



Hosting an Internship

Prepare and offer a rewarding internship experience

Hari B. Varshney
Business Career Centre

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Prepare for your internship

Now that you have successfully hired a candidate for your internship, we encourage you to consider taking the following steps to prepare for their first day:

- If you are providing your intern with technology or equipment, ensure this arrives before their first day.
- Save time setting up email accounts and systems access by doing this before your intern starts.
- Create a high-level plan for your new intern by indicating key responsibilities, projects, and/or milestones the intern will be working on and towards during their internship. This can be treated as a living document that provides direction to yourself and your intern.



Check out our [Internship Work Plan Example](#)

- If you have an outgoing intern in the role who precedes the new hire, consider asking them to put together a handover document. This document can include information on how to complete key tasks, how to access relevant resources, and so forth. Further, consider hosting a transition meeting between your outgoing and incoming intern to review this document and cover any preliminary onboarding.
- Email your intern a week to a couple days before their first day to share your excitement about having them join your team. A simple email goes a long way! This email should also include logistical information about their first day (where and when they should meet you, key HR policies and procedures, dress code, etc.).
- If you haven't already, share the news with your team. Encourage the team to schedule coffee chats directly into the intern's calendar so the intern has a glimpse of who they will be meeting and working with.

What are some effective ways to introduce my intern to the team?

Our past interns have shared a few ideas that have made them feel welcome, comfortable and part of the team from day one... even virtually!

"I was surprised with a gift card to a food delivery website that I could spend on lunch on my first day.

My whole teams joined a Zoom call at lunch hour and we shared a virtual lunch together.

It was a fun, creative way to get to know the team, even though we weren't in person."



"My first meeting of the day was with my manager and peer mentor.

They dedicated the time to just getting to know each other in a personal way.

This was truly the catalyst to building trust with them and feeling comfortable to ask for support in the long-term!"

Onboard your intern

An effective onboarding process will help you set the tone for the internship. From building a positive first impression, to providing insights on workplace expectations, the onboarding process will be the stepping stone to a successful internship.

What information should I share with my intern on the first day?

The first day of a new job can quickly veer into “information overload” territory. Consider what is critical for the intern to know on their first day and what can wait for later. The topics we often advise for the first day are:

1. Discussing shared goals and expectations for the internship. Consider these tips for setting goals and expectations with your intern:
 - Encourage a conversation about the intern’s learning objectives and how they tie into your organization’s goals.
 - [Here](#) is a great resource for more quick tips to support your intern in setting SMART goals.
 - Consider utilizing tools that track KPIs and goals, such as the free version of Asana or Monday.
2. Sharing schedules and timelines of projects/assignments for the duration of the internship.
3. Informing about the company policies and/or guidelines that apply to them during their internship, such as HR policies and procedures and dress code.
4. Ensuring administration and documentation is complete.
5. Asking the intern how comfortable they are with basic technology (ie. Outlook, Excel). If they’re not familiar, offer to train them within the first week.

How do I effectively communicate with my intern throughout the internship?

1. Set expectations for communication preferences up-front. Daily check-ins are recommended while the student is onboarding, followed by weekly check-ins.
2. Share calendars and make sure they are up-to-date with meetings the student should attend.
3. Share your expectations on how a student should communicate when working on projects and tasks. (E.g. How long should they spend trying to figure something out on their own before asking for help? Should they ask a co-worker for help before asking you?)
4. Students have also shared that having a one-pager and/or organizational chart with the “go-to” people for certain topics/questions can be a great reference sheet.

Virtual Onboarding Tips



If your team is working remotely, share the channels that are commonly used at your company. (E.g. Tools like Slack or Teams might be new to your student. Explain how and when to use them).



Looking for some remote team building activities that you can do with your team? We love [this website](#) for recommendations on anything from the occasional team activity to establishing daily routines for connecting and checking in.

Host a Rewarding Internship

Once your intern has onboarded and has a core understanding of the goals and expectations of the internship, consider how these can be effectively fulfilled throughout the internship.

How can I ensure my intern is supported throughout their internship?

1. Schedule regular ongoing 1:1 meetings with your intern to discuss their workload, learning objectives, potential obstacles, and overall experience at the company.
2. If applicable, set up a weekly connect with other interns so they can get to know each other.
3. Consider matching your intern with a mentor and/or employee who can relate more closely to the intern, provide perspective, help them integrate into the company, and support them to explore career paths.

Appendix: Internship Work Plan Example

Stay organized and on track to meeting your and your intern's goals by creating a work plan. Consider this template to be a high-level, living document that can be modified to reflect the intern's goals, responsibilities, and outcomes as the work term progresses.

While this example is structured for a standard 4-month (16-week) internship timeline, we encourage you to explore adapting this for alternative student work-placement terms, if needed (i.e. co-op work term(s)*, full-time positions).

| Timeline | Key Action Items |
|---------------------|--|
| Week 1 | <p>Internship Onboarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intern to meet the team, learn about the organization, complete training requirements. • Set goals and expectations for internship; consider how you can support the intern in fulfilling their learning objectives. |
| Week 2 | <p>Project and Task Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign projects and tasks with clearly defined scopes. |
| Week 3 to 8 | <p>Project and Task Execution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the project and task execution phase as needed. • Regular 1:1 meetings can help sustain expectations, ensure deadlines are met, and serve as an opportunity to provide support, if required. |
| Week 8 | <p>Mid-Point Check-In</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set goals and expectations for internship; consider how you can support the intern in fulfilling their learning objectives. • Meet to review and evaluate initial goals and expectations. • Determine if goals and expectations are being/ will be met or modify if needed. • Provide the intern with feedback on performance. |
| Week 9 to 15 | <p>Project and Task Execution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the project and task execution phase as needed. • Regular 1:1 meetings can help sustain expectations, ensure deadlines are met, and serve as an opportunity to provide support, if required. |
| Week 16 | <p>Final Check-In</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet to review goals and expectations and determine if these have been fulfilled. • Provide the intern with feedback on performance. <p>Evaluations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it is required by the university, or a funder, please complete assigned evaluations. |

*If your intern is completing a co-op term, you and your intern will be provided with a work term checklist with additional action steps you should be taking throughout the placement.

We're here to help.

Hari B. Varshney Business Career Centre

UBC Sauder School of Business
155 - 2053 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC, Canada
V6T 1Z2

Tel (604) 822.6479
Fax (604) 822.1271
Toll-free 1.877.777. 6479

talent@sauder.ubc.ca
sauder.ubc.ca/employer/hire-ubc-sauder

