

OPERATION: INTERN
LO-TECH FIELD GUIDE



INTERNSHIP:

A STUDENT WORK EXPERIENCE
ASSOCIATED WITH ACADEMIC
CREDIT. IT IS A MUTUALLY
BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIP
BETWEEN A STUDENT AND
AN EMPLOYER.

OPERATION: INTERN

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to develop an internship program within your organization.

Interns can become agents of change for your business. They bring new ideas, enthusiasm, and knowledge on the most up-to-date business practices. They can provide an available workforce during peak workloads and special projects. In addition to being great public relations agents, interns can help your organization build strong ties with local colleges and universities. Hosting an intern can also help you cost-effectively recruit and evaluate potential new full-time employees, and enhance the diversity of your workforce.

Our North Dakota University System has talented, enthusiastic and motivated young people eager to make a contribution to your business. "Operation: Intern" is designed to help you develop an internship program that meets the needs of your organization.

TEN STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL OPERATION: INTERN MISSION

#1 **Define the mission and objectives of your internship program**

Mission: What does your organization want to gain?

Example: Hiring new employees.

Objectives: How will you measure the program's success?

Example: We will hire two new employees through the internship program within the next year.

#2 **Develop your mission plan**

Write job descriptions to use for recruiting interns. Describe your organization and outline the duties, projects, responsibilities, compensation, plus the length and timing of the internship.

Write a project plan for individual projects including tasks that must be performed in order to meet your objectives. Include descriptions, deadlines, expectations, and reporting channels. Decide who will supervise the intern. Identify a workspace and provide necessary resources. Outline the level of intern involvement in meetings, decision-making, and social functions.



#3

Assign a mentor for each intern within your organization

The mentor should be someone in your organization other than the intern's supervisor that can provide support, direction, and information on the mission, vision and values of your business. The mentor should be supportive of the internship program and its goals. And should be available to help answer questions and provide feedback.

#4

Establish a briefing/orientation process

A formal orientation by a mentor or manager will familiarize interns with policies and procedures, work processes, performance standards and culture within your organization.

#5

Scout and evaluate performance

Conduct performance reviews to track the intern's performance and provide them with feedback. Clear goals and explanations will ensure that your intern is productive and your internship program is successful.

#6

Reinforce development

Offer interns opportunities to engage in professional development, training, and employee networking. Mentors, supervisors, and employees can provide interns with valuable professional insight.

#7

Assign an intriguing mission with challenging work responsibilities

Design specific projects that will provide the intern practical work experience and benefit your business.

#8

Recruit qualified interns

Look for qualities in an intern that you would look for in a full-time employee. Consider things like academic performance, major, college courses, required skills, and computer proficiency. Rules, regulations and other important information relating to employee recruitment is available through the ND Department of Labor web site at: <http://www.state.nd.us/labor/publications/docs/brochures/005.pdf>

Staff at university and college career centers, and Job Service North Dakota, are available to help you with on-line job posting and on-campus informational meetings and interviews.

#9

Work within the law

Contact your legal consultant with any employment law questions.

Interns are not specified in the language of the law; however, it is recommended that you follow equal employment opportunity laws in addition to federal (<http://www.dol.gov/>), state (<http://www.state.nd.us/labor/>), and local laws on matters considering hiring, employment status, wages, and workers' compensation.

To limit yourself from exposure to liability, it would be a good idea to cover your intern under your workers' compensation policy even if the individual is not paid.

#10

Conduct Debriefing/Exit interviews

Improve your internship program and enhance your business by gathering feedback from your intern. Prior to the completion of the internship, ask questions and get suggestions on how your internship program could be improved.

Interns want challenge and responsibility. They can become agents for positive change within your organization. Tap into their potential and realize the long-term benefits. Accept the mission of "Operation: Intern" and add an intern force to your business.

