

The Role of the Site Supervisor

Mentoring

1. Mentors do more than just giving instructions about how to do a task.
2. A teacher teaches about WHY you do things and HOW your policies came about.
3. A conscientious supervisor establishes regular meeting times with an intern.
4. A mentor involves interns and includes them in meetings with others.
5. An advice-giver talks about professions, career goals, options and gives advice about “how to break into_____.”
6. A mentor asks how things are going and asks if anything is less than ideal.
7. A mentor cares.

Supervision

1. Clear expectations.
2. Set time for frequent two-way feedback.
3. Explain WHY and WHAT this is for.
4. Provide a positive, supportive learning environment in which the intern may participate in the work that directly correlates to their academic major.
5. Designate an area expert to serve as the site supervisor; provide a meaningful orientation for the intern to the organization’s purpose, services, clientele, and operating practices. Make available space, supplies, and other resources needed for completing assignments.
6. Complete and discuss with the intern a minimum of two evaluations (midterm and site visit) with emphasis on progress made toward learning objectives and plan for continued learning.

Communication

1. Clear communication is the key to effective supervision in all internships.
2. Clarify the intern's role through the formal learning contract (clarify job responsibilities, set goals, set regular work hours, etc.)
3. Schedule regular meetings with the intern to discuss new and past assignments, to answer any questions, and discuss dynamics of the organization.
4. Give the intern opportunity to attend meetings (staff, committee, or legislative) whenever possible.
5. Explain to the intern how decisions are made.
6. Structure and supervise the internship more highly in the beginning, and ease off when the time seems appropriate.
7. Remember: Interns need to receive regular descriptive feedback on their progress. Are they meeting expectations? Let them know.
8. If problems do occur, speak directly with the intern. If the supervisor is unsure how to deal with a particular situation, a phone call to the faculty moderator or the Assistant Director of ELCE, Laura Hammond, is recommended.

Rewards

1. No rules exist in this area. Supervisors are encouraged to use creativity in rewarding interns for work well done. Some suggestions include:

- Give the intern opportunities to attend professional seminars and workshops provided within or by the organization.
- Give them the opportunity to meet the administration, board members, VIPs or director.
- Give the intern the opportunity to interview or observe other departments/areas of the organization.
- Recognize them for doing things right.
- Note the intern's name on a finished project to give credit and recognition.
- Provide student with contact people known to help in future job hunting.

Motivation

1. Make interns feel like a member of the team.
2. Challenge the intern and show respect for the intern's talent and abilities.
3. Give the intern a designated work area.
4. Give interns a sense of planning and involvement by hearing their ideas.
5. Select/organize assignments so that progress is observable for interns (the feeling of making a difference is a big motivator!).
6. Give constructive, descriptive criticism.
7. Help interns to understand their jobs in relation to other jobs.

Completion

Organizations, colleges, and interns must plan for the internship ending date from the beginning. It is important to set realistic goals for completing projects and for transferring them to other personnel. This prevents incomplete work, abandoned clients, and helps to keep a timeline. A good way to end the internship is by holding some form of celebration. This is a comfortable means of recognizing the completion of the internship experience.

Sources: St. Thomas University:

<http://www.stthomas.edu/careerdevelopment/employers/employerresources/internshipplanning/internshiptips/>

High Point University: <https://www.highpoint.edu/careerinternships/internship-responsibilities/>

Cottey College: <https://cottey.edu/media/84965/internshipsitesupervisorguide.pdf>