



Connecting Siouxland businesses with our regional colleges

Thursday, September 29

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

7:30 Welcome

Kory Menken – The Siouxland Initiative
Alex Watters – Sioux City Growth Organization

7:40 Panel Discussion with Q&A

Attorney

Ryland Deinert – Partner at Klass Law Firm, LLP

Employers

Linda Kalin, RN, BS, CSPI – Executive Director at Iowa Poison Control Center
DeeAnn Zimmerman, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, CMS – Sr. Manager, Human Resources at Great West Casualty Company
Tim Terveer, CPA – Certified Public Accountant at Kramer & Associates, LLC

Former & Current Interns

Teresa Kaup – Former Intern/Current Supervisor, Systems Development at Great West Casualty
Grant Houselog, PharmD, RPh – Former Intern/Current Pharmacist at Iowa Poison Control Center
Joelle Kruger – Current Intern/Student at Morningside College

8:40 Closing Remarks

Alex Watters

8:45 Connect with College & University Representatives

Visit booths to discuss internship needs and available services

Briar Cliff University
Creighton University
Dordt College
Iowa State University
Morningside College

Northeast Community College
Northwestern College
University of Iowa
University of Northern Iowa
University of Sioux Falls

University of South Dakota
Wayne State College
Western Iowa Tech Comm. College





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Creating an Effective Internship Program

If you already have or are considering implementing an internship program with your organization, you are not alone. In today's tight labor market, offering such programs can be a significant way to lure new talent. Interns can provide cost-effective, highly skilled labor for your organization while giving you a chance to observe potential new employees without having to hire them on a long-term basis.

Simply deciding to utilize interns in your organization, however, is only the first step. It is important that organizations take the time to carefully research and plan an effective internship program. Internships should be designed to give students an opportunity to use their knowledge and skills in an actual work situation. It also allows them to investigate career opportunities and learn about their interests and abilities.

Key Elements and Best Practices for a Successful Internship Program

Planning: Thinking about your internship needs in advance is necessary for a successful internship program. Things to consider include workload and the availability of intern projects, staff support, office space and financial resources. In most cases, you should post internships at least seven to ten weeks prior to your expected start date. This will allow sufficient time to screen and select appropriate candidates.

Meaningful Assignments: Gone are the days of using interns as simple "go-fers". Students have many talents and traits that benefit employers: enthusiasm, dedication to learning, and an eagerness to work and do a good job. They are seeking opportunities that will stimulate them and provide real experience. A good internship program will ensure the assignment of challenging projects and tasks. Effective assignments are coupled with adequate supervision so as to provide an information resource and to ensure interns are keeping pace.

An internship is really a partnership between the employer, the student, and their school. While there are many aspects to establishing a successful work-learning experience, the work assignment is a key element in the planning process. Here are some tips for creating a successful work assignment:

- Review current job descriptions of employees and determine what types of work can be expanded or augmented. Develop a student assignment from that information and provide a thorough job description.
- Involve the manager who will be responsible for supervising the student in the development process.
- Develop positions that will challenge students. Don't underestimate their abilities.
- Remember that students learn quickly and want to contribute meaningful work to your organization.
- Ensure that infrastructure is in place to support the intern(s). Sufficient workspace (desk, computer workstation, access to phone and fax, company email if necessary, etc.)
- Be prepared to discuss "learning objectives" with your student workers. Many students will need to develop clear objectives for the learning they want to achieve while working in an experiential learning position.



Recruiting and Hiring: The students you hire for internships should be as carefully chosen as other employees. These are individuals in whom your organization is making a significant investment. They may well be your future permanent employees. To recruit students successfully, consider the following points:

- Determine in which academic majors you will find students with the course work, interests and career goals that fit well with your organization's experiential learning assignments.
- Contact the career services department at the private colleges, community colleges or universities for assistance in developing and advertising your positions.
- Once you have received resumes from interested students, interview them in-person at your organization, if possible, so that they can meet potential co-workers and see the actual work environment.
- Try to elicit information from students about their immediate work interests and career goals to develop a good match between the student and your work assignment.

Effective Supervision: Providing quality supervision is an essential element in establishing a successful experiential learning opportunity. Considerable time investment will be needed, especially on the front-end, to plan for and implement necessary training. It is also recommended that the supervisor plan ongoing weekly meetings to stay up-to-date with the intern's progress. Use care in identifying a seasoned staff member who "buys in" to the importance of utilizing interns. The person should realize that the purpose of an internship is two-fold. Consider the following points:

- Place students with carefully selected and trained **supervisors**.
- Be sure that supervisors provide students with **detailed information** about the work they will be doing, including specific tasks, relevant equipment, and work flow.
- Have students and supervisors **meet at least weekly** to address students' questions and provide them with feedback on their performance.
- Provide an **orientation to your organization** (by the supervisor or student program coordinator) so that students will learn about policies, benefits, the facility, etc. Having a handbook that is geared for student workers can also be extremely helpful.
- If possible, have supervisors encourage students to **participate in your organization's training programs** as well as cross-department assignments.
- Involve supervisors and students in a **formal evaluation process**. Be sure that students know how and when their performance will be evaluated.

Appropriate Documentation: Documentation is very important for effective learning to take place. It is strongly advisable that an employer and intern create mutually agreed upon learning objectives. Well documented learning objectives provide clear direction and targeted goals for the intern. This ensures both parties envision the same experience and reduces the possibility of misunderstanding and disappointment. Effective learning objectives are concise and measurable. Some college internship programs may also require that the employer complete performance evaluations at the end and/or at mid-term.

An example of a measurable learning objective: *The intern will produce a marketing plan for XYZ product line.*



An example of an immeasurable learning objective: *The intern will receive an understanding of our marketing concepts.*

It is a good idea to also document other aspects of your internship program, such as your internship program mission, internship job descriptions, eligibility and application requirements, compensation structures, supervisory roles, and supervisor/intern evaluations.

Ensure Interns Feel Welcome: Just as you would a new full-time employee, it is very important that interns be provided with a warm introduction to your organization. Not only are interns new to your organization, in many cases, they are new to the professional world of work. Before interns arrive, be sure to provide them with any necessary housing, transportation, parking and/or dress code information. Once interns start, they should review necessary policies (i.e., work hours, missing work, harassment, safety, etc.). Acquaint them to their work space and environment by introducing them to co-workers. Interns should become familiar with your organization's communication process and chain of accountability. The intern should also know the extent of their job authority and decision-making capabilities. You may even want to plan lunch activities with various staff members for the first week.

Evaluation: An internship can only be a true learning experience if constructive feedback is provided. An effective evaluation will focus on the interns' learning objectives that were identified at the start of the internship. Supervisors should take time to evaluate both a student's positive accomplishments and weaknesses. If an intern was unable to meet their learning objectives, suggestions for improvement should be given.

Stay Connected: It is important for you to stay connected with the students after the internship is over if you are interested in hiring them after graduation. Your company could send a care basket to the students during finals week or include them in the company Christmas party. If you fail to keep in contact with the students, they will likely start looking elsewhere as they don't think the company is interested in hiring them.

Assistance developing an internship position: If you need assistance developing your internship position, contact the career center at one of the private colleges, community colleges or universities. Career centers can provide assistance with:

- Internship job description
- Guidelines for posting internship positions to the website
- Internship agreements with the educational institution
- Assistance in developing a job offer for the intern
- Assistance in evaluating the intern's work

Source: *Internships: Tips for employers on starting an internship program. [10 paragraphs]. National Association of Colleges and Employers: Jobweb, HR/Staffing Professional's Desktop, Tools and Publications [Website]. Available: <http://www.jobweb.org/hr/intertips.htm>*



Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under The Fair Labor Standards Act

This fact sheet provides general information to help determine whether interns must be paid the minimum wage and overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act for the services that they provide to “for-profit” private sector employers.

Background

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) defines the term “employ” very broadly as including to “suffer or permit to work.” Covered and non-exempt individuals who are “suffered or permitted” to work must be compensated under the law for the services they perform for an employer. Internships in the “for-profit” private sector will most often be viewed as employment, unless the test described below relating to trainees is met. Interns in the “for-profit” private sector who qualify as employees rather than trainees typically must be paid at least the minimum wage and overtime compensation for hours worked over forty in a workweek.*

The Test For Unpaid Interns

There are some circumstances under which individuals who participate in “for-profit” private sector internships or training programs may do so without compensation. The Supreme Court has held that the term “suffer or permit to work” cannot be interpreted so as to make a person whose work serves only his or her own interest an employee of another who provides aid or instruction. This may apply to interns who receive training for their own educational benefit if the training meets certain criteria. The determination of whether an internship or training program meets this exclusion depends upon all of the facts and circumstances of each such program.

The following six criteria must be applied when making this determination:

1. The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;
2. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
3. The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern; and on occasion its operations may actually be impeded;
5. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and
6. The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.

If all of the factors listed above are met, an employment relationship does not exist under the FLSA, and the Act’s minimum wage and overtime provisions do not apply to the intern. This exclusion from the definition of employment is necessarily quite narrow because the FLSA’s definition of “employ” is very broad. Some of the most commonly discussed factors for “for-profit” private sector internship programs are considered below.

Similar To An Education Environment And The Primary Beneficiary Of The Activity

In general, the more an internship program is structured around a classroom or academic experience as opposed to the employer's actual operations, the more likely the internship will be viewed as an extension of the individual's educational experience (this often occurs where a college or university exercises oversight over the internship program and provides educational credit). The more the internship provides the individual with skills that can be used in multiple employment settings, as opposed to skills particular to one employer's operation, the more likely the intern would be viewed as receiving training. Under these circumstances the intern does not perform the routine work of the business on a regular and recurring basis, and the business is not dependent upon the work of the intern. On the other hand, if the interns are engaged in the operations of the employer or are performing productive work (for example, filing, performing other clerical work, or assisting customers), then the fact that they may be receiving some benefits in the form of a new skill or improved work habits will not exclude them from the FLSA's minimum wage and overtime requirements because the employer benefits from the interns' work.

Displacement And Supervision Issues

If an employer uses interns as substitutes for regular workers or to augment its existing workforce during specific time periods, these interns should be paid at least the minimum wage and overtime compensation for hours worked over forty in a workweek. If the employer would have hired additional employees or required existing staff to work additional hours had the interns not performed the work, then the interns will be viewed as employees and entitled compensation under the FLSA. Conversely, if the employer is providing job shadowing opportunities that allow an intern to learn certain functions under the close and constant supervision of regular employees, but the intern performs no or minimal work, the activity is more likely to be viewed as a bona fide education experience. On the other hand, if the intern receives the same level of supervision as the employer's regular workforce, this would suggest an employment relationship, rather than training.

Job Entitlement

The internship should be of a fixed duration, established prior to the outset of the internship. Further, unpaid internships generally should not be used by the employer as a trial period for individuals seeking employment at the conclusion of the internship period. If an intern is placed with the employer for a trial period with the expectation that he or she will then be hired on a permanent basis, that individual generally would be considered an employee under the FLSA.

Where to Obtain Additional Information

This publication is for general information and is not to be considered in the same light as official statements of position contained in the regulations.

For additional information, visit our Wage and Hour Division Website: <http://www.wagehour.dol.gov> and/or call our toll-free information and helpline, available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in your time zone, 1-866-4USWAGE (1-866-487-9243).

U.S. Department of Labor
Frances Perkins Building
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

1-866-4-USWAGE
TTY: 1-866-487-9243
[Contact Us](#)

* The FLSA makes a special exception under certain circumstances for individuals who volunteer to perform services for a state or local government agency and for individuals who volunteer for humanitarian purposes for private non-profit food banks. WHD also recognizes an exception for individuals who volunteer their time, freely and without anticipation of compensation for religious, charitable, civic, or humanitarian purposes to non-profit organizations. Unpaid internships in the public sector and for non-profit charitable organizations, where the intern volunteers without expectation of compensation, are generally permissible. WHD is reviewing the need for additional guidance on internships in the public and non-profit sectors.

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Iowa Student Internship Program

IowaEconomicDevelopment.com/WorkforceTraining/Student

Nebraska

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The Intern Nebraska Program

neded.org/business/talent-a-innovation-initiative/interne

South Dakota

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Dakota Seeds Program

sdreadytowork.com/financing-incentives/dakota-seeds.aspx



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