

Orienting Interns

A Guide for Supervisors

A good orientation program gets the internship experience off to a successful start. The intern gains insights into the university's policies, procedures, and guidelines, and has the opportunity to ask questions and become motivated to achieve high performance. The orientation also helps facilitate a supportive mentoring relationship that will serve the intern through their assignment and into their career. Be prepared to welcome the intern to the university and acknowledge their value to the organization.

All interns should become familiar with the university and their department through two orientation sessions:

- With your department (preferably led by the supervisor)
- With a Human Resources Representative

Departmental Orientation

Your department orientation should cover:

- An **overview of the division and department** organization chart, a review of what the department does, and who the intern will work with.
- A **tour of the workplace and campus.**
- **Projects the intern will work on.**
- **Performance measurements**, so the intern knows the criteria under which his/her work will be evaluated regularly.
- A review of the **Internship Evaluation Form** and your plans to provide ongoing feedback to the intern. The supervisor should complete an evaluation halfway through and at the end of the program.
- **Reporting time off.** The intern must call the supervisor and Human Resources Representative within the first hour of the regular work schedule to report off.
- **Lunch arrangements.**
- **Departmental expectations, practices, and policies** (e.g., confidentiality, appropriate dress, hours of work, appropriate use of university property, such as telephones and computers, safety and security procedures, etc.)
- A review of your department's **"Who to see for what"** list.
- **Answers to any questions** the intern may have.

Orientation with Human Resources

The orientation conducted by your Human Resources Representative will cover:

- **Employee application.** All interns must complete and sign an application, if they haven't already.
- **Sponsored ID card.** The department for which the intern works typically sponsors an ID card for the intern.
- A review of the **University's Staff Handbook.** Interns should be knowledgeable of the policies and procedures governing the university.
- **Reporting time off.** The intern must call the supervisor and Human Resources Representative within the first hour of the regular work schedule to report off.
- **Overtime.** Internship positions are non-exempt and overtime work must be approved in advance.
- **Salary.**

Strategies for Success

- Include interns in **appropriate meetings** and events within the department, division and university.
- Interns should participate in appropriate **department and university training** opportunities.
- Give the intern a **Carnegie Mellon computer account** and access to necessary databases and software.
- Ensure interns have an **appropriate work environment**, i.e., desk, computer, etc., if necessary.
- **Help your staff** understand, find value in, and support the internship program. Explain that the intern is not a work study employee responsible for clerical and other routine tasks. Instead, link your department's internship position to the university's strategic goals.
- **Identify your expectations of staff** members. If they'll be directing the intern, talk about their role in providing a learning opportunity and the need to provide instruction, ongoing feedback, and opportunities for questions.
- **Encourage involvement.** How can other staff members get involved? Ask them to share their insights into career development and growth, or take the intern to lunch.

Before the Intern Arrives

Make your intern feel welcome by following these steps before he or she arrives:

- Announce the intern's start date to department staff
- Ask staff for project suggestions and let them know what the intern will be working on.
- Plan a first day get-together to introduce the intern to the staff.
- Ask different staff members to have lunch with the intern throughout the internship.
- Have the intern's work site established and ready, stocked with necessary supplies.
- Request an e-mail account and computer access for the intern in advance.
- Schedule training if needed.

And Don't Forget Administrative Details

- Determine salary for intern.
- Complete DRIVE appointment.
- Sign off on photo ID card form.
- Designate a supervisor and back-up person to be responsible for signing the intern's bi-weekly timecard.
- Be sure to explain the payroll process, including information on the intern's paycheck.

For additional information, contact your Human Resources Representative at 8-4747.

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