

Internship Mentoring Guidelines

To be successful, an intern must have a designated Mentor who is responsible for providing orientation and supervision throughout the summer internship program. This should be someone who will be available to the student on a regular basis, and who possesses a thorough understanding of the purpose of the internship program.

The Mentor will be the sole supervisor who oversees the internship. Since the intern will rotate through the various departments, in order to gain the broad-based manufacturing experience, the Mentor will require access to all plant management/leadership.

It is the responsibility of the Mentor to guide the intern through their summer experience. This should include allowing the intern to participate in daily activities that may not normally be open to entry-level employees, such as certain staff meetings, client consultations, or other work-related events.

Because an internship is defined as a learning experience, the role of the Mentor goes beyond proper supervision. The mentor could positively or negatively impact the intern's experience in the manufacturing environment.

MENTOR'S ROLE:

- Develop intern selection criteria with proper plant management team
- Provide a clear vision of what the internship will look like
- Interview and select the proper candidate
- Convey the importance of the Internship program to all existing management and plant personnel
- Introduce the intern to all existing management and plant personnel
- Acquaint the intern to the facility and all safety procedures
- Discuss company policies
- Define specific expectations
- Assist in the development of the final written presentation/written report

Evaluation is important to an intern's development and is an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses for the intern as well as the company's internship program. The Mentor should schedule evaluation opportunities at the following points in time during the summer internship program.

- End of first day
- Daily Check-in
- Weekly Report
- End of summer report

The Mentor is responsible for assuring the feedback in two-ways. Specifically, the Mentor shall:

- Answer specific industry questions
- Give feedback frequently
- Make feedback timely
- Keep feedback simple
- Always provide feedback in a private setting
- Communicate the impact of their behavior
- Reward "doing things right"

TIME COMMITMENT:

A Mentor should plan on the following time commitment:

- Planning for internship and project: 5–10 hours
- Interviewing Candidates: 5-10 Hours
- One-on-one meeting with intern: 15 minutes every day
- One on one meeting with intern: 30 minutes once a week
- Assisting in the development of the final written presentation/written report: 2-3 hours

KEY ACTIVITIES OF THE MENTOR

- On the first day, and throughout the first week, plan to spend a significant amount of time with the intern to be certain that the intern is comfortable and understands what is expected.
- Provide specific guidelines to the intern for how he/she will spend his/her time.
- Work with the intern to develop a plan for specific goals that will be accomplished during the internship, including a plan for the development of the final written presentation/written report.
- When an intern attends a planning, management or sales meeting, it will be the responsibility of the Mentor to explain to the intern what the meeting is about in relation to the company's overall growth and success.
- Encourage professionalism by assisting the intern in developing human relations skills, decision making abilities, and managing office politics.
- Remember that you are a role model.

DEVELOPING YOUR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM PLAN

A carefully thought out and written plan, developed with the management team and others in your organization will help create a successful internship program. This plan must include tangible goals and objectives that will enable you to measure the success of the internship program for both the company and the student.

The following questions will help you in preparing an internship program plan.

- Which departments (i.e.. purchasing, inventory control, data entry, quality inspection, assembly, machine operator, management etc.) will you rotate the intern through during the summer program?
- What specifically will the intern be doing in each of these departments?
- What is the day-to-day structure to assure that the intern does not become lost, confused or bored during the program?
- Can you develop a daily, weekly, monthly schedule of activities including the responsible departments and department head responsible for implementing the activity? This schedule be for the length of the program and include:
 - The name of the department/division the intern will be working in for the day or given week.
 - Who the intern will report to during their duration in this department/division.
 - The duties and essential activities/job functions that will be required of the intern in each department/division.
 - The expectations regarding outcomes of tasks/projects performed and completed in each department/division.
 - The physical and mental requirements expected to perform the tasks in each department/division.
 - The health and safety training and equipment required by each department/division.
- Where will you put the intern? Do you need to provide an assigned workspace for them?
- Will the intern require training specific to your health and safety program?
- Will the internship go beyond the day-to-day operations? Will there be special training developed for the internship program like lunches with executives or social events they should be included in?

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INTERN ORIENTATION

The first day of the internship will establish the tone for the entire program. As the mentor, be certain you have allocated uninterrupted time to successfully launch the summer intern program. The following list provides important items that should be accomplished the first day or the first week.

- Complete all necessary forms needed for “new” employee
- Explain the Mission of the Company. Include company history, ownership; how did the organization start? What is unique about your product or service? Who benefits from your product or service?
- Explain company policies such as hours of operation, calling in late or sick etc.
- Provide a job description for the intern
- Take your interns on a tour of the facilities and introduce them to the other employees
- Give your interns company materials to read as you would a new hire. This could include newsletters, an organization chart etc.
- Encourage your interns to spend break and lunchtimes in places where employees gather
- Schedule regular feedback times. Stick to those times throughout the program
- Be certain to explain who the intern reports to beyond you as the mentor.

As a mentor, you will be the single most important influence on the intern’s impression of your company and manufacturing in general. With the need for skilled and qualified workers now and in the future, a summer internship program is an investment. Like any investment, you must manage it to assure the expected ROI. A well developed and managed summer internship program will give you a competitive advantage in recruiting the best workers. A successful manufacturing internship program will play an important role in rebranding manufacturing as an industry and help grow manufacturing in Colorado.

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