

Internship

An internship is an opportunity to learn more about a career while gaining meaningful on-the-job experience. Not only will you get an insider's view of what it is like to work in the field, but you will also be in a position to make valuable connections and gain references for future work.

CATEGORY

- Engineering
- Could be adapted for any industry

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the benefits of an internship.
- Identify available resources that will help them search for internships.

SUPPLIES

- Flip chart and markers
- Computer with Internet access

PREPARATION

- Prepare a slide deck presentation about internships for Activity 1.
- Arrange for a visit from a human resources team member.
- Arrange for a visit from an engineering intern.

ADVISOR NOTE: Text in italics should be read aloud to participants. As you engage your post in activities each week, please include comments, discussions, and feedback to the group relating to **Character**, **Leadership**, and **Ethics**. These are important attributes that make a difference in the success of youth in the workplace and in life.

ACTIVITY 1

Internships Presentation

Show a short slide deck presentation on internships. Include information to address the topics below.

Slide 1: Benefits of an internship

Slide 2: Outcomes of this presentation

- The purpose of an internship
- What to expect from doing an internship

Slide 3: Opportunities

- Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they might be considering.
- Internships give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

Slide 4: What to expect from an internship

- To develop specific learning objectives that will allow experiences while supervised by a professional
- To support academic, career, and personal development
- To set learning objectives and participate in observations, reflections, and evaluations
- To have the learning goals of the intern match the organization's needs
- To have a distinct timeframe, often three months, and work part time or full time
- To include industry-related and soft skill development
- To be carefully monitored and evaluated for academic credit
- To have supervision in a reasonably safe environment with the necessary equipment to perform learning goals

Slide 5: What not to expect from an internship

- To be used as free help
- To be used to replace an employee
- To spend more than 20 percent of your time on busywork, i.e., filing, covering phones, or running errands

Slide 6: Sample Engineering Internship Description

TEST ENGINEERING INTERN

Internship Description: The Test Engineering Intern will be responsible for developing and executing physical and electrical performance testing to have more comprehensive characterization of fluid dispensing equipment. Essential job duties and responsibilities include: developing test plans to effectively evaluate dispense equipment (valve, dispenser, barrel) performances, selecting the test methodology and instrumentation required, setting up the test equipment, executing tests, summarizing their test results, and concluding in a formal report format. Any other duties will be assigned.

Qualifications:

- Pursuit of a mechanical, industrial, or electrical engineering bachelor's degree; at least a junior in standing
- Self-directed and motivated
- Technical-report-writing skills
- Proficient in Microsoft Office preferred skills and abilities
- Familiar with LabVIEW
- Familiar with National Instruments products
- Knowledge of physical and electrical measuring methods

Working Conditions and Physical Demands

- Mixed environment of office, laboratory, and manufacturing
- To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. This includes being able to lift up to 20 pounds daily and 40 pounds on occasion.
- 10 to 15 hours per week availability, \$17 per hour
- Transportation to and from internship experience required

The requirements listed above are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Drug-Free Workplace. In an effort to safeguard workplace health, safety, and productivity, employment is contingent upon passing a post-offer drug screening and background check.

This organization is fully committed to equal employment opportunity and to attracting, retaining, developing, and promoting the most qualified employees without regard to their race, gender, gender identity or expression, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, citizenship status, veteran status, or any other characteristic prohibited by state or local law.

(Sample internship content from *Employer Guide to Structuring a Successful Internship Program* by Rhode Island colleges and universities and Bridge.jobs. Retrieved from <http://web.uri.edu/experience/files/RI-Employer-Guide-Good-Internships-are-Good-Business.pdf>)

ACTIVITY 2

Speaker Visits

Open the discussion with the guest speakers by introducing the human resources manager and current engineering intern who are visiting your post.

Ask the human resources manager the following:

- *What do you look for in references from interns and those pursuing their first jobs?*
- *What tips do you have for résumés and other ways to highlight skills?*
- *What type of education focus, if any, should applicants have?*
- *How should applicants present themselves during interviews?*

Ask the current engineering intern the following:

- *Why did you decide to do an internship?*
- *Why did you pick the company you are affiliated with?*
- *What was the process to get your internship?*
- *What is your next step?*
- *What do you normally do as part of your internship?*
- *What have been some of the challenges you have faced?*
- *What would you do differently now that you know more about the internship process?*

ADVISOR NOTE

Some sample questions are below to help the participants get the most out of the session and make them think. The questions are designed to help the participants apply what they have learned to their own interests. You are welcome to use these questions or develop your own questions that relate to your post or specific focus area.

REFLECTION

Focusing Questions

- *What is the purpose of learning about engineering internships?*
- *Can you think of other questions you have about internships?*

Analysis Questions

- *Discuss feedback from the guest speakers.*

Generalization Questions

- *Is an internship something you might be interested in? What about it appeals to you?*
- *What types of engineering would you like to learn more about?*
- *What subjects in school do you believe you will need for an internship?*

ADVISOR AND OFFICER REVIEW

After the meeting, address the following:

- Identify what was successful from the meeting.
- Identify what needed improvement.

Schedule an officer and Advisor planning meeting to prepare for next the post meeting or activity.