

WORKING WITH STUDENT INTERNS

For many high school students, an internship is their first professional experience. Although they may feel nervous, they are eager to learn and contribute to your organization. Reflect on your own high school experience and strive to be the mentor you wished you had. Here are effective ways to work with your intern(s).

WHEN MANAGING AN INTERN...

SET CLEAR GOALS & EXPECTATIONS

Clearly explain the tasks, goals, and behavior standards. Students often do best when they know exactly what is expected and feel that expectations are achievable and fair.

CONNECT TO COLLEGE & CAREER SKILLS

Reinforce the relevance of Future Ready Skills such as communication, collaboration, and problem solving. Share how they show up in your day-to-day work.

SHOW HOW TASKS ARE PART OF THE BIGGER PICTURE

Help students see how their work contributes to the organization's mission and goals. Purpose builds motivation and engagement.

GIVE REGULAR, CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

Offer specific, positive feedback along with suggestions for growth. Students thrive when they understand what they're doing well and how they can improve.

ENCOURAGE REFLECTION AND QUESTIONS

Ask students what they're learning and how it connects to their goals, what challenges they're facing, and what they're curious about. Reflection deepens their learning and builds critical thinking skills.



Right when my internship started, my manager asked me what my top three goals were and throughout, they made sure I met them...I never went up to an employee and felt like they didn't want to give me their time. I'm so grateful for the investment all the employees made in me."

Joshua C., Lenovo High School Intern



WHEN INTERACTING WITH AN INTERN...

MODEL PROFESSIONALISM

Students learn by observation. Demonstrate professional communication, teamwork, time management, and ethical behavior so students model these skills.

BE PATIENT & APPROACHABLE

Students are new to professional environments. Encourage questions, show patience with mistakes, and create a safe space for learning.

SHARE PERSONAL STORIES

Briefly share your own career and educational journey, both struggles and successes.

SPEAK WITH RESPECT & AUTHENTICITY

Avoid talking down to students. Treat them as young professionals and they'll reciprocate

FOSTER A WELCOMING, RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT

Recognize, value, and respect the varied backgrounds and experiences students bring when joining your organization.