



Internship Guide for WBL Coordinators, Teachers and Instructors

Introduction

This guide is designed to help design, structure and support Internships that work for students and young adults, employers, teachers and career pathway program staff. It is part of the Earn & Learn East Bay Work-Based Learning Toolset, which provides quality approaches and strategies to create high-quality, safe and legal Work-Based Learning experiences for students and young adults.

Internship Overview

An Internship is a highly structured, time-limited, Career Preparation activity in which a student or young adult is placed at a workplace for a defined period of time to participate in and observe work first hand within a given industry. Internships provide students and young adults the opportunity to learn by doing real work and being productively engaged in the workplace. They may provide the opportunity to work in teams, rotate through a number of departments and job functions, or to work on a project of interest and productive value for the employer partner. Internships generally take place for a minimum of 60 hours, with 144 hours or more being optimal. They may be paid or unpaid, depending on whether the intern is performing productive work for the employer.¹ They are designed to give students and young adults hands-on experience in a field of interest, the chance to learn and practice occupational skills and the opportunity to learn about their career options.

Internships are designed to promote:

- Exploration of and experience in a field of interest
- Exposure to a wide range of careers and jobs within the industry
- Opportunities to develop, practice and demonstrate new skills
- The acquisition of occupational knowledge
- Awareness of the skills and education needed to be successful in the industry

Internships are intended to enhance workplace knowledge and workplace awareness. They help build the skills required for specific occupations by exposing students and young adults to a wide spectrum of activities within the industry and the range of career options available at a workplace. Internships engage students and young adults in their own learning and provide multiple opportunities for reflection on the experience, both verbally and in writing. High-quality Internships are designed to directly support academic learning, and in many cases have a defined productive value for the Internship host.

Sustaining and growing Internships and all other Work-Based Learning types are dependent on developing and maintaining positive relationships with the employers who are providing opportunities to the students and young adults being served. These employers should be treated as valued customers and partners with frequent check-ins to address participation needs as they arise.

¹ See USDOL Internship Fact Sheet #71 <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>



Internship Support Materials

Tip sheets and checklists for program coordinators, employer partners, teachers, and students and young adults are provided in the Earn & Learn East Bay WBL Toolset to help design, structure and support Internship experiences to maximize learning. Each tip sheet supplements the Work-Based Learning quality elements described in section one of the toolset, and provides a set of success factors and lists of activities or tasks to perform before, during and after the experience. A fact sheet for prospective employers is also provided. Note: These tools and materials are available in Word format to allow for programs to brand appropriately and include contact information. The Work-Based Learning Plan and Evaluation tool provided in section 11 of this toolset can be a valuable tool to help plan, support, assess and document the Internship experience.

Tip Sheets and Fact Sheets

Coordinator Tip Sheet: Internship Success Factors

A tip sheet for Intermediary Staff, WBL Liaisons, Connectors and program staff

Teacher Tip Sheet: Internship Success Factors

A tip sheet for teachers to help students and young adults get the most out of their Internship

Student/Young Adult Tip Sheet: Internship Success Factors

A tip sheet to help students and young adults get the most out of their Internship

Employer Tip Sheet: Internship Success Factors

A tip sheet for participating Internship hosts

Employer Fact Sheet: Internships

A fact sheet for employers that describes what's involved in a company providing Internship opportunities.

Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under The Fair Labor Standards Act

Tools

Work-Based Learning Readiness Worksheet

Work-Based Learning Experience Assessment Tool

Work-Based Learning Plan and Evaluation Tool

The Importance of Structured Activity

All Internship presentations should include structured activity before, during and after the experience. These activities help ensure that all involved parties have meaningful, productive experiences that result in enriched learning. Proper planning and preparation, attention to legal and logistical details, maximization of learning potential, and communication and support for the students/young adults and speakers will help ensure success.