



**Marin County School to Career Partnership**  
1111 Las Gallinas Avenue • P.O. Box 4925  
San Rafael, CA 94913  
415-499-5865 • Fax 415-491-6622

# **EMPLOYER GUIDE TO INTERNSHIPS**



**PROVIDED BY THE**

**MARIN COUNTY SCHOOL TO CAREER PARTNERSHIP**

*working with businesses to support high school students in obtaining work-based learning experiences*



**Marin County School to Career Partnership**  
**1111 Las Gallinas Avenue • P.O. Box 4925**  
**San Rafael, CA 94913**  
**415-499-5865 • Fax 415-491-6622**

Dear Employer:

Thank you for your interest in providing internship opportunities for the students of Marin County. We appreciate your willingness to be part of an educational program that provides students with valuable knowledge and insights into career planning and the world of work.

The Marin County School to Career Partnership has been coordinating internships for high school students since 1997. Internships are structured opportunities for students to understand the relevance between classroom learning and the world of work, while participating as productive employees in a company or an organization. These work-based opportunities allow students to explore areas of personal and career interest, to acquire the skills necessary to be successful employees, and to formulate goals and plans for their futures. Please ask your School to Career Liaison for the next internship period dates.

The *Employer Guide to Internships* is designed to assist you in preparing an internship opportunity and planning for the student in your place of business. It contains the following information:

- Employer Guidelines for Working with Interns
- The Role of the Workplace Supervisor
- Steps for Employers Requesting and Hosting Interns
- Answers to Questions Frequently Asked by Employers
- Preparing for Your Student
- Supervising Teenagers

Also included in this packet is the *Employer Request for Interns* form. If, after reading these materials, you are interested in hosting an intern, please complete the form and return it to the School to Career Partnership office. We will then begin the process of matching your needs and interests with those of one or more students.

Throughout your involvement in our program, our staff is available should you need assistance of any kind. We can assist in creating the internship position and provide ongoing support during the internship to solve problems or answer questions. It is our goal to make the internship a meaningful experience for the students *and* the employers participating in the program.

Thank you very much for your interest. We look forward to working with you. Please feel free to contact us at (415) 499-5865 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ken Lippi  
Executive Director

# EMPLOYER GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH INTERNS

## Basic Responsibilities

- Understand the student's goals and objectives in joining the internship program.
- Clarify internship responsibilities with the student and direct supervisor before the internship begins.
- Stress the importance of nondisclosure/confidentiality as it applies to your specific department.
- Stress the importance of conduct rules and reasons for immediate termination of internship.
- Review safety rules and emergency procedures, including the location of emergency exits, fire extinguishers, and first-aid kits.

Even the most motivated student needs help from you to do their best during the internship. Things only you can provide include:

- ★ Specific and realizable goals toward which to work
- ★ Tasks that promote new skills
- ★ Tasks that keep students involved
- ★ Feedback on the student's progress, strengths, and weaknesses
- ★ A comfortable and safe environment
- ★ Effective ways to cope with possible frustrations and problems
- ★ Long-term projects
- ★ Open channels of communication with you
- ★ Clear boundaries for acceptable and unacceptable behavior

## Feedback

Feedback is most useful when it is frequent, honest, and constructive.

Here are some strategies you can use:

- ★ Meet with each student on a regular basis;
- ★ Review what each of you sees as progress;
- ★ Define areas that still need improvement;
- ★ Make concrete suggestions for improvement;
- ★ Focus on what the student is doing right rather than what he/she is doing wrong.



## **THE ROLE OF THE WORKPLACE SUPERVISOR**

The role of the workplace supervisor is to act as a role model, trainer, and mentor. You will assist the student(s) to make the connections between the world of work and the importance of doing well in school. You can do this by:

- Explaining carefully the expectations of the company.
- Providing training, mentoring, and ongoing guidance.
- Providing continual feedback on performance.
- Writing an evaluation provided by School to Career. Meet with the student at the end of the internship to provide assessment results.
- Showing the relevance of schoolwork. Students may observe and practice how English, Math, problem solving, and other basic skills are used each day on the job.
- Demonstrating necessary workplace skills. Students should be introduced to the skills required for success in your field of work.
- Emphasizing teamwork. Students will discover how each person and department plays an important role in the production or service delivery process.
- Assigning work projects and monitoring performance against the workplace standards.
- Monitoring attendance, ensuring compliance with workplace policies, introducing the intern to other employees, and providing training, as well as frequent encouragement and feedback.
- Being available when the intern is working. If you need to be away, designate someone to fill in for you.
- Providing feedback to the School to Career Liaison or informing the School to Career Partnership office at (415) 499-5865 about any changes in the students' schedules, about any performance difficulties, or about any other problems with the placement.
- Supporting students who may have required assignments in order to receive credit for internship.

## STEPS FOR EMPLOYERS REQUESTING INTERNS

1. Please read the entire *Employer Guide to Internships* and the cover letter for the *Employer Request for Interns*. The packet contains important information of which you should be aware.
2. Complete the form entitled *Employer Request for Interns* that is enclosed in your packet. Please complete a separate form for each available position, specifying how many interns could be accommodated in that category.
3. Return the *Employer Request for Interns* form(s) to the School to Career Partnership office, or fax it back to (415) 491-6622.
4. A School to Career Liaison will contact you to forward pre-screened student résumés.
5. If you prefer, the School to Career Liaison can also directly match students for each position.
6. Set up interviews. Contact student(s) directly, or ask a School to Career Liaison to set up the interviews. In any case, please forward the names of students selected for the internship to the School to Career Liaison or the Partnership office at (415) 499-5865.
7. Sign the *Internship Agreement* form. After the student and the employer choose a start date, the School to Career Liaison or Career Pathway Teacher will set up an appointment to meet with each student and his/her respective supervisor to sign the *Internship Agreement* forms.
8. A final evaluation will be mailed to you at the end of the internship. Please complete evaluations, **review with your intern** (very important), and mail or fax back to the School to Career Liaison.

If you have any questions or any problems with placements,  
please contact your School to Career Liaison or the School to Career Partnership office at (415) 499-5865.  
We are here to help make this a successful experience for all!

***Thank you!***

# ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED BY EMPLOYERS

The following are answers to questions frequently asked by employers about internships.

## ***How do I begin?***

Start by filling out the form entitled "Employer Request for Interns." We will find the most appropriate students to fill the internship position(s). You will then receive a call from us to answer any further questions and set a time for you to interview one or more students.

## ***Are the students paid for their internship?***

This varies depending on the business or organization providing the internship. Some interns receive salaries or stipends. However, the emphasis of our program is on work-based learning; so, in many cases, internships are unpaid. If you are using the intern in an employee role, no less than the minimum wage should be paid to the students. If students are paid, a ***work permit*** will be required.

## ***Who selects the intern?***

Students will be screened by the School to Career Liaison, taking into consideration their skills and interests, before referring them for a specific internship. You will be contacted and one or more students will be referred to you for interviews. At the conclusion of the interview(s), you may or may not offer an internship. You will inform the School to Career Liaison which student(s) have been selected.

## ***How long is an internship?***

The internship generally runs for a semester during the school year or for six weeks during the summer. The internship allows the student and the employer some flexibility to determine a mutually agreed upon time for the student to work. Whatever the time agreement, the emphasis is on creating an experience that will allow the student to experience a real work setting.

## ***What about insurance?***

For unpaid students at your worksite, the school district will be responsible for the insurance coverage. For paid internships, the student would be covered by the employer's normal Workers' Compensation Insurance, just as if the intern were an employee.

## ***What if it's just not working?***

The internship experience must work for the employer, the student, and the school. The School to Career Liaison will assist with communication, will make periodic contacts, and will help out with any problems that may develop. We acknowledge the possibility of unsuccessful placements and encourage the employer and the student to recognize when the placement isn't going well. The School to Career Liaison will assist the employer and the student in making an orderly transition.

## ***How does having an intern benefit my business?***

- Ensures that students entering the workforce will be adequately trained, thus alleviating some of the burden of future training costs to create a pool of potential applicants;
- Influences on the kinds of skill(s) students will develop, including those needed in your industry;
- Expands the interpersonal, training, and supervisory skills of current employees as they mentor interns;
- Increases employee morale;
- Contributes to the community and assists schools by providing meaningful educational opportunities;
- Builds vibrant schools and communities;
- Creates positive exposure.

# PREPARING FOR YOUR STUDENT

## **Student Orientation**

The key to a successful internship is to develop clear expectations, skills to be mastered, and projects or tasks to be accomplished. Just like new employees, student interns benefit greatly from a thorough orientation to the workplace. The student's orientation should take place on the first day, and be clear and specific. The more information you provide, the more successful the internship will be.

## **Creating an Internship Description**

It is essential to have a clear, concise internship description that outlines the skills to be learned and the tasks or projects for which the student will be responsible. A clear job description can be used as a tool for supervising and evaluating the intern's performance and knowledge.

## **Training**

Effective training is an important part of the internship experience.

### **Fours Steps to Effective Training:**

#### *1. Preparation*

- Develop a training plan listing the tasks and skills required for an internship.
- Decide when and how training will be accomplished.
- Decide who will conduct the training.

#### *2. Telling and Showing*

- Describe what should be done.
- Demonstrate how to do the task.
- Ask questions, check for understanding.

#### *3. Practice*

- Allow interns to do the task.
- Correct errors.
- Ask interns to describe what they are doing.

#### *4. Performance*

- Allow interns to work on their own.
- Designate someone to go to for help.
- Check frequently for progress.
- Ask questions.
- Provide feedback on performance.

## **Key Elements of a Quality Internship**

- The nature of the internship is related to the educational goals and career interests of the student.
- The student, worksite supervisor, and the School to Career Liaison design the internship experience.
- The student has expressed his/her desired internship outcomes.
- At the internship site, the intern has an immediate supervisor who provides directions or instructions and close supervision initially, then supervision as necessary.
- There is periodic evaluation of learning by the worksite supervisor and School to Career Liaison.
- When the targeted level of competence is acquired, the intern is introduced to new responsibilities.

# **SUPERVISING TEENAGERS**

## **The Rules of the Workplace**

Teenagers often need to be told things about the workplace that you might assume “everyone knows.”

- What are they being paid per hour (if applicable)?
- When will they get their paycheck (when applicable)?
- What is the protocol if they have a schedule conflict?
- What should they do if they cannot come to work?
- What happens if they are late? Absent?
- Who depends upon the work they do? What happens if they do not produce?
- How will their work be evaluated?
- What happens if they have more than one supervisor? If their supervisor changes?

## **Set Goals**

Decide on goals with the students and ask them to pay attention to their own progress. Encourage them to stretch and achieve. Ask them what they would like to accomplish in relation to the work-based learning plan, and tell them what you think would be a reasonable and measurable set of goals toward which to work. For example, if a student wants to achieve “Advanced” skill levels in a certain area, develop a project with him/her that will help the student to attain the goal.

For work experience to be a learning experience, students need to be given tasks that make demands on their intelligence and their skills. Whenever possible, shape the job requirements to take advantage of the particular talents of each student.

## **Encourage Involvement**

Teenagers have a lot of energy. They need to be active participants, not passive observers. Encourage their involvement and give them enough work to test their capacity. When the pace of work changes and there is little for them to do, help them learn another skill.

## **Give Feedback**

Teenagers need to hear you say how they are doing. Like other workers, they thrive when they know their efforts are valued, even if they do not succeed at everything they do. That is why it is important to give them feedback, to identify their strengths and talents, to help them accept mistakes as part of the learning process, and to encourage them to persist and master new skills. Schedule frequent, short sessions to evaluate the student; this fosters open communication between supervisor and intern.

### **Foster Communication**

Be willing to answer what might seem to be obvious questions. Encourage the students to ask questions about anything they don't understand or about any specific interests they might have. Ask the student questions about him/herself to create rapport.

*Always feel free to contact your School to Career Liaison.*



**Marin County School to Career Partnership**  
1111 Las Gallinas Avenue • P.O. Box 4925  
San Rafael, CA 94913  
415-499-5865 • Fax 415-491-6622

## EMPLOYER REQUEST FOR INTERNS

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Internship Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Internships Available: \_\_\_\_\_

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR ORGANIZATION:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### QUALIFICATIONS/SKILLS DESIRED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### BENEFITS TO INTERNS (e.g. will learn computer skills, etc.):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

TERM OF INTERNSHIP: Summer \_\_\_\_\_ School Year (both terms) \_\_\_\_\_ Fall \_\_\_\_\_ Spring \_\_\_\_\_

APPROXIMATE INTERNSHIP HOURS PER WEEK: \_\_\_\_\_ PREFERRED DAYS: \_\_\_\_\_

BUSINESS HOURS: \_\_\_\_\_

MONETARY COMPENSATION: Non-Paid \_\_\_\_\_ Paid (rate) \_\_\_\_\_

HOW DID YOU HEAR OF THIS PROGRAM? \_\_\_\_\_