

High School Internship Tips for Employers

Internship Goals

Our Convent/Stuart Hall students are excited to work with you this summer! The goal is that by the end of their internship, students have gained insight into what it takes to build a successful career in your industry and how organizations work, as well as building basic on-the-job foundational skills at a high school level.

A Few Tips

If you have never sponsored a High School intern before, here are a few recommendations to consider:

- 1) **Structure:** This is likely the first time your intern has worked in a place of business. The unfamiliarity and the feeling that they should be contributing in a meaningful way can create uncertainty about how they will be spending their time. Giving them a daily schedule for the duration of their time with you will help them make the best use of your and their time.
- 2) **Expectations:** Communicate your expectations for the internship upfront as well as any important milestones or deliverables. Beyond work tasks, it's also a good idea to communicate the company's dress code and the hours when they should plan to arrive/leave and when to typically take lunch. Setting expectations around how and how quickly to communicate (ie email responsiveness) is also important. Be sure to check-in with your intern regularly and communicate feedback.
- 3) **Buddy System:** Pairing interns together or with someone who is relatively early in their career can make for a more collaborative experience. Buddies can work together on project goals and confer with one another before seeking clarification from their manager on tasks.
- 4) **Intern Assignments:** Consider what tasks your intern can reasonably take on that support your near-term goals. Internships are most successful when interns feel they are a valued part of the team, whether they are working alongside you or on an independent project. Connecting their efforts to the larger organizational priorities is important, as is providing specific context. For example, even for routine tasks such as updating a database, it is helpful to explain that it is a critical first step in your marketing outreach.
- 5) **Company Resources:** What company resources will the interns need access to? What resources are available that could further their education and help them to be effective in their role (e.g. Learning modules, e-training courses, company web-site, Intranet site, industry research).
- 6) **Facilitating Connections:** Who can you introduce your intern to and who might help to broaden their experience? Could they have lunch or coffee with employees from different departments to help your intern assess whether they have an affinity for marketing, finance, human resources etc.? Gaining this self-knowledge early is extremely valuable.
- 7) **General Learning:** Beyond the specific tasks or projects that you assign, there is also much a young person can learn by working inside an organization. When there is downtime, have your interns explore:

Industry

- What industry is the organization in?
- What product(s)/service(s) are offered?
- What problem does the organization solve/how does it help those it serves?
- What is the industry market size, and is the market growing?

Customers

- Who is your target customer?
- How does your company acquire new customers?
- Where does your company reach customers?
- Are some customers more important/desirable than others?

Competitors

- Who are your competitors?
- What differentiates your company/business/non-profit?
- What are your competitors' strengths?
- What are your company's weaknesses?

Company

- How many employees are there and where are they located?
- What are the revenue, expenses and profit of your company? For non-profits, what is the annual budget and how many people do you serve?
- What is your company doing well?
- What are its challenges?

Job Function

- What is the role of the person you report to?
- What department does s/he work in?
- What are her/his primary job responsibilities?
- Who does s/he report to and who does s/he manage?
- How are priorities set? How is progress communicated? Are there daily or weekly check-in meetings?

Culture

- Do people work independently or do people work closely in groups? Is collaboration and teamwork a major part of how people spend their day?
- How many levels are there to get to CEO (e.g. Associate, Senior Associate, Manager, Senior Manager, Director, Vice President, Senior Vice President etc.)?
- How do people get promoted? What are the mechanisms for feedback from manager to employee?
- How does the person you report to describe the culture? How have you seen evidence of this?
- How does leadership motivate employees at the team, department and company level? What types of communications are there?
- What makes an outstanding employee?

If the student can answer many of these questions, consider the internship a great success!

Below is a copy of the Guidelines we have curated for our CareerStart Interns to help them make the best of their internship experience - and to give them guidance on how to be valuable members of your team this summer. We are including it here for reference.

Internship Guidelines for Interns - Summer 2025

Welcome to the CareerStart Summer Internship Program. To help you prepare for your internship, we have curated tips and best practices to help you make the most of your experience. This may or may not be your first time in a professional setting. Showing up effectively at work shares some similarities with showing up in class, but there are many differences and nuances. If you're embarking on your first internship, consider these internship tips to help you do a great job for your Employer and make the most of your time.

What Are You Hoping to Get Out of Your Internship Experience?

When you meet with your Employer, be sure to let them know if there is anything you're particularly curious about as they can support you in realizing your goals. For example, if you think you might be interested in product management or finance (but are interning in marketing), ask your Employer if they may be able to help you set up a lunch or coffee with someone who works in those areas. In addition to developing specific job skills and learning about organizations, a great outcome would be to validate which career pathways you might be interested in exploring further and which ones you would not. It would also be worthwhile to know which aspects of company culture you like and which you don't prefer. Any self-knowledge you gain will help to put you one step ahead on your career journey.

Getting Started

Your Employer should provide a schedule and a general outline of what you will be doing for the duration of your internship. Please arrive on time and check-in with your Employer before leaving at the end of the day. Ask for feedback and write a brief bullet summary of what you've accomplished at the end of each day or week. When you have questions or need clarification, use the resources available to you (including other interns or colleagues), and don't be afraid to ask for help.

High School Intern Guidelines

21 internship tips to help you find success

Source: Indeed.com <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/starting-new-job/internship-tips>

1. Learn about the company

Before you start your internship, research the company and learn all you can about it. This way, you have a strong idea of what you can expect professionally while on your internship.

Additionally, your manager and coworkers will see you've taken the time to learn about the business, which reflects well on your preparation skills.

2. Meet everyone

Make an effort to meet and [introduce yourself](#) to everyone you interact with during your internship. This shows you're friendly and interested in learning about a variety of roles within the company. Greeting people also demonstrates you're personable and have strong communication skills.

Related: [How To Introduce Yourself Professionally \(With Examples\)](#)

3. Set SMART goals

Your manager might have specific goals for you to achieve while on your internship. Take the time to set your own specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) goals related to your future career aspirations to ensure you're using your time at your internship wisely. You can refer back to your [SMART goals](#) at the end of your internship to determine if you accomplished them.

Related: [How Do You Set SMART Goals? Definition and Examples](#)

4. Get reading suggestions

Ask your colleagues and supervisors for reading suggestions. Learn about any industry publications and stay updated about news in the field. Read the suggestions your coworkers or managers offer you and discuss your thoughts about the materials with the person who suggested them. Follow the company and key executives at the company on LinkedIn - this way you will be notified about company news. You can also join industry groups or follow other companies in the industry to learn more about what is happening in the business landscape.

This will help you do impactful work on your internship project / tasks and it will also demonstrate your interest and commitment to your colleagues and supervisors.

5. Accept all assignments

Some internships require tasks, like setting up conference spaces before a meeting. Even if the assignment doesn't appeal to you, readily accept and perform the job well and on time. This can help show that you're willing to work as part of the team and do whatever the company needs. To the best of your ability, work on an assignment or task on your own for as much as you can before reaching out for help. Use the internet, research, ask your peers or colleagues (while maintaining any confidentiality as necessary) and be resourceful in finding solutions. If you hit a roadblock, it's ok to ask for help from your manager. The best way to do this is to explain the situation, quickly outline the steps you have taken to try to get to a solution and then offer some potential ideas for next steps and then ask for their input. This will demonstrate that you are resourceful and independent - it's much more effective and will leave a more positive impression than asking your manager to solve it for you. Having said that, make sure you keep an eye on your deadlines - if you are at risk of missing a deadline, reach out to your manager to let them know and to ask for support, using the approach outlined above.

6. Ask questions

Ask your coworkers about their jobs, hobbies and education. Talk with your supervisors about the skills they find most valuable in their employees. Use your internship to find out as much as you can about your industry, potential career path and the overall lifestyle of those who work in the field. Similarly, as much as you are comfortable, share things about yourself - your colleagues and your manager want to get to know you, what motivates you, what you find interesting and what your goals are. They are there to support you - you'll find you will make strong and lasting connections when you engage and take an open and curious approach.

7. Look for a mentor

Find a mentor during your internship, if possible. A mentor is someone, usually a manager or supervisor, who helps guide you professionally by offering advice and feedback. Interns who find mentors during their internship may have extra support and resources during their job search. **Related:** [How To Choose a Mentor in 5 Steps](#)

8. Maintain your professionalism

Ensure you remain professional during your internship. If you spend time socially with your colleagues, keep your conversations appropriate and your demeanor professional. Your internship can help you find a full-time job later. Show you're mature and ready for responsibility.

9. Grow your network

Foster positive relationships with your colleagues. Maintain these relationships even after your internship ends. This enables you to have more professional connections to rely on when applying for jobs or looking for professional development training opportunities. These connections can also help you learn more about the industry, and they may offer additional tips about your role if you have a good relationship.

Related: [10 Tips To Help You Build a Network](#)

10. Have a positive attitude

Keep a positive attitude during your internship. Sometimes, you might find the job you thought you wanted isn't the right fit for you. Even if this is the case, use the internship as a learning experience and for finding ways to develop important skills.

Related: [9 Effective Ways To Keep a Positive Attitude](#)

11. Know the expectations

Have a conversation with your manager before you start your internship or on your first day to ensure you understand what they expect of you. Know what your job responsibilities can be, what hours you can expect to work and any other industry or company-related specifics that are important for you to know. This can help you plan a general schedule for your days and anticipate what you may learn.

12. Seek feedback

Ask for feedback from your supervisor and colleagues at the halfway point and end of your internship. Find ways you can continue to develop and improve your skill set as you move on in your career. You can also work with your manager and colleagues and ask them about actionable steps you can take to implement their feedback.

Related: [How To Ask for Feedback at the Workplace in 7 Steps](#)

13. Take notes

Keep track of your responsibilities, important skills or qualifications you admire in coworkers.

You may also want to take notes about what you learned in your internship that you can use in your resume, college application or later in your career.

14. Develop your skills

Make sure you're using your time during your internship to build and improve your professional skill set. If you're not sure which skills to focus on, ask your manager. They can share what they think the most important qualities are in their employees that you can work on developing during your internship to help you succeed in later positions. We call this a Learning Plan. You can create your own learning plan or collaborate on it with your manager.

15. Get a letter of recommendation

Ask for a [letter of recommendation](#) from your supervisor at the end of the internship. This way, you have it ready when it's time to apply to full-time positions. The letter can help you earn new roles because you have someone endorsing your abilities and knowledge.

Related: [How To Ask for a Letter of Recommendation \(With Examples\)](#)

16. Stay organized

[Organizational skills](#) are essential to help you keep track of work responsibilities, meet deadlines and show your manager you can monitor your obligations independently. When you're organized, it can show your managers and coworkers that you're a reliable individual. These skills can also help you manage a heavier workload if you organize your day correctly.

Related: [13 Work Organization Tools To Improve Your Productivity](#)

17. Dress professionally

Ensure you know what the dress code is for your internship and adhere to it. Consider dressing more formally than your colleagues to demonstrate your dedication to the role. While it's important to dress formally and professionally, make sure you're comfortable in what you're wearing so you can concentrate on your work.

Related: [How To Ask About Dress Code at Work \(With Types and Tips\)](#)

18. Take your role seriously

Even if you're only going to work for the company for a short time, or if it's a job shadow vs a more formal internship, take your role and responsibilities seriously. Show you care about your professional reputation by accomplishing tasks with a positive attitude. If you find the task challenging, think of it as an opportunity to learn a new skill or process.

19. Manage your time

Make use of your time efficiently. If you complete an assignment and you don't have other tasks to complete, think about what you could do to take the assignment to the next logical step. For example, if you have been working on an overview of a competitor company as part of a market research assignment, once you have completed it, take a quick inventory of other likely competitors and check in with your manager to see if they would like you to provide overviews of these competitors as well. If you don't know a likely next step or it's a finite task, ask your manager for another task or see if your colleagues need any assistance. It's essential to ask for help when you can during your internship to show you're passionate about your role and using your time there to learn and improve.

20. Communicate well

It's essential to learn to communicate with your manager and colleagues well. This can show you're respectful and tactful in your work. Focus on your verbal and [written communication skills](#), such as presenting your statements clearly and proofreading your work. Additionally, if you're unsure of an assignment from your manager, ask them for clarification to ensure you do it correctly. This skill can help you with your internship and future career. Most importantly - **be responsive**. Employer expectations for response time on email is immediate - or within the hour. Professionals use emails like texts. An area of friction between managers and young professionals is mismatched expectations on response time. Check your email often - several times a day. Set up notifications on your phone for when you receive an email. Even if you don't have an answer to a request on email, send your manager a response that acknowledges receipt of their email and let them know you're working on their request and give them a time when you will check back in with them. When writing emails, use professional language - proper punctuation and grammar. Use exclamation points sparingly. Mirroring the tone of your manager or coworkers in email is an easy way to approach email etiquette.

Managing Up: A useful skill for managing relationships with your manager and co-workers is called 'managing up'. This means being proactive in communicating what you're working on vs waiting for your manager or coworkers to check in on you. This could look like a weekly or bi-weekly email where you list the things that you're working on, highlighting any areas where you need support or have questions. The best part of this is that by being proactive you can reduce your manager's tendency to micromanage your work.

21. Get to know the work culture

Getting to know the work culture can help you feel a part of the organization and bond with your colleagues, which may make you feel more comfortable as an intern. When you familiarize yourself with the company culture, you may learn about the norms, such as arriving at meetings 15 minutes early. Each organization you work at may have a different company culture, making it important to learn to show respect and be kind to your colleagues.

MORE TIPS FOR SUCCESS - KEY QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK

Being inside an organization presents a great opportunity to begin understanding the workplace. The below question categories can spark your thinking:

Industry

- What industry is the organization in?
- What product(s)/service(s) are offered?
- What problem does the organization solve/how does it help those it serves?
- What is the industry market size, and is the market growing?

Customers

- Who is your target customer?
- How does your company get new business?
- Where does your company reach customers?
- Are some customers more important/desirable than others?

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- How many levels are there to get to CEO (e.g. Associate, Senior Associate, Manager, Senior Manager, Director, Vice President, Senior Vice President etc.)?
- How does the leadership motivate employees at the team, department and company level? What types of communications are there?
- What makes an outstanding employee?

Questions You Might Ask Colleagues Over Lunch or Coffee

(The questions under the Culture Section are a good jumping off point too)

- How did you get into this field? Was it related to their college major?
- Were there any classes that you took that were helpful in preparing you for this job?
- What made you want to work at this company and how did you get the job?
- What do you like most about working here? What do you like most about your job?
- What's a typical day like?

Student Evaluation Form - Take Inventory on What you Learned...

- What did you work on?
- What knowledge/skills did you gain?
- What aspects of the company culture did you like? What aspects did you dislike?
- Did you gain further insight into what type of career you're interested in? What did you like or dislike?
- Was there anything else that you learned from this experience? Please elaborate.
- Would you recommend this internship for another CHS Student? How could it be an even better experience?