

# Lock Haven University Career Services

## Employer Guide - Steps for Starting and Managing an Internship Program

This guide provides nuts and bolts information needed to start an internship program. More comprehensive information on setting up and managing an internship program is found in the Employer Manual for Internships which is on website <http://www.lhup.edu/internships/>.

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### **Step 1 - Set Goals and Define Needs**

Think about your business's needs and build your goals for an intern from there. After assessing your needs, write the position description.

- Do you need an intern for ongoing assistance or special projects?
- How can you ease the workload of a department or organization?
- How many interns can you support, and in which positions?

**Write an Internship Position Description**, which includes the following information:

- Title of Position
- Hours per week, if known
- Full or part-time
- Schedule
- Academic background and skills needed
- Assigned work (be as specific as possible with description of responsibilities)
- Paid or unpaid. If paid, how much
- Application process

### **Step 2 - Prepare for Your Intern**

Preparing for an intern lays the groundwork and structure for a successful internship experience. Address the following points before your intern arrives:

- How can you provide a meaningful learning experience for the intern?
- Identify training opportunities.
- Can I compensate the intern in ways other than a wage? i.e., stipend, lunches, training, parking, etc.
- Assign a supervisor/mentor who likes to train and has the resources to do an effective job.
- Identify a workplace for your intern and supply needed equipment, computer, phone, etc.
- Identify training materials and put together a package for the intern's arrival.
- Learn the legal implications of hiring interns. Just like other workers, they are subject to legal protections and regulations. Protect yourself and your intern by knowing the laws. (See LHU website.)
- Think of safety issues that may affect the intern. Create a safe environment for the intern.

### **Step 3 - Recruit an Intern**

Finding an intern is similar to finding an employee. However, since interns are students, a good place to start is with the local colleges and universities. The following process is used to recruit interns at LHU. *(continued next column)*

- Post your internship on LHU's internship site several months before you would like the intern to start.
- Students will apply directly to you. In some cases, the faculty will contact you to place the intern.
- Screen and interview applicants.
- Select the intern.
- Set learning goals with the student and the faculty supervisor.

### **Step 4 - Orientation**

Consider developing an orientation folder that includes particular protocols and policies of the organization. Cover the following in orientation:

- Introduction to staff
- Typical working hours
- When to take lunch break and where
- Where to park
- Where are restrooms
- Office equipment to be used and how to use the equipment
- What is appropriate attire
- Where are staff meetings held (if appropriate)
- Answering the office telephone and how to take messages
- Appropriate level of personal telephone calls or internet use
- How to carry out particular research, if applicable
- Etiquette at business meetings

### **Step 5 - Manage and Evaluate the Intern**

Treat the intern like an employee, but provide more guidance and feedback. Keep in mind this may be the intern's first professional experience. A sample evaluation is provided on the website.

- Assign day-to-day tasks, monitor and provide feedback.
- Allow intern to develop teamwork and communication skills.
- Create goals with deadlines. Guide intern in breaking down tasks and setting milestones.
- Clearly define roles of mentor and/or supervisor. Provide good support.
- Evaluate your intern mid-way through the program and at the end. Be sure to contact the faculty supervisor if issues arise.

### **Step 6 - Evaluate your Program**

At the end of the internship, take a step back and ask a few questions about the value of the program to your organization.

- How well did the internship meet your program's needs?
- How well did the internship meet the needs of your intern(s)?
- Are there other projects or departments where an intern could add value?