mentor

- Is respectful of others
- Keeps a positive outlook on life
- Enjoys working with young people
- Likes or loves his/her work
- Listens and communicates well
- Stays flexible while keeping healthy boundaries
- Has capacity for sharing and empathy
- Promotes the growth and development of the intern
- Can make people and resources of the organization available to the intern
- Sees the intern as capable of making decisions and learning new things

### The Most Important Responsibilities of a Supervisor/Workplace Mentor

- Models professional behavior and work habits
- Sets high expectations
- Helps the intern feel like a part of the workplace
- Takes the time to structure the intern's experience at the site
- Involves the intern in deciding the nature of the work
- Is consistent and dependable throughout the internship, spends time with the intern and gives encouragement
- Gives positive feedback when the intern handles a situation or task well
- Guides the intern towards maturity
- Encourages the intern to ask questions, reminding them that there are no stupid questions, pulls the intern aside to discuss a problem; does not discuss it in front of other people
- Provides ways to readdress and correct mistakes
- Assists the intern in obtaining additional resources and professional contacts
- Serves as a role model for the career field
- Understands the goals of the program and work towards them
- Communicates with site coordinators from partnering agencies

Adapted from the *New Urban High School, A Practitioner's Guide*.



## Supervisor/Workplace Mentor Strategies for Success

### KEEP A WATCHFUL EYE

Watch for signs of boredom or indifference. Try to create opportunities and experiences that foster discovery of new ideas and development of new skills.

### ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Check periodically to see how well and how much the intern is learning. Ask open-ended questions such as, "What has been most challenging to you these past few weeks?"

### PROVIDE SUPPORT WITHOUT RESCUING

Too often mentors say, "Let me show you how to do that," when they should be asking, "What do you think you should do next?" It takes patience and courage to stand back and let an intern risk failure. However, the most significant growth happens through the discomfort of grappling with a new situation.

### AVOID MESSAGES OF PERFECTION

The greatest gift a supervisor/workplace mentor can give the intern is authenticity. When you make a mistake, you can show how you learn from that mistake and are more competent as a result. Make sure the intern sees and hears that you are not always an expert and that you are still a learner yourself.

## Sample Agenda

Experience shows that employers who take adequate time at the beginning of the internship to orient the intern reap productivity and effectiveness more quickly than those who do not.

In orienting the intern take time to do the following:

### Questions to ask the Mentee:

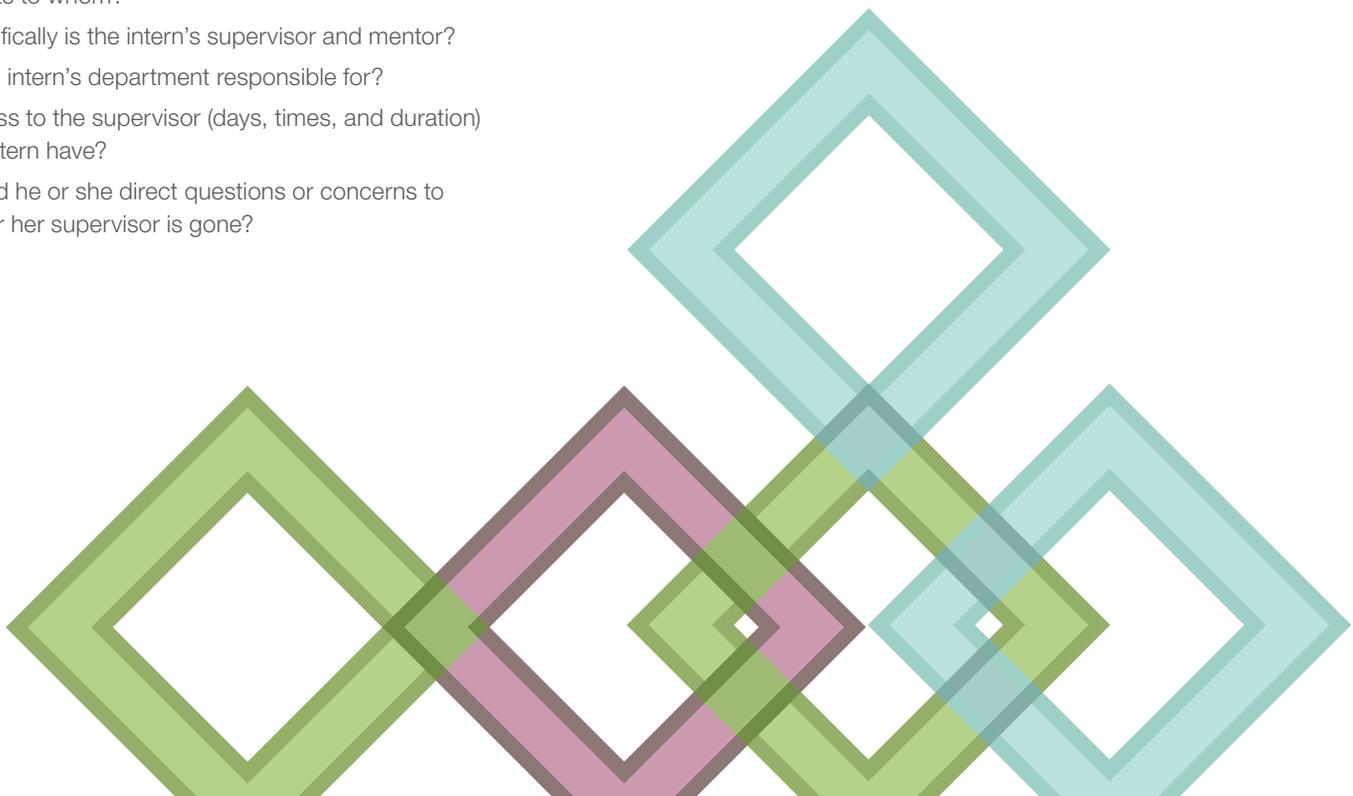
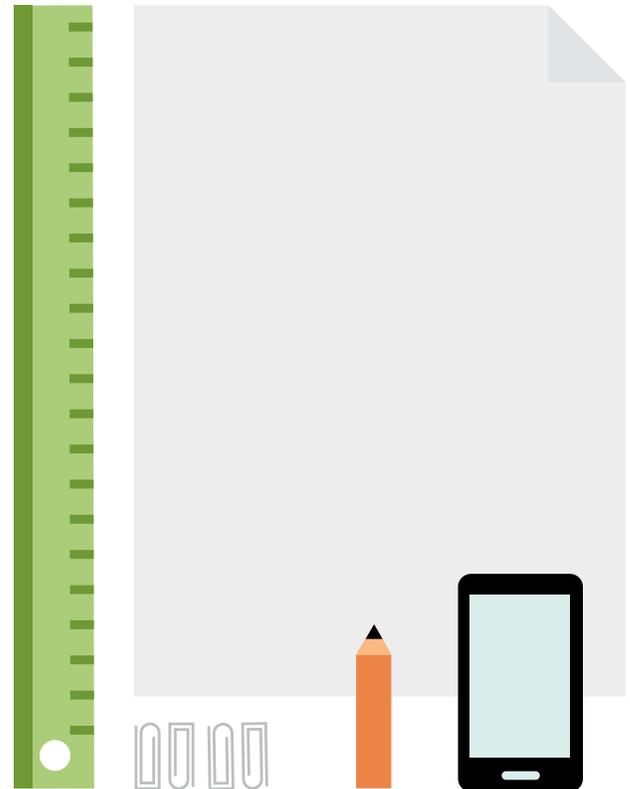
- What do you hope to get out of the mentor/mentee relationship?
- Share about your journey to the energy industry
- What are you most excited about with your new job?
- What are you most apprehensive about with your new job?
- Which nuances do you think might be different in working for an energy company?
- Tell me about your family and interests outside of work

### Explain the Mission of the Organization

- How did the company start? Why?
- What is unique about your product or service?
- Who benefits from your product or service?
- How may the intern contribute to the company's work?

### Explain the Organization's Structure

- Who reports to whom?
- Who, specifically is the intern's supervisor and mentor?
- What is the intern's department responsible for?
- What access to the supervisor (days, times, and duration) does the intern have?
- Who should he or she direct questions or concerns to when his or her supervisor is gone?



## Designing an Internship Program—Questions to Get Started

### How many interns should you take?

The number of interns that you choose to accept will depend upon the physical space you have available; the number of staff you have to supervise or mentor; and the amount of work you have available.

### Do you want an intern for a specific project or general support around the workplace?

- What are the tasks and objectives of the project? What are the deadlines for completing the tasks and objectives?
- Does your company need an intern to perform administrative and support functions including data entry, answering telephones, filing, etc.? If so, what percentage of the intern's time will be spent on these activities?

### Will the intern work in one area or rotate through departments?

- Will the intern rotate through departments or will he or she have a single assignment and work for one person on one or several projects?
- Will employees from each department be designated to train the intern on particular department functions?

### How will you keep the intern busy?

The best way to keep an intern busy and productive is to have a plan ahead of time, before the intern arrives. Since the intern will be at the workplace for an extended period of time, the supervisor should have an idea of potential projects and assignments identified, so there isn't any "down time." Each week, the intern should have specific assignments that relate to a work plan that is created in partnership with the intern within the first day or two of his or her arrival on the work site.

### How will you ensure all youth are welcome and address racial and age bias?

It is important to be aware of and knowledgeable about the cultural differences of youth who participate in the internship program. Youth who participate in SETA – Sacramento Works for Youth programs come from all backgrounds. All, however, face at least one or more "barriers to employment." Employers should be sensitive to the individual needs of the intern, including youth of color, those with disabilities, those who speak English as a second language.

### What will an orientation to the workplace look like?

- An effective orientation establishes expectations, roles, and protocol while setting a welcoming tone. The structure of the orientation will depend on whether you have multiple interns, or just one or two participating youth. If there is only one in-coming intern, how will he or she be welcomed?
- Will there be welcoming materials or a gift for the intern?
- How will the intern learn about the company and how his or her work connects to the entire organization?

### What training will you provide the intern to develop soft skills?

- Keep in mind that youth need exposure to a variety of supports and opportunities in order to develop social skills. The intern can learn how to use soft skills by observing staff meetings and participating on teams and committees.
- If your organization is partnering with an employment training agency, they may already provide training that can be reinforced by the supervisor/workplace mentor and other employees working with the youth.



### How will the intern's interest be incorporated into assignments?

- Perhaps you can identify many different kinds of projects that need to be done and give the intern some choice.
- Be honest with the intern about what he or she can expect during the internship. Honesty doesn't cost you anything, and it will make the intern feel that much more respected.

### How will the intern be recognized for their work?

- Will you pay the intern? Everyone likes to be recognized and appreciated for a job well done.
- Will you formally recognize the intern's contributions at a staff meeting or in a newsletter? Maybe the intern can showcase some of the work he or she has done at a special event.
- Will you provide a certificate, or plaque of appreciation at the end of the experience?

### Who will have the primary responsibility for the intern?

Will that person be a supervisor/workplace mentor or merely a supervisor? The designation of a supervisor who will work closely with the intern can be essential in creating a successful experience. Ideally, the supervisor/workplace mentor should be someone from the department where the intern is working and who is very familiar with the projects and tasks the intern will be performing. This person should like young people and be able to model professional and engaging workplace behavior while teaching and training the intern.

### How will you train staff who will be working with the intern?

- A couple of hours of training can go a long way in creating a positive experience for employees and the intern.
- One option is to work with your local employment agency and youth development partners to address the training needs of staff working with the intern.
- Training can help employees recognize and address concerns, biases or stereotypes they may hold about teenagers while also covering mandatory policies and procedures related to issues such as sexual harassment.



## Sample Job Description

Company name/description:

---

Internship title:

---

Internship description (duties and essential responsibilities):

---

Job specifications (knowledge, skills and abilities required to the job):

---

Preferred qualifications (personal attributes, interests, extracurricular activities and talents preferred for the job):

---

Physical requirements of the internship:

---

Any training that will be provided:

---

Compensation: Unpaid/Paid

---

Length of the internship (start-finish dates):

---

Work schedule (days of the week/time of day):

---

Number of hours (full-time/part-time):

---

Internship contact:

---

Company address:

---

Website/E-mail:

---

Application deadline:

---

## Intern Orientation—Sample Agenda

- Check-in and greetings; introduce staff
- Complete paperwork; (social time while waiting, hand out packets, welcome gifts, serve refreshments)
- Icebreaker/introduction of interns—have the interns pair up, interview each other (5 minutes), then introduce each other to the group
- Mission of the organization
- Organization's structure
- Outline organizational rules, policies, decorum and expectations
- Tour the facility
- Allow time for interns to share their expectations
- Define the interns' responsibilities/ expectations
- Team-building activity
- Closure

## Intern Orientation—Checklist

Experience shows that employers who take adequate time at the beginning of the internship to orient the intern reap productivity and effectiveness more quickly than those who do not. In orienting the intern, take time to:

### Explain the Mission of the Organization

- How did the company start? Why?
- What is unique about your product or service?
- Who benefits from your product or service?
- How may the intern contribute to the company's work?

### Explain the Organization's Structure

- Who reports to whom?
- Who, specifically, is the intern's supervisor?
- What is the intern's department responsible for?
- What access to the supervisor (days, times, and duration) does the intern have?
- Whom should he or she direct questions or concerns to when his or her supervisor is gone?

### Outline Organizational Rules, Policies, Decorum and Expectations

- Is there specific industry jargon?
- What are the specific work standards and procedures?
- What is acceptable with regards to dress and appearance?
- What are the rules for cell phone usage, text messaging and e-mailing?
- How does the mail, telephone, and other office equipment work?
- By what safety regulations must he or she abide?
- What should they do in an emergency or if he or she is sick?
- How should the intern maintain the work area?
- What should he or she do when work is completed?
- What forms or reports need to be completed?
- Are there security or confidentiality issues the intern should be aware of?

### Define the Intern's Responsibilities

- What is the intern's role? Provide a clear job description.
- What projects will be assigned to him or her?
- What resources and training are available to the intern?
- How does the organization want the intern to deal with clients and vendors?
- Do other employees understand the intern's role?

True, Michael. *Starting and Maintaining a Quality Internship Program, 5th Edition*. Grantham, PA: Messiah College. Modified.



## Sample Table of Contents for an Intern Handbook

- Welcome
- About the organization
- Organizational structure
- Organizational acronyms and terms
- Intern responsibilities
- Supervisor/workplace mentor responsibilities
- A copy of 21st Century Skills Intern Self-Assessment (Tips and Tools #2)
- A copy of the Intern Expectations and Interests Form (Tips and Tools #13)
- Policies/procedures
- Benefits to the intern
- Accessing future employment opportunities
- Frequently asked questions and answers

## Intern Expectations and Interests Form

(To be completed by the intern and shared with the supervisor/workplace when developing a work plan.)

Please take a moment to answer the following questions in order to let us know what we can provide to make this internship a meaningful experience for you.

### Intern's Expectations

List three things that interest you about this occupation:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

List three skills/experiences you want to gain from the internship:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Mark the top three 21st century skills you would like to develop from this experience:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problem-Solving       | <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technology            | <input type="checkbox"/> Oral Communication    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Direction        | <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership            | <input type="checkbox"/> Written Communication |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Responsibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Work Ethic            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork/Working      |  |

Linking Education and Economic Development's *Employer's Internship Guide*. Modified.

## The Work Plan Worksheet

Mentor, it is important to take time to consider how you can make the most out of your time as well as the intern's time. Work through these steps with the intern to develop a direction for assignments.

**STEP 1** What interests and expectations has the intern identified on the Intern Expectations and Interests Form? (Tips and Tools #13)

---

**STEP 2** What projects and work assignments are available to the intern and how do these fit with the company's goals?

---

**STEP 3** What are the skills required for the project/work assignment?

---

**STEP 4** What skills/interests identified by the intern can be incorporated into the work assignment?

---

**STEP 5** How will your intern obtain new skills/knowledge? What kind of support might you need to provide?

---

**STEP 6** Agree upon a project/assignment.

---

**STEP 7** Break the work down into tasks.

---

**STEP 8** Schedule timelines for completion of tasks.

---

**STEP 9** Schedule regular meetings to review the progress of the intern's work.

---

**STEP 10** What is the best way for the intern to ask questions, or share concerns between scheduled meetings?

---

Sign below and keep one for both you and intern to refer to from month to month.

---

Intern Signature

Mentor Signature

Date

## Mid and End-of-Term Intern Performance Review

To be completed by the supervisor and shared with the intern.

### Section 1: Personal Traits

#### Reliability

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations

#### Ability to listen

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations

#### Attitude towards work

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations

#### Level of professionalism

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations

#### Productivity

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations

#### Relations with coworkers

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations

#### Response to supervision

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations

#### Attendance

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations

#### Appearance

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations

#### Comments:

### Section 2: 21st Century Skills

#### Problem Solving: uses knowledge and creativity to solve problems.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Oral Communication: Verbalizes ideas and concerns appropriately.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Written Communication: effectively transferred thoughts to paper.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Teamwork: works well with others toward a common goal.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Diversity: learns from working with people with differing points of views, lifestyles and cultures.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Technology: selects and uses appropriate technology for research and other needs.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Leadership: uses skills to guide others toward a goal.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Creativity: demonstrates inventiveness and shares new ideas effectively.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Flexibility: adapts to various tasks and responsibilities.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Work Ethic: honest, punctual, and good work habits.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Social Responsibility: acts responsibly with the larger community in mind.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Self Direction: manages time and stays on task, learns from mistakes.

- Exceeds expectations
- Meets expectations
- Below expectations
- Not applicable

#### Comments:

## Intern Evaluation of the Internship

Please respond to the following questions regarding your internship experience and site:

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please rate the following aspects of your internship experience on the basis of this scale:**

(1) Poor                      (2) Fair                      (3) Good                      (4) Excellent

### SITE

Physical environment was safe	1	2	3	4
An orientation was provided to the organization	1	2	3	4
Adequate resources were available to accomplish projects	1	2	3	4
Coworkers were welcoming and helpful	1	2	3	4

### SUPERVISOR

Regular feedback was provided on my progress and abilities	1	2	3	4
An effort was made to make the internship a learning experience for me	1	2	3	4
Supervisor provided levels of responsibility consistent with my abilities	1	2	3	4
Supervisor was supportive of the agreed upon work days and hours	1	2	3	4

### LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Work experience related to my expressed interest and expectations	1	2	3	4
Opportunities were provided to develop my communication skills	1	2	3	4
Opportunities were provided to develop my interpersonal skills	1	2	3	4
Opportunities were provided to develop my creativity	1	2	3	4
Opportunities were provided to develop my problem solving abilities	1	2	3	4
This experience has helped prepare me for the workplace	1	2	3	4
Overall value rating for this internship	1	2	3	4

**1. Feel free to explain any of your responses to the above criteria here (use other side if necessary):**

**2. Would you work for this supervisor again?**                       Yes                       No                       Uncertain

**3. Would you work for this organization again?**                       Yes                       No                       Uncertain

**4. Would you recommend this organization to other students?**                       Yes                       No                       Uncertain

True, Michael. *Starting and Maintaining A Quality Internship Program, 5th Edition*. Grantham, PA: Messiah College. Modified.

## Sample survey for gathering feedback from intern supervisors

Gathering feedback from those working directly with the students can be very valuable to improving and/or expanding a program.

<b>Q1.</b> How helpful were the students that you were assigned?	Limited	Sometimes Helpful	Helpful	Very Helpful	Don't Know
<b>Q2.</b> To what extent would you agree with the statement, "I enjoyed hosting the students?"	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Q3.</b> To what extent would you agree with the statement, "I had a positive experience working with the students?"	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Q4.</b> To what extent do you agree with the statement, "I think the students had valuable learning experience?"	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Q5.</b> To what extent do you agree with the statement, "I feel like I made a difference in the life of a student?"	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Q6.</b> What suggestions do you have for improving the program? <i>(optional)</i>					
<b>Q7.</b> Is there any advice you have for next year's students? <i>(optional)</i>					
<b>Q8.</b> Is there anything else you would like to share? <i>(optional)</i>					



## Recruiting Interns and Legal Issues

### How will you find those ideal candidates to fill your internship position(s)?

The number one tip from those who have established programs is to start recruiting early! This cannot be overemphasized to organizations that want the very best interns.

Students begin making commitments to course schedules as much as two-three months prior to the next semester as well as making commitments to part-time jobs. Begin searching as much as a year in advance but no later than three to four months before you need a student to begin. Starting early has other advantages. The longer you accept applications, the greater number of applications you have and you increase your chance of finding the best person for the internship.

When you are recruiting interns, develop relationships with local recruitment resources. Promote yourself with the career or internship centers at colleges and universities, attend internship and job fairs, place ads in college/university newspapers and websites, and send material to student organizations.

When choosing an intern, do so as carefully as you'd choose permanent employees. After all, they might be permanent employees some day. You're making an investment of time and money. As you interview potential interns, determine if the intern truly motivated.

- Does he or she just want a job or is he or she fulfilling an academic requirement?
- Will the intern fit into your organization's culture?
- Does he or she have the level of experience you need?

With careful hiring consideration, you can avoid some of the most common pitfalls of internships.

Last, but certainly not least, learn the legal implications of hiring interns. Just like any other workers, interns are subject to legal protections and regulations. Protect yourself and your intern by knowing the laws. What work can and can't you assign? This is especially important if your company employs international students, who need special qualifications to work in the U.S. Consult your corporate lawyer or the intern's school office of international education, if you think you are unfamiliar with the hiring of international interns.

### Do You Have to Pay Interns?

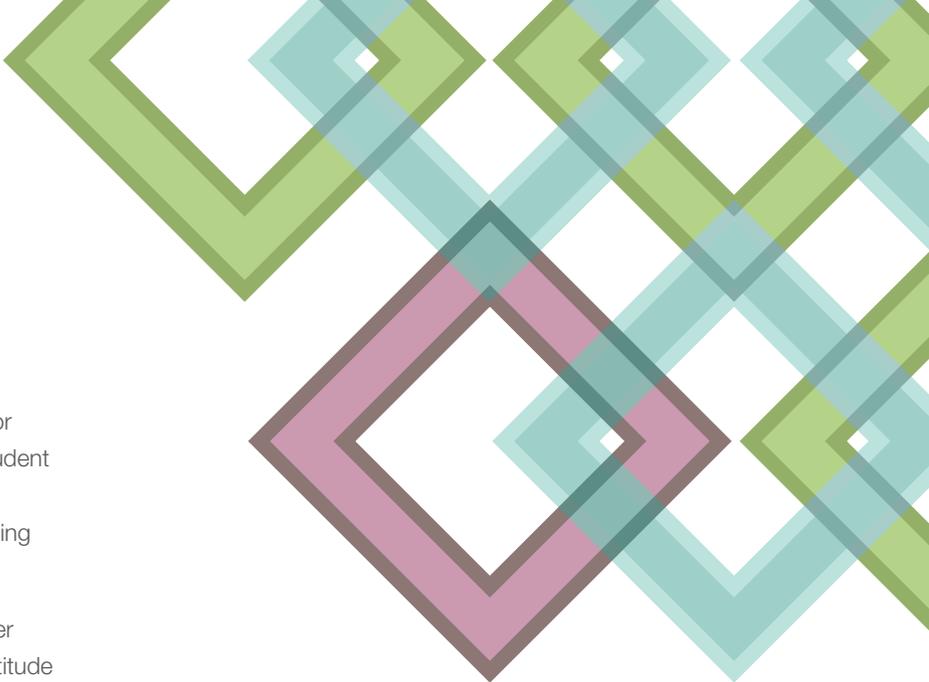
The U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which applies to all companies that have at least two employees directly engaged in interstate commerce and annual sales of at least \$500,000.00, severely restricts an employer's ability to use unpaid interns or trainees. It does not limit an employer's ability to hire paid interns.

You do not have to pay interns who qualify as 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 aren't 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.

Paid interns make ideal workers — hungry to learn, eager to make a good impression and willing to perform a multitude of tasks. The relatively small amount of money employers spend on intern wages and benefits is a good investment, because it often produces future, long-term employees.

The employer should identify the specific terms and conditions 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 prospective interns, so that there is no misunderstanding regarding the relationship. Also, it may make good sense to document such a discussion.



## International Students

The most common types of visas employers will 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.”

Employers may need to seek legal advice regarding the hiring of international student interns from their organization’s legal team.

Also see the website of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services – <https://www.uscis.gov/>  
Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 214.2 (f)

## Top Ten Concerns of Interns

### 1 GIVE US REAL WORK!

It cannot be said too many times that interns want to work and learn. An internship can help you with projects and assignment that may not get accomplished otherwise. If you have brought on an intern as a recruitment tool, then how will you be able to assess their abilities? It just makes sense to utilize your interns well.

### 2 DO WHAT YOU SAY, AND SAY WHAT YOU DO!

Be honest with your interns about what they can expect during their internships. If the job will require stuffing some envelopes, then make that clear. But if you tell the intern they will be researching a project, and they spend 90% of their time doing “grunt work,” then bad feelings may develop. Honesty does not cost you anything, and it will make the interns feel that much more respected.

### 3 WE LIKE FEEDBACK!

Remember that interns are students, and they may not have the business skills, experiences and workplace behaviors that you take for granted. If your intern makes a mistake, use this as a “teaching moment” and pull him or her aside and explain how the situation should be handled in the future.

### 4 WE WANT TO BE INCLUDED TOO!

Is there a staff meeting that they can attend? Can they quietly tag along to that next project meeting? Headed to lunch with a couple of people in the office? Please include them in the daily life of your workplace. After all, if you provide a little more perspective on the intern’s work, the product will be much better.

### 5 PLEASE EXPLAIN.

When you assign work, make sure you give a detailed explanation. While the work may seem trivial and obvious to you, it may not be obvious to someone who has never done it before. Patience and a few extra minutes at the beginning will pay off later when your intern can produce good work independently.

### 6 I WANT A MENTOR!

Make sure that interns have mentors or supervisors to provide guidance. Identify those who truly like to teach and train, and the experience will be even better.

### 7 A MINUTE OF YOUR TIME PLEASE.

The best mentor in the world is useless if he or she cannot or will not spend the necessary time mentoring. As newcomers, interns may not speak up if they are feeling ignored, so the burden of making sure they are okay is on the mentor. If the busiest person in the office wants to be the designated the mentor, he or she should schedule regular times to meet with the intern.

### 8 BE PREPARED!

That wonderful day has arrived and the intern begins his/her internship only to learn that no one knew they were coming, and there is no place for them to work.

### 9 UM...I NEED A CHAIR.

It is amazing how many employers hire an intern and do not think about the fact that they will need a desk, chair, phone and a computer to perform assigned tasks. It is no fun, and not efficient to move an intern from desk to desk as people are out one day to the next. If you want to get a job done, you need to supply the intern with the tools to do the job.

### 10 SHOW ME THE MONEY (AS BEST YOU CAN).

While each internship is different, and each industry has its own personality, remember that interns have expenses. Your organization may not be in a position to pay much, but anything can help. Maybe you can help pay for their parking, take them to lunch every so often, or develop some other creative way to assist them.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What types of tasks should I give my intern?

The tasks or projects assigned will depend on each individual company. Try to give the intern projects that will tie in previous coursework or will give them something physical to show at the end of their tenure with your company. The intern is working with you to advance their professional skills and is capable of contributing innovative thinking based on college courses that they have taken.

### How can I make my program exciting and productive?

The intern will need to have a well rounded experience, with exposure to a number of different areas within the organization. Most importantly, there must be an organized plan. There should be an orientation process during which the intern will learn how their department fits within the structure of the entire organization. The best way to stay organized is to develop a plan before the intern arrives and outline the projects and goals ahead of time. A different assignment could be assigned each week, or the intern could rotate to different departments within the organization, developing different skills.

### What are the legal issues associated with hiring an intern?

Some possible legal issues include compensation, confidentiality, equal opportunity employment, discrimination, and harassment. Please check with your organization's Human Resources Department for assistance. If you do not have an HR department, please email Terri Carpenter at [Terri.Carpenter@seta.net](mailto:Terri.Carpenter@seta.net) for further assistance.

### Do I need to pay interns?

Most of internships offered through the SETA – Sacramento Works Youth Programs are paid. We encourage organizations to offer paid internships when possible. However, non-paid volunteer internships provide young people with valuable real-world work experience.

### How long do I need to hire an intern?

The time frame of the internship depends on the resources your organization has available to support an intern. An internship can be through the summer months, typically a three month period or a year-round internship for up to twelve months.

### What are my responsibilities as an internship employer?

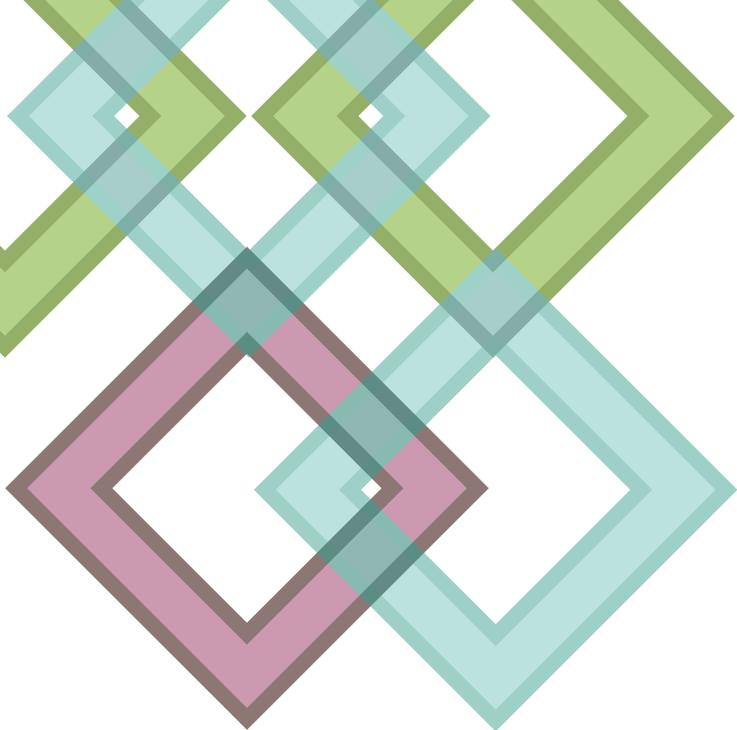
As an employer, it is up to you to provide an open line of communication, a safe work environment, challenging and meaningful work, supervision, and feedback regarding the intern's performance.

### Are interns eligible for workers' compensation benefits?

State workers' compensation laws do not distinguish between employees and paid interns. They are considered employees for this purpose. Your premiums should not increase by much because the interns will have little effect on your payroll and experience rating, two of the factors on which premiums are based.

### Are interns eligible for unemployment compensation at the end of the internship?

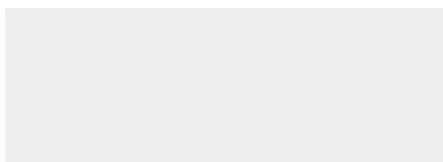
Generally, the answer is no. Unemployment eligibility is based on a person's availability for work, thus excluding interns who currently are in school or will return to school after a summer internship. Ask the student if he/she intends to return to school. If the answer is no, you can prevent misunderstandings by explaining that the intern position is just for the summer and you can't promise regular full-time work when it's over.



### What do I do if there is a problem with my intern?

Your organization is offering the intern an opportunity to gain hands-on, “real world” experience. As this may be the intern’s first professional experience, it is recommended that you constructively approach this subject. Just like any other employee of the company, there are specific rules to follow and appropriate behavior to be demonstrated. Hopefully, as a result, the student may learn something that can be corrected in the future. We can help you in this process.

Please feel free to call.



### Do equal employment opportunity laws apply to interns?

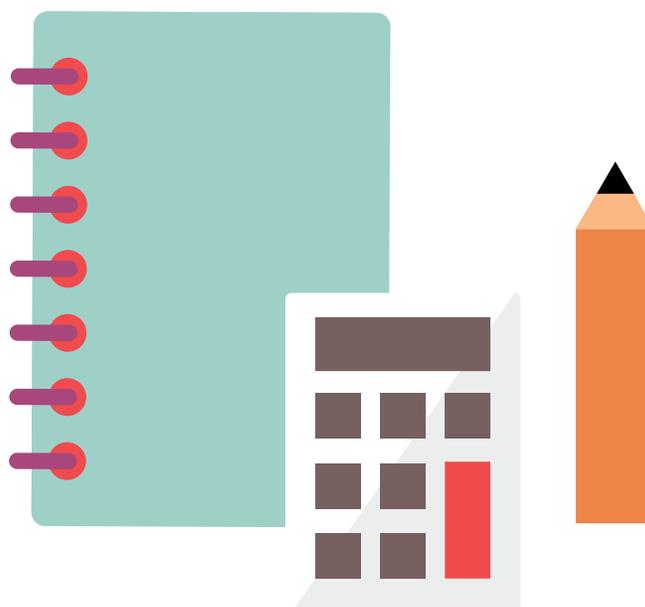
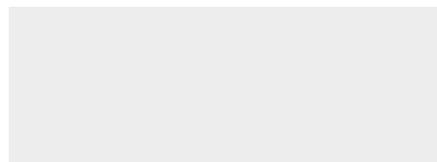
Federal laws, such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) do not define who qualifies as employees and who does not. They prohibit discrimination in recruiting, hiring and employment practices. Therefore, you should treat intern candidates the same as all other applicants and base your hiring decisions on their qualifications, rather than on gender, race, color, age, national origin, religion or disability.

### Are you liable if an intern experiences or instigates harassment (sexual, racial or ethnic) while on the job?

Yes. If an intern is harassed at your worksite and you do nothing about it, your company is exposed to the risk of lawsuits. Therefore, take time to advise new interns of your guidelines regarding appropriate workplace behavior, your company’s harassment policy and its complaint procedures. To fend off any problems, let your regular employees know that the policy applies to interns as well and that you expect students to be treated appropriately.

### How do I sign up?

All you will need to do is send us an email or give us a call.



## Useful Websites

### California Department of Industrial Relations

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/DLSE-CL.htm>

This site contains information regarding child labor laws and work permits for young workers.

### Forum for Youth Investment

<http://www.forumfyi.org>

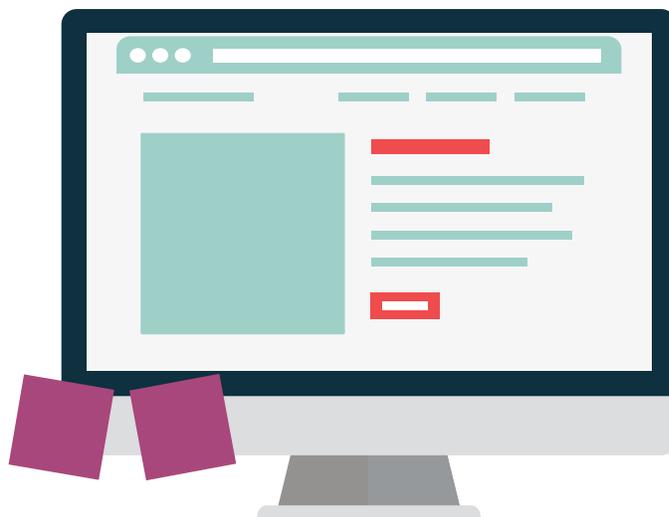
The Forum for Youth Investment is a nonprofit, nonpartisan “action tank” dedicated to helping communities and the nation make sure all young people are Ready by 21®: ready for college, work and life. Informed by rigorous research and practical experience, the Forum forges innovative ideas, strategies and partners to strengthen solutions for young people and those who care about them. A trusted resource for policy makers, advocates, researchers and program professionals, the Forum provides youth and adult leaders with the information, connections and tools they need to create greater opportunities and outcomes for young people.

### New World of Work

<http://www.newworldofwork.org>

Serve as a catalyst to position 21st century skills at the center of US K–12 education by building collaborative partnerships among education, business, community and government leader. To successfully face rigorous higher education coursework, career challenges and a globally competitive workforce, U.S. schools must align classroom environments with real world environments by infusing 21st century skills. This skill set includes:

- Information and communication skills (information and media literacy skills; communication skills)
- Thinking and problem solving (critical thinking and systems thinking; problem identification, formulation and solution; creativity and intellectual curiosity)
- Interpersonal and self-direction skills (interpersonal and collaborative skills; self-direction; accountability and adaptability; social responsibility)
- Global awareness
- Financial, economic and business literacy, and developing entrepreneurial skills to enhance workplace productivity and career options
- Civic literacy



Workforce readiness skills for today's entry – levelworkers mean more than just having basic academic skills. To remain competitive, employees must be able to demonstrate 21st century workplace skills. These include skills related to professionalism, communication, teamwork, innovation and critical thinking. The Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA – Sacramento Works for Youth) prepares entry level workers by funding year-round and summer youth employment. SETA – Sacramento Works for Youth is delivered via Job Centers in collaboration with community-based organizations and school districts. SETA – Sacramento Works for Youth offers: summer youth employment, pre-employment skills/academic enrichment, internships, work experience, community service and service learning. SETA – Sacramento Works for Youth employment programs are more than job placement programs. SETA – Sacramento Works for Youth incorporates youth development principles to help young people make a successful transition to adulthood and economic independence.

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**For more information about SETA – Sacramento Works for Youth, visit [sacramentoworks.org](http://sacramentoworks.org)**

