

EMPLOYER'S GUIDE

BUILD A HIGH SCHOOL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

There are 10 steps for employers to build a successful high school internship program that meets objectives and results in a positive experience for the student and employer:

Build Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build relationships with teachers for career awareness and company branding.• Use k12navigator.org to connect with the right teacher, counselor, or staff person at the schools in your area.• Get your company's name in the classroom.
Host a Student Tour Field Trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Host a student field trip using the tool "Employer's Guide to Conducting a Successful Student Tour".• Send email invitations to schools/teachers of your choice.• During the visit, introduce your internship program. Send around a sign-up sheet for students and teachers that are interested.• Email interested students, and their teacher, to share more information about your internship program.
Continue Student Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow up with the teacher separately on ways you will engage the student, including your internship program.• Examples of ways to continue student engagement could include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Job Shadows○ Classroom Speaker○ Student Mentoring○ Teacher Externship○ Material Donation○ Student Project Support○ Student Transportation Funding
Keep Students Top of Mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep students at the top of your mind for the most meaningful experience.• Students like:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Interaction with people○ Hands on work○ Exploring different areas○ Accessible supervisor○ Being treated like an employee and attending department meetings○ Autonomy and trust to execute a project

Determine Program Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the duration of program. It is easier to shorten a plan to cater to a student intern's availability. • Discuss the student intern's desired outcome at an intake meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Give students an option of what departments to explore. ○ Discuss student availability and duration of internship. • A few common options include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One semester or trimester: typical in a work-based learning environment with 1-to-2-week rotations in different departments. ○ Six weeks: Spend 3 weeks exploring different departments. Halfway through the internship, sit down with the student intern to review their experience. Allow them to spend the remaining 3 weeks exploring their favorite department(s). ○ Nine weeks: Spend 5 weeks exploring different departments. Halfway through the internship, sit down with the student intern to review their experience. Allow them to spend the remaining 4 weeks in exploring their favorite department(s).
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Assign a Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign an on-site Program Coordinator to be the point of contact for students and teachers, and to ensure a consistent program offering and process.
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Design Pathways and Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design your internship pathways and training activities. Consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are there training videos or scenarios that they can complete during their down time? ○ Is there a project that they can have autonomy to execute?
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Assign Mentors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign positive and encouraging mentors in each department that the student spends time with exploring and learning.
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Student Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of internship, encourage the student intern to prepare a presentation of their internship experience, what he/she learned through the process, and how it helped define his/her career pathway. • Present to company leaders and mentors.
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Enhance & Improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance this process and improve the internship program every year to fit your objectives as the employer. • Ask your student intern and teachers how the internship program could be improved for future interns.
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