
FOR EMPLOYERS

2020-2021 Lehigh Valley Internship Toolkit

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INTRODUCTION

What is an Internship?

(Excerpt from National Association of Colleges and Employers)

An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

The following criteria for internships were developed by the National Association for Colleges and Employers.

- The experience must be an extension of the classroom.
- It must allow the student to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to real work issues.
- The skills or knowledge learned in the internship must be transferable to other employment settings. The intern should not be learning skills that can only be used at one organization.
- It must provide clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student's academic coursework. Learning objectives for credited internships are typically agreed upon by the student, faculty, and employer.
- It must be supervised by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience. The supervisor should provide routine feedback, be accessible to the intern throughout the duration of the internship, and should serve as a mentor and provide guidance to interns during the internship, offering feedback on things they did well and on areas of improvement.
- Employers must provide resources, equipment, and facilities that support learning objectives/goals. An intern should be provided with a space to work and should not be expected to provide their own work materials, including a computer/printer, software/ hardware, design materials, etc.
- It must have a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.



Characteristics of an Internship Program May Include:

(Excerpt from Muhlenberg College)

- Duration of three months to two years, but a typical experience usually lasts from three to six months.
- Generally, a one-time experience.
- May be part-time or full-time.
- May be paid or unpaid.
- May be part of an educational program, providing careful monitoring/evaluation for academic credit.
- An important element that distinguishes an internship from a short-term job or volunteer work is that an intentional “learning agenda” is structured into the experience.
- Learning activities common to most internships include: learning objectives, observation, reflection, evaluation, and assessment.
- There should be a reasonable balance between the intern’s learning goals and the specific work an organization needs done.
- Internships promote academic, career and/or personal development.

Adapted from materials published by the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE)

What Types of Internships Exist?

(Excerpt from Moravian College Center for Career and Civic Engagement).

PAID INTERNSHIP: A paid internship offers students monetary compensation for their work as an intern. Students may receive payment in the form of a stipend (paid in one or more lump sums) or an hourly rate. There may be other ways to obtain compensation such as reimbursement for travel, housing and/or other living expenses.

UNPAID INTERNSHIPS: An unpaid internship is the same as all other experiences except there is no monetary compensation. In an effort to be supportive of the needs of students and employers, the internship should abide by the guidelines set forth in the Department of Labor Fair Labor Standards Act.

ACADEMIC CREDIT: These internships allow students to earn academic credit for their experience. The student’s university or college decides if the student is eligible to receive college credit or not. That decision is based on school policy as well as the criteria of the student’s major. Students interested in earning academic credit typically must meet college specific guidelines and work with a faculty advisor. Interns receiving academic credit can be paid or unpaid.

Virtual Internships

(Excerpt from Hora & Center for Research on College-Workforce Transitions. UW-Madison)

Virtual internships can be a rewarding experience for both the student and the employer. The next page contains several suggestions for companies and organizations that are considering hosting virtual internships.



- Allocate enough time before the start of the virtual internship to:
 - Select and test software for managing work.
 - Train staff to use software/systems (if students are expected to use new software or information technology, it should be provided free-of-charge).
 - Develop a work plan for the intern, training materials, activities and tools that the intern will need to be successful in the role.
 - Clearly define expectations for both the intern and the supervisor/mentor. These need to be agreed upon before the start of the internship. Goals and expectations should be reinforced on a regular basis.
- All tasks and projects must be carefully prepared and planned for the virtual intern to manage the work effectively by themselves. A written workplan that covers the entirety of the experience is suggested.
- Because the intern will not have the everyday interactions of the workplace, materials, instructions and task descriptions need to be well prepared and available online so the intern has access to that information when it is needed.
- Supervisors should engage their teams in the delivery of the virtual internship experience so the intern will have the opportunity to interact with several individuals throughout the course of the experience. Team members need to be committed and available to engage with virtual interns on a daily basis (and sometimes multiple times a day).
- Create and deliver a well-balanced experience for your intern that includes the opportunity for the intern to:
 - Learn about your organization.
 - Focus on professional development.
 - Engage in meaningful projects and work that will help to develop their overall ability to become a valuable team member in the future.

Resources for delivering a virtual internship experience:

- Face-to-face communication – GoToMeeting, Zoom, WebEx, Zoho Meetings, etc.
- Other communication tools – Slack, Email, Instant Messenger, etc.
- Free Project Management Tools – Asana, OpenProject, nTask, Monday, etc.
- Online file sharing – DropBox, Box, GoFile, etc.

Micro-Internships

(Excerpt from Parker Dewey)

Micro-Internships allow highly motivated college students and recent graduates to complete short-term, low-risk assignments on behalf of hiring managers. They also provide the opportunity to build a talent pipeline, more effectively assess full-time or internship candidates, and drive improved hiring performance.

ARE YOU READY FOR AN INTERN?

(Excerpt from Muhlenberg College)

The questions below will help you determine if your company is prepared to manage an internship program, how your organization can benefit from having an intern, and how a student-intern would benefit from working with your organization. You may find that the answers provide a foundation for creating the internship position description.

1. How do you see your company benefitting from hosting an intern? Would your organization benefit from the work of interns to write, research, identify business leads, work with clients, or provide overall organization or program support?
2. What are the goals of your organization's internship program? Do you need assistance completing a particular project? Are you supplementing staffing needs (though not using an intern as a replacement for a permanent employee)? Do you hope to use the program as a pipeline for potential full-time employees? Do you seek to cultivate talent in young professionals?
3. What do you want the intern to learn while interning at your organization?
4. Who would you like the intern to work with or meet?
5. Would having interns benefit current staff members by providing managerial and supervisory experience?
6. What type of project work needs to be completed? Is there an individual in the organization that will serve as the intern's supervisor and point of contact for the College?
7. Do you have the support of senior management?
8. Does your organization have the space and resources to support an intern and his/her duties?
9. What is the intended duration of the internship? Will the need to fill this position be on-going, or complete after one term?
10. What time of year can you host an intern? What are ideal start and end dates for the internship? Is this a part-time or full-time internship?
11. Are specific skills or technical knowledge/ experience required to adequately complete the assigned tasks?
12. Are you looking for an intern in a particular major(s) or program of study; year level (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior); or GPA?
13. Can your organization offer opportunities for unique industry experiences during the internship? (Conferences, professional development, networking with industry professionals, etc.)
14. Is this a paid or unpaid internship? If unpaid, are there alternative forms of compensation that could be offered (transportation/ parking reimbursement, meal stipend, etc.)?
15. Are you able to develop and implement a training/ orientation program for new interns?



Developing an Internship Program

(Excerpt from Moravian College Center for Career and Civic Engagement)

1. Define your goals for the program.
2. Build support for the program at all levels. Commitment from top management is crucial in creating successful internship opportunities.
3. Plan ahead! Interns will need....
 - **A proper workspace** including a desk, computer and access to technology.
 - **A supervisor/mentor.** Be sure to include your intern in staff meetings, professional development opportunities, lunches and other gatherings.
 - **Information regarding compensation.** Will the intern be paid? If so, how much?
 - **An orientation to the organization/position.** Provide an orientation to your organization, overview of services, and an introduction to staff.
 - **Something to do.** What are the intern's duties? What are the learning goals?
 - **Useful and meaningful work.** An intern does NOT mean free or low-cost help. Take time to learn your intern's skills and strengths so you can create appropriate projects.
 - **A structured evaluation process.** How will the intern be evaluated? When?
 - **Regular contact and feedback.** Schedule a time to meet with your intern regularly.
 - **Immediate explanations.** Be sure to explain policies and procedures to your intern. Sometimes students may not know how/what to ask, so be proactive and explain.
4. Construct a job description which includes an overview of your organization, intern duties, special projects and desired qualifications.

WRITING THE INTERNSHIP POSITION DESCRIPTION

What Do You Need to Include?

(Excerpt from Muhlenberg College)

It is important to create a clear, detailed job description that outlines the responsibilities and qualifications of the internship position. Listed below are the basic items you should include in your position description to help you generate a pool of applicants that fit the needs of the position. You will find sample internship position descriptions in Appendix A.

Items to Include in the Internship Position Description:

(Excerpt from Muhlenberg College)

- The name of your organization
- Location
- A contact person to whom application/resumes will be sent
- The contact's phone number and email address
- The internship position title
- Description of responsibilities and tasks
- Qualifications or required skills
- Information about scheduling/ hours
- Desired start date and/or anticipated end date
- Compensation and/or wages
- Desired majors
- Desired class level: Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, Alumni
- Travel percentage
- Application materials: What do you want students to supply when applying? Resume, cover letter, transcript, writing, and/ or portfolio samples?
- Training offered
- Expected learning outcomes

POSTING YOUR INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Posting on Handshake and Simplicity

(Excerpt from Muhlenberg College)

Handshake and Simplicity are platforms used to manage job postings, interview schedules, and more. They allow you to directly connect with students who apply, and put you in charge of your recruiting process. Each institution has a unique link to create an account on the platform they use.

ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

Onboarding the Intern

(Excerpt from Muhlenberg College)

You should familiarize the intern with the in's and out's of your organization and help him/her acclimate to their new work environment. Many students are unfamiliar with the activities, environment, and objectives of business and industry; a thorough orientation can help with this. The sooner your student- interns understand what your organization does and how it operates, the sooner they can assume their assigned responsibilities and become active and productive in your company.



Prior to the Start of the Internship

- Establish and agree upon the start date, end date, and work hours/schedule. Adhere to the agreed upon hours and dates as closely as possible. During the internship, changes in scheduling should be discussed in advance.
- If the student is completing the internship for academic credit, provide assistance with granting credit as needed.
- Set up an organized workspace for the intern; set up phone, computer, email, and any other resources necessary for the intern to fulfill the responsibilities discussed.
- Establish expectations regarding the organizational dress code.
- Review employer expectations and job description; outline work expectations for the duration of the internship.
- Review and discuss the mission of the organization and how the intern fits into that role.

Within the First Two Weeks of the Internship

- Provide a tour of the facility and introduce the intern to other employees.
- Provide an overview of the company culture.
- Further discuss the position description and specific task/project details.
- Discuss absences, such as how and when to notify the supervisor (provide contact information).
- Discuss timesheets, including proper completion and deadlines, time off, and overtime rules (if applicable).

The First Two Weeks of the Internship

- Explain use of equipment such as phones/making calls, computer, copier, fax machine, supplies/forms.
- Provide intern with organization chart and contact list of key personnel (supervisor, IT, HR, etc.).
- Review company policies and safety/emergency policies—students should be made aware of your company's sexual harassment policy.
- Establish project timeframes and expectations on how to complete projects.
- Review procedures for payment and reimbursement of travel expenses (if applicable).
- Outline opportunities to network within the organization.

How Can You Provide this Information

- Give your intern company materials to read such as newsletters, annual reports, organization charts, etc.
- Encourage your intern to spend breaks and lunchtimes in places where employees gather.
- Schedule regular one-to-one meetings with the intern.
- Give the intern opportunities to observe or participate in professional meetings.
- Allow the intern to interview company personnel to learn more about their position/role

Do You Have to Pay Interns?

(Excerpt from Muhlenberg College)

The U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which applies to all companies that have at least two employees directly engaged in interstate commerce and annual sales of at least \$500,000.00, severely restricts an employer's ability to use unpaid interns or trainees. It does not limit an employer's ability to hire paid interns. See Fact Sheet #71 from the U.S. Dept. of Labor <https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>. You don't have to pay interns who qualify as learners/trainees. The U.S. Department of Labor has outlined six criteria for determining trainee status:

1. Interns cannot displace regular employees.
2. Interns are not guaranteed a job at the end of the internship (though you may decide at the conclusion of the experience to hire them).
3. Interns are not entitled to wages during the internship.
4. Interns must receive training from your organization, even if it somewhat impedes the work.
5. Interns must get hands-on experience with equipment and processes used in your industry.
6. Interns' training must primarily benefit them, not the organization.

INTERNSHIP EVALUATION

Career Readiness and Key Competencies

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) developed a task force composed of college career services staff and human resource staffing professionals to define career readiness. Through extensive research, they identified eight key competencies.

The competencies are listed below. (NACE)

- Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
- Oral/Written Communications
- Teamwork/Collaboration
- Digital Technology
- Leadership
- Professionalism/Work Ethic
- Career Management
- Global/Intercultural Fluency



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APPENDIX A

Sample Internship job description/posting

Sample: Accounting Internship Description

Baltimore Accounting, LLC

Position Available: Accounting Intern

Jump-start a career in the field of accounting. Internships at Baltimore Accounting, LLC offer distinctive, hands-on experience and unparalleled networking opportunities. As an intern, you will work alongside licensed CPAs to provide support in all aspects of accounting. We are a firm that provides audit, compilation, consulting, and review services for for-profit, nonprofit, and employee benefit plans as well as individual and corporate tax return preparation.

Responsibilities include:

- Assist the Finance Manager in daily operations such as accounts payable/receivable » Prepare and review financial statements and management letters
- Assist in the preparation of quarterly expenses analysis and weekly financial reports » Perform membership and sponsorship tracking and follow ups
- Assist Controller with preparing billing audits and sales tax reports
- Attend networking events to develop new client relationships and strengthen existing partnerships

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Solid reasoning, analytical, technical, mathematical and language abilities » Must possess excellent work ethic and ability to self-motivate
- Must be able to multi-task as well as communicate well with clients
- Understands the importance of being a team player

Interns are expected to work a minimum of 15 hours per week. Compensation is \$15.50/ hour. Undergraduate and graduate students with a GPA of 3.0 or higher are encouraged to apply. Summer, Fall, and Spring sessions are offered.

The Application Process: All intern applicants should submit a cover letter and a resume by email. The cover letter should clearly state the position the applicant is applying for, the semester of interest, approximate date on which he/she would be available to begin work if selected, and why would he/she be a good fit for the position desired.

Application Dates: Applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible prior to the deadline of June 1.

Please send applications by email to: janesmith@xzyaccounting.com



Sample Internship Description/Posting:

Event Coordination Intern, XYZ Company

Company Overview: Include a brief summary of the company (e.g. mission, vision and services provided). This can be pulled directly from your website.

Responsibilities: (Examples of specific duties)

- Shadow and assist Event Producer in securing event locations, preparing event visuals and coordinating activities
- Participate in weekly staff meetings to assist in idea development and provide project updates
- Market services and upcoming events using various social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- Perform analysis of marketing effectiveness and present findings during company-wide training session
- Attend client meetings with supervisor and co-facilitate project discussions
- Assist staff and supervisor with “day-of” event duties including guest registration and issue reconciliation

Desired Major(s): Management, Marketing, English

Desired Class Level(s): Senior, Junior

Salary Level: Paid - \$12.00 per hour

Duration: 14 weeks with opportunity to continue, 10-12 hours per week, some weekends required

Requirements: (Examples)

- Undergraduate student majoring in English, Business or other related field with a strong desire to learn about event management
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Ability to effectively work within a team environment
- Experience using various social media platforms
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite
- Familiarity with Adobe’s Creative Suite (Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, etc.) is a plus

Application Procedures:

Interested candidates should submit cover letter and resume via email to <email address>

Contact Information:

APPENDIX B

Intern Final Evaluation

If any criteria are not applicable to this internship experience, please leave the response blank.

Student: _____

Work Term (circle one): Fall Spring Summer

Supervisor: _____

Company: _____

Evaluate your intern based upon the 8 Career Readiness Competencies established by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. Simply place an “x” in the corresponding box, for each statement below.

A. Critical Thinking/Problem Solving	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Shows interest in understanding their role, and tasks					
Seeks out resources and/or asks for help as needed					

B. Oral/Written Communication	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Articulates ideas and concepts clearly in written form					
Actively listens and expresses ideas effectively					

C. Digital Technology	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Identifies and uses appropriate technologies					
Adapts/learns new technology quickly					

D. Teamwork/Collaboration	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Manages and resolves conflict in an effective manner					
Supports and contributes to a team atmosphere					

E. Professionalism/Work Ethic	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Exhibits self-motivated approach to work					
Exhibits professional behavior and attitude					



F. Leadership	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Utilizes teams strengths to achieve common goal					
Takes initiative on projects					

G. Career Management	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Identifies personal strengths and utilizes them					
Assesses areas of growth and develops those areas					

H. Global/Intercultural Fluency	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Values, respects and works with all diverse groups					
Demonstrates inclusive and open attitude					

Please use the space below to provide any additional information on your intern's strengths, weaknesses, and/or ability to accomplish their learning objectives:

Circle YES or NO to the following statements below in regard to future steps.

This evaluation has been discussed with the student? YES NO

The student was made a job offer as a result of this experience? YES NO

Would you consider taking on a future intern? YES NO

Supervisor's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Student's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Internship Coordinator's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____



Our Mission

The mission of Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation is to market the economic assets of Lehigh Valley and to create partnerships to lead the recruitment, growth, and retention of employers.

Our Vision

Our vision is of a diverse Lehigh Valley economy that provides economic growth and opportunity for people of all skills and education and strengthens all our cities, boroughs, and townships.

Our Priorities

- Market the economic assets of Lehigh Valley
- Recruit companies in targeted economic sectors
- Support the growth and retention of new and existing employers
- Promote and coordinate a skilled and prepared workforce
- Provide intelligence and data on the Lehigh Valley economy
- Expand public and private LVEDC investment and build partnerships for economic growth

Lehigh Valley

Come here. Start here. Grow here.

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