Employer Best Practices: Pittsburgh Summer Internship Program

CONSIDER APPROPRIATE ONBOARDING.
It’s important for everyone to begin “on the same page,” so to speak. Onboarding can be achieved in a number of ways that best align with your organizational needs and resources (e.g., sharing of key people and information, check-ins, casual meetings, etc.). An onboarding process helps ensure that interns develop an understanding of workplace culture and expectations.

PROVIDE ORGANIZATIONAL EXPECTATIONS.
Whether they are communicated in the form of a handbook or through verbal conversation, it’s important to share guidelines concerning the organization’s profile, goals, workplace policies, and job responsibilities.

PROVIDE INTERNS WITH REAL WORK ASSIGNMENTS.
Providing interns with real work is essential to ensuring the program’s success. Interns should be completing work related to their major, that is challenging, and that will provide them with a valuable learning experience.

We also ask that organizations communicate with interns frequently throughout the work term to determine how they perceive what they are doing. We recommend having a supervisor provide weekly in-person feedback to our students.

ENCOURAGE INTERNS TO ATTEND DIETRICH COLLEGE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS.
We have planned a series of professional development workshops to help students succeed in their internships. Students are required to attend the first Orientation, in addition to one other workshop. We have planned these sessions to occur from 5:30-6:30pm, outside of regular business hours, but please allow your student to leave early if their travel time to CMU is more than 30 minutes. We’d also appreciate you encouraging them to attend more than two workshops, as they will all prove to be beneficial! The workshop topics are below. You’re encouraged to follow up with your interns to discuss what they learned from these workshops to support their reflection and growth.

- **Session One**: Orientation and Pirates Game
- **Session Two**: Professional Communications
- **Session Three**: Career Exploration
- **Session Four**: Articulating Transferable Skills / Resume Building

CONTACT DIETRICH COLLEGE FACULTY/STAFF WITH ANY ISSUES.
This may be your intern’s first professional work experience. With that in mind, if an issue related to an intern’s performance or behavior arises during the summer, we encourage you to discuss it with the student directly so it becomes a learning opportunity for the intern. However, the Dietrich College Pittsburgh Summer Internship Program is available to answer your questions. Please report any issues via email to psip@cmu.edu.

INVITE CAREER CENTER STAFF AND FACULTY TO VISIT INTERNS ON SITE.
Although some programs—especially those that are very structured on the university side—make visits by career center staff and faculty a regular practice, most do not. In general, career center staff and faculty members have relatively few opportunities to visit employer work sites to see firsthand the types of experiences that their students are pursuing. By inviting them to your site, you will build a better working relationship with these groups, which can lead to more student referrals and enhanced campus visibility.

CONDUCT EXIT INTERVIEWS WITH YOUR INTERN.
Whether face-to-face or over the telephone, a real-time exit interview done by a member of your team with your intern is an excellent way to share your advice and to gather the student’s feedback on their experience. If you need assistance in crafting an exit interview conversation or survey, then please contact psip@cmu.edu.