



INTERNSHIP TOOLKIT



A PRACTICAL TOOL FOR PREPARING
STUDENTS FOR THE WORLD OF WORK

**CLEVELAND STATE
UNIVERSITY**



Career
Services



INTERNSHIP TOOLKIT TABLE OF CONTENTS

Employers have asked for a practical tool for starting or refining an individual internship or broader internship program. Included here are pieces that can be used independently or as a whole.

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SAMPLE POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE:

DEPARTMENT:

SUPERVISOR: Name and role

POSITION SUMMARY: Overview of position (Tip: consider what will attract a candidate)

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES: Clearly defined areas of responsibility (e.g. projects, tasks)

QUALIFICATIONS: Education; experience; undergraduate or graduate degree; GPA; areas of relevant study

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES: Knowledge of specific skills (e.g. technical, language); other transferable skills (e.g. project management, flexibility, work ethic)

LEARNING OUTCOMES: What will the student be able to accomplish as a result of this internship? (Tip: use Learning Outcomes sheet)

DAYS/TIMES NEEDED: Hours per week; location of internship; if license or personal car is required

SALARY: Typically \$10-15 an hour in order to be competitive; must be at least minimum wage

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO APPLY: Resume; cover letter; writing samples

HOW TO APPLY: Website or contact's email



CAREER READINESS

Career readiness of college graduates is of critical importance in higher education, in the labor market and in the public arena.

In accordance with its mission to lead the community focused on the employment of the new college graduate, the **National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)** has developed a definition and identified competencies associated with career readiness.

The definition and competencies work to help close the gap between higher education and the world of work. They lay the foundation for the work necessary to prep college students for successful entry into the work force.



DEFINITION:

Career readiness is a foundation from which to demonstrate requisite core competencies that broadly prepare the college educated for success in the workplace and lifelong career management.

COMPETENCIES

Career & Self Development: Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.

Communication: Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.

Critical Thinking: Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.

Equity & Inclusion: Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures and policies of racism.

Leadership: Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

Professionalism: Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.

Teamwork: Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

Technology: Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks and accomplish goals.



SUPERVISOR'S GUIDE

TIMELINE/INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUPERVISORS:

DAY 1: Orientation

- Office culture (dress code, use of mobile devices, use of social media, department policies, arrival and departure time, parking, events, etc.)
- Organizational chart (staff and reporting structure)
- Physical area (work space, restrooms, breakrooms, emergency exits, safety facilities, etc.)
- Technology (what is required/available for use and how to operate them)
- Duties and responsibilities (what student will be doing, expectations, goals, tasks, acceptable results, etc.)

WEEK 1: Orientation and expectations

- Determine weekly tasks and appropriate deadlines
- Coordinate a team/organization meet and greet
- Assign a project that the student will manage from start to finish, including deadlines
 - These tasks and projects should align with learning objectives; we recommend you determine together what those objectives should be and incorporate them in the Work Plan

WEEK 7-8: Complete Midterm Evaluation with student

- Using the weekly tasks and semester project that was determined on the student's Work Plan, assess the current results and share feedback with the student - both on quality of work content and interpersonal skill development (refer to Learning Outcomes)

WEEK 16: Complete Final Evaluation with student

- Using the weekly tasks and semester project that was determined on the student's Work Plan, assess the final results and share feedback with the student - both on quality of work content and interpersonal skill development (refer to Learning Outcomes)



INTERNSHIP WORK PLAN

Name: _____ Major: _____

Year in School: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Tasks	Deadlines

Semester Project	Deadlines

Student Signature: _____

Supervisor Name and Title: _____

Organization: _____ Supervisor Signature: _____



INTERNSHIP MIDTERM AND FINAL EVALUATION

Name: _____ CSU ID: _____ Date: _____

Student Instructions: Complete the Weekly Tasks and Semester Project fields based on the Work Plan. Complete the Core Competencies Self-Evaluation by checking off the appropriate box for each area. Sign form after reviewing with your supervisor.

Supervisor Instructions: Complete the Results and Comments sections for the Weekly Tasks and Semester Project. Complete the Core Competencies Evaluation by checking off the appropriate box for each area and adding comments as appropriate. Sign form after reviewing with the student.

Weekly Tasks	Results	Comments

Semester Project	Results	Comments

EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

Student Self Evaluation	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Needs Improvement	Supervisor Evaluation	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Needs Improvement	Comments
Critical Thinking/ Problem Solving				Critical Thinking/ Problem Solving				
Oral/ Written Communication				Oral/ Written Communication				
Teamwork/ Collaboration				Teamwork/ Collaboration				
Digital Technology				Digital Technology				
Leadership				Leadership				
Professionalism/ Work Ethic				Professionalism/ Work Ethic				
Global/ Intercultural Fluency				Global/ Intercultural Fluency				

Student Signature: _____

Supervisor Name and Title: _____

Organization: _____ Supervisor Signature: _____



TIPS FOR PROVIDING FEEDBACK

FOCUS FEEDBACK ON BEHAVIOR, RATHER THAN THE PERSON

It is important to refer to what the person does, rather than comment on what we imagine the person is. This focus on behavior helps to center on actions rather than qualities. “I noticed you talked for a few minutes,” rather than, “You are a loudmouth.” Focusing on behavior also relates to a specific situation, which can be changed. It is less threatening to hear feedback about behavior than traits.

FOCUS FEEDBACK ON OBSERVATIONS, RATHER THAN INFERENCES

Speak to what you can see and hear, not to your own interpretations or conclusions. “I noticed you looked down the entire time you answered that question,” instead of, “You looked sad when you answered that question.”

FOCUS FEEDBACK ON DESCRIPTION, RATHER THAN JUDGEMENT

Report what occurred; do not make judgements about good, bad, right, wrong, nice or not. Judgements arise out of a personal frame of reference or values, whereas descriptions are objective.

FOCUS FEEDBACK ON THE VALUE IT MAY PROVIDE FOR THE RECIPIENT, RATHER THAN THE “RELEASE” IT PROVIDES THE PERSON GIVING THE FEEDBACK

Before providing feedback, consider if it is in service of the client, or if it is about your need to give advice.

“The fear of feedback doesn’t come into play just during annual reviews... Many expect the worst: heated arguments, impossible demands...”

Those who learn to adapt to feedback can free themselves from old patterns. They can learn to acknowledge negative emotions, constructively re-frame fear and criticism, develop realistic goals, create support systems and reward themselves for achievements along the way.”

Jay M. Jackman and Myra H. Strober

“Feedback can provide learning opportunities for each of us if we can use the reactions of others as a mirror for observing the consequences of our behavior.”

Such personal feedback helps to make us more aware of what we do and how we do it, thus increasing our ability to modify and change our behavior and to become more effective with our interactions with others.”

Dr. George F.J. Lehner



15 BEST PRACTICES FOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

- 1.** The intern must have a supervisor - someone who is interested in the student's growth and success
- 2.** Provide interns with meaningful work assignments
- 3.** Hold orientation for intern and staff
- 4.** Invite university staff and faculty to visit interns onsite
- 5.** Offer scholarships
- 6.** Offer flex-time and/or other benefits that would make this experience attractive
- 7.** Provide interns with a handbook and/or instructional videos
- 8.** Provide housing and relocation assistance
- 9.** Encourage team involvement
- 10.** Bring in speakers from your company's executive ranks
- 11.** Hold panels with employees who were hired as new grads
- 12.** Offer ongoing trainings and encourage out of office learning
- 13.** Showcase intern work through presentations and expos
- 14.** Conduct focus groups and surveys to generate feedback with interns and co-workers, for continuous work improvement
- 15.** Conduct exit interviews

Courtesy of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

BONUS TIPS!

- Hold interns accountable for delivering quality work that adheres to deadlines
- Give interns direct and meaningful performance feedback



“MICRO” OR PROJECT BASED INTERNSHIPS

One’s use of “**micro-internships**” or “**project based internships**” just depends on what language they prefer to use. **These two terms mean the same thing** in describing the following:

- **Short-term, professional assignments**
- Usually completed **remotely**
- Requires **5-40** hours of work by the student (total) in a finite period of time
- Students are typically given between **one week and one month** to complete project(s)
- Students receive a fixed fee, typically **\$15-\$25** per hour
- Some common **examples** are: content creation, industry research, data entry and social media support

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS:

- Gives students the **opportunity** to work in a field that may not be available to them due to geographic reasons
- Offers **remote** options
- Offers **flexibility** to accommodate classes and busy schedules
- Opportunity to gain **real-world experience**
- Gain and **refine skill sets**
- Explore **fit** and/or **potential career path**
- Earn **income**

BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYERS:

- Can be created **on demand as needed**
- Students participating in micro-internships are not direct hire employees or contractors
- **Identify and build relationships** with potential candidates for full-time roles
- Explore **fit** of student with organization
- Connect with a more **diverse** array of students
- Effectively assess communication, problem solving, and the other **skills** that are vital to success

OVERALL BENEFITS:

- Expand **experiential learning opportunities** for students
- Since micro-internships are **low-risk**, employers are often more willing to look beyond majors and GPA
- **International students** may be eligible to participate in micro-internships through CPT, OPT or a work visa

IMPORTANT POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- How can you ensure a **successful learning experience**?
- Build in time and methods for **regular feedback sessions** with the student.
- **What challenges do you foresee with this structure**, and how can you address proactively?
- How can career services staff help to **ensure the integrity of the internship experience** for students? (hours worked, supervision requirements, etc.)
- How can we **coach students to most effectively market their micro-internship** experiences on the resume and in interviews?



REMOTE INTERNSHIPS: HOW TO

WHAT IS A REMOTE INTERNSHIP?

A remote internship is an internship that allows the intern to work remotely, as in: anywhere other than the office.

It is important to keep in mind a commonly accepted definition of “internship”: a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent. (NACE, 2020)

REMOTE INTERNSHIP BASIC STRUCTURE

There are essentials that must be in place in order for a remote internship program to be successful. The following items must be developed prior to bringing an intern on board, to work remotely:

1. Develop the work plan (use our Internship Toolkit!) and projects the intern will work on (just like an onsite internship). Include what technology the intern will need access to, such as WiFi, laptop, cell phone and any other necessary tools. Also determine which, if any, of these tools the organization will provide. If organization is providing equipment, consult with IT department on next steps.
2. Determine what tools and platforms will be used for collaboration, review and delivery of work such as a shared network folder, Google Docs, DropBox, etc. Bonus: ask your intern if they know of any project management or communications tools to use; they are part of a digital-native generation, and this can be your first opportunity to collaborate!
3. Set clear, realistic deadlines for delivery of assigned projects. Structure is very important in all internship programs, and particularly so when working in different locations.
4. Create an ongoing schedule of regular communication such as Microsoft Teams meetings, regular email communication and a bi-weekly in-person meeting (if possible and appropriate). This also includes ensuring there is a scheduled video conference (or in-person meeting if allowable) for internship evaluations. Regular communication and feedback is critical to the success of a remote internship and to ensuring that the intern feels part of the team.
5. Identify a supervisor, or point person, for each department that is working with a remote intern. This will be the staff person that can answer general questions, provide support, help communicate any organizational news to the intern and ensure their overall engagement in the internship.
6. HR, senior leadership and any other point people should work together to identify solutions for any privacy concerns or other organizational proprietary issues such as access to the network or internal programs, such as CRM, etc.
7. Work with HR to create a remote onboarding and orientation for remote interns.
8. Departmental point-person is responsible for creating a departmental orientation for remote interns.
9. Determine compensation for the intern. The general rule of thumb is to pay them what you would pay an onsite intern.
10. Be creative in developing opportunities for professional development and social interaction such as monthly webinars, remote coffee connections with other employees (outside of their department), access to LinkedIn Learning, etc.
11. Get the intern’s feedback about the experience at the midpoint and end of the internship using survey tools and video meetings. Also, do regular check-ins about how they feel about the experience.



REMOTE INTERNSHIPS: HOW TO

OTHER BEST PRACTICES

The following is a list of ideas and practices from employers experienced with remote internships:

1. A communication schedule which includes seeing each intern through video or in-person meetings.
2. Ensure department supervisors are prepared and able to manage someone remotely. This is critical!
3. Provide laptops with access to necessary files and programs so the intern has quality tools.
4. Schedule social activities that are in-person, if possible. This could be themed meetings (e.g. bring your favorite mug or hat) sporting events, etc. This will encourage connection, and therefore encourage teamwork in doing the work of the organization. Remote social event ideas include remote “Lunch and Learns”, tours of local organizations (i.e. museums), speaker series, sober happy hours, talent show/game show, etc.
5. Determine what the transportation needs are for the intern to attend in-person meetings or events (if in-person meetings are possible). If there are costs associated with traveling to meetings and events, decide who will cover travel expenses. It is common for the employer to cover parking costs and mileage for travel. Consider paying for a bus pass or gas card.
6. As with any internship, very clearly identify what your goals and objectives are for the internship.

PROJECT IDEAS FOR REMOTE INTERNS

1. Any research-based projects
2. Data clean-up
3. Content creation such as website copy (or clean up), blogs, press releases, etc.
4. Event planning and event research – remote events need to be planned also!
5. Call campaign
6. Lead generation
7. Member or customer outreach
8. Research different remote outreach tools or processes, such as developing a chat, creating an online library or using other technologies outside traditional methods (e.g. email)

OTHER IDEAS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Condense summer internship program to 4-6 weeks with a part-time schedule (20-25 hours per week). This allows the organization to lightly enter into remote internships and allow the intern to keep any part-time jobs they may need.
2. Consider a more project-based approach (sometimes referred to as “micro internships”). A project-based internship would mean the intern was assigned a specific project(s). Once the project was completed, the experience would be over. The student would be paid a stipend typically based on the estimated hours of work required to complete the project.
3. Allow remote internships to be optional for individual departments to participate.
4. Identify both in-person (if an option) and remote professional development opportunities for interns
5. Require some in-person and in-office meetings (if possible).
6. Require that all participating departments submit an intern work plan (template will be provided) and tentative communications schedule to HR in advance of internship.
7. Hold a “Lessons Learned” meeting at the end of the internship experience, including all departments that participated in the remote and/or project-based internship experience, and incorporate into next internship experience. Continue to improve your processes!

Framework adapted from Greater Cleveland Partnership



JOB SHADOWING GUIDE

BENEFITS OF A JOB SHADOWING EXPERIENCE:

- An effective tool in your overall recruitment strategy
- An innovative approach to enhance your company’s “brand awareness” with students
- A way to interact with students and start to build a talent pipeline
- Can expose students to real-world experience and an understanding of career pathways

This guide was developed to assist you with the planning process to ensure a successful experience. Some best practices include:

- Define the goals for the shadowing experience
- Enlist approval from management and engage volunteer co-workers
- Determine the length of time, format and logistics
- Identify employees interested in engaging with students for informational interviews
- Develop a clear internal implementation plan
- Contact CSU Career Services or individual faculty with whom to collaborate
- Provide students an agenda prior to the shadowing experience

EXAMPLES OF A COMPREHENSIVE SHADOWING EXPERIENCE:

- A welcome meeting with leadership
- An overview of the company’s products and/or services, mission, vision and values
- A tour of the company
- Lunch with employees and/or CSU alumni
- Networking with employees
 - Ex. Provide an opportunity for informational interviews with employees in specific roles or departments
- A work assignment (optional)
- Meeting with Human Resources representatives to understand the hiring and selection process
- Wrap up with Q & A



SAMPLE SHADOWING AGENDA

8:00 AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Welcome meeting- Check-in instructions
8:30 AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Overview of company's products and/or services- Overview of company's mission, vision and values- Tour (if in person)
12:30 PM	Lunch with employees and/or CSU alumni
1:30 PM	Networking with employees OR informational interview
2:30 PM	Work assignment
3:15 PM	Meeting with HR representatives to discuss hiring process
3:30 PM	Wrap up with Q & A
4:00 PM	Evaluation



INCLUSIVE HIRING: WHY IT'S IMPORTANT AND HOW YOU CAN START MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Below are four steps you can take for immediate, yet meaningful impact in reducing biases in recruiting:

1. WRITE BETTER JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Job descriptions are often the first tangible impression between you and your prospective candidates. Do subtle cues discourage would-be-candidates from applying?

Be sure to include:

- The outcomes a new hire would be expected to achieve at specific milestones (months 1, 3, 6, etc.)
- A clear articulation of what the new hire would be expected to know already and help others with (labeled as “Teach”) and then clearly state what skills they would have to develop on the job (labeled as “Learn”).
- Give weight to a candidate’s volunteer experience and civic engagement. Does this person care about – and are they invested in – the world around them?
- What other skills and experiences – not academic credentials or certificates – are critical to the role?

Bonus Tip: Check out [Textio](#). This is a fantastic tool that may help companies analyze the language of job descriptions. Research has shown that bias embedded in job descriptions can favor/discourage certain candidates. Language is a reflection of your culture, and a signal whether your workplace is welcoming or not.

2. SPARK A CONVERSATION ABOUT BIASES

A conversation about unconscious biases with your team is a great place to start (see recommended reading and TED Talks below), as it’s something that affects everyone.

Bonus Tip: We recommend the unconscious bias training from [Hone](#) and materials from [Paradigm](#), one of our favorite leading consultancies offering Unconscious Bias Trainings.

Bonus Tip 2: [Harvard has developed a free online tool called the Implicit Association Test \(IAT\)](#) to help the unconscious become more conscious. Check out the website and try out a few of their tests – it’s a window into self-awareness, and you may be surprised by the results.

Readings:

- [White Fragility](#)
- [How to Be An Anti-Racist](#)
- [Stamped from the Beginning](#)
- [Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#)
- [Uncovering the Myths That Keep Racism in Place](#)
- [So You Want to Talk About Race](#)

TED Talks:

- [How to Overcome Our Biases: Walk Boldly Toward Them](#), Verna Myers
- [Color Blind or Color Brave](#), Mellody Hobson
- [Can Art Amend History](#), Titus Kaphar
- [How Studying Privileged Systems Can Strengthen Compassion](#), Peggy McIntosh



INCLUSIVE HIRING: WHY IT'S IMPORTANT AND HOW YOU CAN START MAKING A DIFFERENCE

3. FOCUS AND INFORM INTERVIEWERS

Here are three critical areas to set your interviewers up for success in effectively screening candidates:

Ensure the hiring panel is aligned on how candidates should be evaluated

At the beginning of every search, gather the hiring panel for a short meeting. Walk through the job description and make sure everyone is on the same page about the evaluation criteria. Ask thoughtful questions to help people talk out what is **required** versus **desired**.

Establish basic guidelines for resume reviewing guidelines

Walk through the basics of resume-reviewing with your hiring team. Use the resume to understand the whole story behind a person, with questions like these:

- Does this person demonstrably show growth in their environment? Or if the organization was relatively flat, does this person demonstrate increased responsibilities over time?
- Does this person's language indicate a healthy view of their contributions (not too exaggerated, overblown, egotistical), including specific details on what they were proud of?
- Does the organization of the resume indicate a conscientious ability to communicate with others? (e.g. minimal typos; careful to explain jargon and make it accessible for the reader)

When it comes to evaluating people, there is no one indicator – the best we can do is to gather as many relevant details as possible to consider the whole person.

Structure and plan your interviews

You'd be surprised how much of an impact some basic structure can have. Structured interviews (planned questions, asked across multiple candidates) are more likely to get you the information you need for a sound hiring decision.

Focus on behavioral questions that are focused on the candidate's past experiences, as opposed to hypotheticals. Focus on the "why" and "how" to learn about the candidate – what their strengths/weaknesses are, as well as how they learn and problem-solve. Ask open-ended questions to gather stories:

- Please tell us about a time you faced a conflict while working on a team. How did you handle that?
- We all make mistakes we wish we could take back. Tell us about a time you wish you'd handled a situation differently with a co-worker.
- What are three words your current boss would use to describe you?

Remember that much stronger predictors of success are found in work samples; past patterns of success; comparison against the required competencies of the job; peer/manager ratings; and motivation fit. Focus on these areas to make sure you can identify top talent, no matter their background or privileges.

Bonus Tip: Check out the [Interview section in our Viking Resources library](#) for thoughtful, productive interview questions.



INCLUSIVE HIRING: WHY IT'S IMPORTANT AND HOW YOU CAN START MAKING A DIFFERENCE

4. TRACK AND MEASURE YOUR PROGRESS

It's not possible to fully measure the impact of unconscious bias. There are too many signals that are too subtle to possibly identify, let alone track.

Company demographics

Determine the makeup of your team and compare against local census data. Start a discussion about the trends and discrepancies you see. If diversity and inclusion efforts are just taking off in your organization, we recommend using this step as a current snapshot and to be able to compare against it in the future.

This is because: 1) Explicit goals around hiring numbers can send the wrong message to your team, who may wonder what's being sacrificed in the pursuit of diversity and 2) Diversity and inclusion work takes time, and moving too quickly on setting aggressive goals in recruiting may result in short-term results and long-term failure. Even if diversity is prioritized in recruiting, if the work environment and company culture still have problems, your unsatisfied new hires will rightly leave.

Conversion rates vs Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) data:

A caveat, you'll need larger sets of data to be able to run this analysis.

Take your conversion rates (e.g. the percentage of resumes submitted are moved to phone screen) and intersect them with demographic data collected by EEO, an optional set of questions that can be enabled in your applicant tracking system.

- For example, you might find that underrepresented candidates are passing phone screens but falling off after on-site panels at a disproportionately high rate. This tells you there is likely some sort of bias in a particular stage.

With this information, you can identify the problem like a detective:

- Maybe it's an untrained interviewer turning people off.
- Maybe it's the type of questions asked that's unfair to a certain group.

In addition to conversion rates, you can run the same analysis with interview scores. If underrepresented groups are consistently ranking lower in certain stages and questions, maybe there's underlying bias at play. More opportunities for detective work!

Bonus Tip: Not every company is set up or resourced for substantial metrics and data analyses in diversity recruiting. In that case, we recommend starting with some low-hanging fruit and building up momentum from there. Here are [50+ ideas for advancing D&I](#) that you can start today.

And as always, you are welcome to contact us in the Career Services office for any additional questions or needs you may have!

Adapted from Kim, J. (2017, April 18). Inclusive hiring: Why it's hard, why it's important, and how you can start making a difference [Blog Post].



INCLUSIVE HIRING: TIPS

Interested in furthering your diversity recruitment initiative? Here are some helpful tips to keep in mind when recruiting Cleveland State University students:

- When attending Career Services events or planning an upcoming visit, send employees that represent your inclusive culture and provide diverse perspectives.
- Highlight in your presentation, and in your conversations with students, how your organization values diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Invest in recurring training for your employees, especially as it relates to reviewing resumes and hiring, so they can better serve students of different backgrounds and abilities.
- Recognize that when addressing diversity and inclusion, you may face issues and questions that are often difficult and nuanced. Approach these with an open mind and be accepting of constructive feedback.
- Understand that recruiting is just one piece of the puzzle. It's important to take a variety of steps to retain your talented and diverse workforce.