

INTERNSHIPS: Creating high impact experiences

OFFERING HIGH IMPACT INTERNSHIPS takes intentional planning and implementation but increases intern engagement, learning, and desire to stay with an organization long-term. Integrating a few of the ideas below could lead to a more productive experience for both your interns and your organization.

ENGAGEMENT

INTERNS are expected to fully engage:

- > Co-create learning goals
- > Be challenged
- > Work on projects important to the organization
- > Produce work samples they can share with future employers
- > Contribute to organizational decision-making
- > Have a chance to fail

EXPOSURE

INTERNS are exposed to diverse:

- > Ways of thinking and solving problems
- > Strategies for prioritizing and managing work
- > Methods of communication
- > Projects and tasks
- > People, teams, and organizational levels

RELATIONSHIPS

INTERNS build substantive connections with:

- > Interns and coworkers in immediate work team
- > Interns and staff members in other teams
- > Supervisors and other mentors committed to helping interns succeed
- > Individuals who might become important networking contacts

REFLECTION

INTERNS are asked to reflect on:

- > Progress towards stated learning goals
- > What they still need to learn
- > What they value
- > Who they are
- > Who they want to become
- > Career development goals and next steps

FEEDBACK

INTERNS receive rich performance feedback:

- > Regularly scheduled informal check-in meetings
- > Periodic formal performance evaluations
- > From both supervisors and peers
- > Focused on what they are doing well and how they could improve

TANGIBLE IDEAS:

- > Ask interns what they want to **learn** and create or modify projects accordingly.
- > Assign both **individual and team projects**.
- > Plan **social activities** for interns.
- > Have **executives** share career advice.
- > Ask interns to write **meeting agendas**.
- > Allow time for **informational interviews**.
- > Require interns to write **learning logs**.
- > Have interns **present** on their projects.
- > Provide **professionalism** training.
- > For more examples, visit <http://www.naceweb.org/talent-acquisition/internships/>

Reference: High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, & Why They Matter by George Kuh (2008).