



## Helpful Hints for Worksite Supervisors

Before meeting with your intern for the first time, ask yourself these questions:

- Think about yourself when you were the same age as your intern. Was there an adult (other than a parent) whom you especially enjoyed spending time with? What were the qualities of that person that made him or her special to you?
- What are the four qualities you have that are going to help you be a great mentor or supervisor?
- Are there any tendencies you have that could potentially make it more difficult for you to develop a strong relationship with your intern? For example, do you like to talk more than you like to listen? What will you do to overcome those tendencies?
- Think about the moment when you are going to meet your intern for the first time. How do you think s/he will feel? What do you imagine he/she will be thinking?

### Questions for Check-Ins

To facilitate the success of your intern, you should consider scheduling regular meetings between supervisor and interns to check-in. These initial meetings will guide you through the process of developing and implementing strategies that support your interns and your organization. In addition, the check-ins could be used to monitor quality, track progress and address any arising issues.

Ask the intern:

1. How is your internship going thus far? How do you feel about being an intern?
2. Are you getting along with other employees? Do you feel comfortable within the organization?
3. What are your ambitions and what current responsibilities, departments, or type of work interests you?
4. Do you need help with any of the projects we have assigned to you? Are you satisfied with how things are going?
5. Is there a training you think would be helpful or of interest to you?
6. Is there anything else you would like to discuss or bring to my attention?

### How to recruit employees & supervisors to work with students:

An internship program could require buy-in from multiple departments and employees in order to make it a success. Below are some ideas as to how you can recruit employees to participate.

- **Build Interest throughout the Company.** Sell the idea of an internship program to people at different levels of the company- from the CEO to board members, union reps and front-line workers. In smaller companies, orient the senior staff and encourage them to support



employees interested in working with students. Once the employees recognize that the program is valued throughout the organization, they will more likely want to participate.

- **Approach Employees in Ways They Trust.** Building interest in internship programs requires a personal appeal from the people employees trust most: other employees. Employers should seek out volunteers willing to recruit their peers. An information session is a good opportunity to give employees a chance to hear from co-workers who already had positive experiences or who believe in the internship program.
- **Anticipate Key Questions and Concerns.** Employees may give several reasons for not wanting to get involved in hosting an intern. The worksite, school contacts and Business Partnership Specialists should assist in providing the employees with the information and support they need. Employees will be more willing to participate if they are confident that resources are available to answer their questions and address their concerns.
- **Create a System of Support and Reward.** Employees need to know that they'll receive the necessary support to work with students. Provide employees with orientation sessions, materials and possibly training sessions. Because participation will require employees to develop new skills and change their routines, employers should consider incentives such as special company recognition, thank you letters, newsletters, etc.

### How Can an Employer Ensure Confidentiality?

Confidentiality should not be a barrier to an internship program. Across the country, organizations and individuals dealing with confidential or client-privileged information have identified meaningful learning activities for students while at the same time protecting client confidentiality.

Employers interested in working with students, but concerned about protecting confidentiality, should consider the following:

- **Train to Build Awareness.** If students are going to be exposed to confidential information, employers should provide the same confidentiality training that regular employees receive.
- **Gauge Maturity Levels.** After observing and talking to the intern, employers should use their best judgment to gauge if he/she is mature enough to understand and apply appropriate behavior regarding confidential information and procedures.
- **Educate Customers.** Employers should explain to customers that the intern is in a learning situation and has received the necessary training to handle confidential matters.
- **Respect the Intern's Confidentiality.** Just as the student has a responsibility to the employer, the employer has a responsibility to the student. Do not share personal information about the intern with other employees or customers.