

Welcoming Young Talent

How to Prepare for High School Interns

Role of schools, employers, and intermediaries

As an employer, you may work directly with schools to recruit students and collaborate on the design of your internship. Alternatively, an initial contact may be your region's [Education for Employment director](#), a role that often connects employers and schools to engage in work-based learning experiences. You may also work with an intermediary who coordinates with schools, such as a local chamber of commerce, workforce innovation board, or economic development agency.

A human resources representative within your company is a valuable team member to include, to help lead the coordination process.

Documents to prepare before the first day

Internship job description

This description should provide a clear overview of the overarching projects and daily tasks. These should be tied to learning objectives to inform any professional skill assessment being utilized.

- ⇒ Download an [intern job description template](#) from the [Internship Micro-Credential](#), a collaboration of Valley Education for Employment System, Indian Valley Vocational Center, and CAST
- ⇒ View Boone County's [internship descriptions](#)
- ⇒ View Perfection Servo's [summer electronic internship description](#)
- ⇒ View the Aux Sable [document control internship description](#)

Organizational chart

This chart should provide a general overview of the team that the intern will be engaging with directly and highlight any direct supervisors and mentors for the intern.

- ⇒ Download the [organizational chart description](#) from the [Internship Micro-Credential](#)

Orientation plan

This plan should include what will be covered the first few days plus onboarding items that need to be completed before an intern's first day including pre-employment drug screening and background checks.

- ⇒ Download the [orientation template](#) from the [Internship Micro-Credential](#)
- ⇒ Download an orientation template [PDF](#) or [Word](#) file

RESOURCES

- ⇒ Watch "[Top 10 Tips for Hosting a High School Intern](#)" from CAST



- ⇒ Review the Illinois [Recommended Technical and Essential Employability Competencies](#) (see pages 7 and 10)

COMMUNITY EXAMPLE

- To support internship hosts, Boone County created [a handout](#) on the role of employer and school coordinator.
- Valley Education for Employment Systems (VALEES) hosted an [Intern Ready Forum](#) with manufacturing employers to discuss and prepare student-facing materials
- McHenry County's [Manufacturing Pathways Consortium](#) holds planning meetings to discuss who would make terrific mentors, and how employers can engage student interns.

Collaboration conversations

Before an intern starts with your company, these collaborative conversations may be helpful:

With your intermediary, school, and/or community partners:

- **Timing and process for outreach to students**
 - When should recruitment begin?
 - How will students be identified as eligible to participate?
- **Length and timing of the internship**
 - Will the internship be offered during the school year or the summer?
 - How many weeks long is the internship? How many hours per week?
- **Onboarding requirements**
 - Does your company have specific requirements and expectations to be completed, such as drug screening and/or background checks, before an intern is able to start?
 - Are there any documents that need to be completed before an intern is able to start?
- **Mentorship and skill development**
 - Who will be the mentor and main point of contact at the employer, as well as who is the main point of contact at the school?

With your team:

- **Intern's contacts**
 - Who should be contacted for absences and late arrivals?
 - Who is the intern's contact for onboarding paperwork, timesheets, etc.?
 - Who will provide direction and support on the intern's daily tasks and ongoing projects?
- **School contact**
 - Who will work directly with the school or community organization? This person should be aware of the supports provided and expectations set by the school or community organization, including any time-specific requirements.
- **Expectations**
 - Who is supervising the intern?
 - Who is mentoring the intern?
 - How will interns be supported to engage in meaningful tasks and develop technical and essential employability competencies? How will these skills be assessed?

EXAMPLE TASKS AND PROJECTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL INTERNS IN MANUFACTURING

- Material and equipment inspection
- Study plant safety and suggest recommendations for improvement
- Read and interpret drawings
- Develop, prepare, and/or review engineering plans
- Develop basic detail and assembly drawings for products and equipment
- Review applications and issues permits
- Perform physical and chemical tests for quality control
- Conduct research and provide technical assistance as needed
- Create 3-D models from 2-D drawings
- Test prototypes and standard products and write reports to document the results
- Maintain clean and orderly work areas
- Develop and write manufacturing process instructions
- Manage vendors; follow-up on purchase orders
- Receive and/or inspect parts
- Collect and record measurements and other data
- Review plans and/or maps of structures for inspections, troubleshooting, and/or repair
- Participate in developing and implementing SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) and WIs (Written Instructions)
- Maintain and prepare reports on inspections, as well as completed and pending work
- Assist with identifying and assessing technical problems; learn and apply techniques and methods using the necessary tools and equipment
- Assist with the installation of necessary equipment for maintenance and/or repairs
- Developing and implementing a consistent project management process for all departments
- Mapping process workflow for manufacturing line
- Developing and implementing a new contractor safety program with training
- Updating labeling system throughout the manufacturing plant
- Updating checklist to ensure all machinery is being inspected daily
- Inspecting and updating signage that required cleaning or replacement
- Developing and implementing new electronic assessment form
- Maximizing sustainability efforts and cost savings through new process development
- Generating part numbers for the new ERP system
- Posting cash for the accounting department