

# Creating a Talent Pipeline: *An Employer's Guide to Creating an Internship Program*



*Empowerment Education Employment*

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## Introduction

Including internship opportunities in business operations is good for business and good for the workforce. Internships provide significantly important benefits to job seekers as a type of learning career experience, while allowing businesses to contribute to the development of the future workforce as they obtain talented and enthusiastic help. Recent research by the National Association of Colleges and Employers found that:

- 83.4% of employers use internships as a recruitment tool to fill entry level jobs.
- 60% of college graduates who had an internship had at least one job offer (verifying the value of work experience in job seeking.)
- 95% of employers are looking for people with experience.

Internships provide employers with the opportunity to utilize a risk-free alternative to temporary or part-time employee needs, removing concerns related to the employment of staff on a more permanent basis. They are especially valuable when the intern is a person with a disability, although all job seekers can benefit from experiencing an internship. Work experiences such as internships are good for existing staff and the community.

- They introduce staff to working with a co-worker with a disability, helping staff to learn of the talent in the workforce made up of people with disabilities;
- They help businesses develop strong relationships in their communities, especially agencies that can help to locate the needed talent;
- They increase the size of the talent pool with work experience, helping the community's economic growth;
- Businesses become a part of the career growth and education journey for young job seekers.

This guide and seminar are designed to assist Florida's businesses in developing a successful internship program, and to consider including people with disabilities when offering career experiences, as well as those without disabilities. The goal is to make the best use of all the talent available in Florida's workforce, to encourage a workforce as diverse and inclusive as the population of Florida. The Able Trust is pleased to be offering this seminar to Florida's businesses to encourage the use of internships as a part of effective business practice.

## About The Able Trust

The Able Trust is a public-private partnership and foundation that was created in 1990 with a specific directive to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Its mission is **to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment.** Since its inception, the Foundation has helped to put thousands of people with disabilities to work, to the delight of the employees and the businesses they serve. Its reach goes to every county in Florida, working with community agencies and educational institutions to make sure that the workforce of people with disabilities is not lost to the business community.

The Foundation does its work through an extensive grant program that helps local organizations in the training and employment process, and through a major youth program, which is directed at helping high school youth to identify a career path that best matches their talents and the needs

of the future workforce. Both of these program areas look to the needs of both business and job seeker in supporting effective and sustainable initiatives.

The Foundation has conducted original research as well as studied national research on the best routes to employment and development of a good career path for job seekers, and the evidence clearly points to the effectiveness of career experience as the most efficient route. Testimony at the Governor's Commission on Jobs for Floridians with Disabilities reinforced the benefits of such experiences. Many colleges and technical schools now require an internship for graduation; nearly all of them highly recommend some type of career experience before graduation, even if not required.

It is estimated by the national Office of Disability Employment Policy that 20% of the population has a disability, true for all ages and for the typical working age range of 16 – 65. Those with disabilities rank highest in terms of unemployment and under-employment, with a range of talent that is thus lost to the workforce. To begin to address this gap, the internship initiative of The Able Trust focuses on helping Florida's businesses to incorporate internships into their operations wherever possible, and to consider including talented people with disabilities in those opportunities. The Able Trust believes that internships are a win-win for everyone; businesses get access to affordable, highly motivated workers and learn more about the disability market, and people with disabilities receive beneficial career experience to become more competitive in the job market.

## I: Introducing Internships

### What is an Internship?

An internship is a temporary position emphasizing on-the-job training rather than merely employment (Merriam-Webster, 2014). An internship can be paid or unpaid. It is the decision of the employer whether to offer wages to an intern. The Able Trust recommends paid internships whenever possible. The Fair Labor Standards Act of the U.S. Department of Labor utilizes a six part test to define an *unpaid internship* using the following criteria:

- The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the employer's facilities, is similar to training that would be given in a vocational school.
- The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern.
- The intern does not displace regular employees but works under the close observation of a regular employee.
- The employer provides the training and derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern. Occasionally, the operations may actually be impeded.
- The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship.
- The employer and the intern understand and agree that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time in the internship.

### Benefits of an Internship Program for an Employer

Having an internship program:

- Frees up professional or full-time staff to pursue projects that have been put aside due to time constraints.
- Helps accomplish projects that have been delayed due to lack of people, resources, or time.

- Provides opportunities for an organization to test the leadership and management capabilities of junior staff members before providing promotional opportunities.
- Allows companies to build a talent pool of individuals who have the necessary skills and training for future hiring needs.
- Provides temporary help during busy periods or high seasons.
- Brings fresh ideas and new ways of thinking.
- Helps provide insights into new markets and trends.
- Translates easily and quickly into paid employees because of familiarity with the company and work requirements.
- Provides the opportunity to recruit and influence new members to an industry or field.

For interns with a disability, an internship program:

- Opens up a new market: people with disabilities. Studies have shown that once a business has been identified as being friendly to people with disabilities, the market will utilize that business loyally.
- Provides the opportunity to work and interact with people with disabilities, who have been found to have lower rates of absenteeism and higher rates of reliability, work ethic, and pride for their work (U.S. Chamber of Commerce 2013, U.S. Department of Labor 2013, DePaul University 2007).

### A few notes on the Millennial Generation

Many, if not all of your intern applicants will be Millennials, who are those individuals born between 1980 and 2000. They will account for 75% of the workforce by 2025. The Millennial Generation has some unique qualities that are important to know about to make the employee/supervisor relationship run smoothly and to most effectively utilize your intern.

- Millennials want feedback, and desire it frequently
- This generation cares a lot about a good work/life balance
- Appreciate flexible schedules and work conditions
- Technology confidence and competence
- Millennials want to continually learn and develop while in the workplace and value it more than advancement
- Want to have a say in the decisions that affect them
- Want to know “why”, as in how their assignments fit into the larger picture/purpose
- Find social giving and civic engagement important
- Focused on task completion and overlook finding additional work independently
- Strong desire to be challenged
- Blend line between work and personal relationships-boss as a “friend”
- Sense of entitlement because parents coached them to ask for what they want

## II: Planning the Internship

When establishing an internship program, there are a number of considerations to ensure an internship is valuable to both the employer and the intern. It is important to pick tasks and projects that are needed by the business, but to also provide a challenging work experience for the intern.

## Organizational Goals

First and foremost before starting an internship program, a business must determine its goals for having a program or hosting even just one intern. Without having a clear goal, the experience can be frustrating for both the host employer and the intern. Goals can vary widely among businesses. Here are just a few examples:

- Accomplishing a special project
- Infusing the company with new ideas
- Increasing labor pool during high season

Once a goal or goals are established, a company can move forward with determining the logistics of an internship program and how to make it mutually beneficial for both the company and future interns.

## Internship Objective

When advertising for a permanent employee often times a job objective or a general purpose statement is contained in the job description. The same is true for an internship, but in the case for internships it would be better referred to as the specific learning objective.

Internships.com states, *“There is one primary element that distinguishes an internship from all other types of employment: an internship, by definition, must include a specific learning objective.”* The specific learning objective should be directly related to the organization’s goal for the internship. For example, the goal of an internship may be to assist with an annual event. The specific learning objective for this internship might be:

*“The intern will know how to plan and execute a large-scale event.”*

Once the broad learning objective has been identified, more specific learning objectives can be written such as:

- *The intern will be able to communicate in multiple mediums in a professional manner with event vendors and participants.*
- *The intern will be able to plan a seating chart and registration for a luncheon.*
- *The intern will be able to use event registration software to provide relevant reports, registration lists, and other information.*

## Internship Tasks

The major projects and general work tasks should be determined prior to the start of an internship. Additional tasks should be planned to supplement the workload in the event the intern completes work faster than anticipated. Alongside the planning of work, a timeline should also be developed that will be used to ensure the intern is on track throughout the duration of the internship. A timeline will help the intern stay on task and meet any deliverables, as well provide their supervisors outline a comprehensive internship experience. An intern may be assigned routine tasks such as opening the mail, checking voicemail, and returning phone calls. However, interns should not only be tasked with routine work, but should have a substantive project or projects to work on as well.

### **Examples of Projects and Work Tasks**

- Coordinating the logistics of luncheon at a summer conference.
- Researching a pertinent topic and preparing a report for management.
- Developing new workplace initiatives.
- Reviewing and updating workplace policies and documents.
- Conducting an audit of the website.
- Developing a social media outreach strategy.
- Conducting customer service surveys.

### **Developing the Job Description**

The job description is an important tool for recruiting the most qualified applicants and managing expectations. A well-written job description should narrow the candidate pool to ensure recruitment of the type of candidates the company seeks. The following is a list of items to include in a job description for an internship:

- Title of the position
- Location
- Internship description, including a brief description of the company and whether the internship is paid or unpaid
- Responsibilities of the position
- Minimum qualifications of the position
- How to apply for the position

A properly written job description can also protect the organization from legal issues that may arise such as pay discrepancies, Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

While developing the job description think about the criterion for selecting the intern; this will make the selection and interview process slightly easier. The listed items are some examples of criterion that can be utilized when developing the job description-keep in mind though, criterion needs to be relevant to the position being advertised for:

- Academic performance
- Demonstrated written or quantitative skills
- Academic major or specialized skills
- Computer proficiency
- Prior work experience

Also during this time, identify important qualities or skills that are necessary or preferred for the position. Examples of these are:

- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Integrity
- Strong work ethic

*\* A sample intern job description is provided in Appendix A.*

### **Supply Adequate and Consistent Supervision**

The intern should have one direct supervisor. This will provide clarity of whom to contact with any questions, requesting feedback or additional work, or notification regarding illness or late

arrival. Other employees will know which staff contact if an issue arises with the intern. There are several reasons for selecting a particular staff member as an internship supervisor. Some companies assign internship supervision to a staff member who is interested in training, teaching, or mentoring, while other companies assign a junior member to test leadership and management abilities; others assign the task to human resources or the department manager. There is no right or wrong way to select an internship supervisor, but it is important to clearly establish supervisory roles prior to taking on an intern and to ensure buy-in from the designated supervisor.

### Specify Appropriate Duration to Provide a Quality Experience

There is no set standard for the duration of an internship. Often the length of time will be project or season driven. However, the goal of every internship program is to have a quality experience for both the business and interns. Therefore, duration should be determined by the employer and based upon the length required for the intern to have a meaningful work experience and for the business to meet its established goal for the internship.

### Other Logistics to Consider

Other items to consider prior to starting an internship are workspace, office supplies, phone access, computer access, and any other resources necessary to do the job. Questions to consider from a logistics standpoint include:

- What office equipment is needed for the job?
- Does the work area allow for minimal distractions to the intern and other staff?
- Will the intern be working on sensitive materials?
- What other employees need to be involved?

Ideally, the intern will have a designated work space and not be moved from place to place. Since the intern is in the office for a relatively short period of time, it is best for all parties concerned that workspace and technology needs are in place before the first day. This will allow for a smooth start rather than spending the first days on workspace arrangements.

The following checklist may be helpful to begin planning an internship:

- Determine the company's organizational goals for the internship.
- Consider projects on which the intern can work.
- Develop a job description or list of duties to provide to the intern.
- Determine who will provide supervision.
- Consider setting aside a day for training or include training in the orientation.
- Establish goals for the program: building a pool of possible employees, inspiring someone to enter the field, increasing staff during high season, etc.
- Create workspace (empty office, shared workspace, desk in a hallway, etc.) in relation to the kind of work to be performed.
- Determine resources the intern will need to be successful.
- Establish what preexisting skills are required of the intern. Make sure it is realistic to the type of applicant recruited. For example, a high school student will not likely be familiar with Microsoft Access.
- If the business has multiple departments, determine if the intern will stay in one area or move around.

## Internships: Filling the Position

Once the internship opportunity or opportunities have been developed the next step in the process is recruitment. This section addresses recruiting, interviewing, and conducting reference checks all of which are slightly different processes than when hiring a standard employee.

### Recruiting Candidates

There are many options available for placement of an internship announcement, each of which has its pros and cons. A business can elect to use one, all, or a combination to find internship candidates.

- The most obvious and often used place to recruit is the employment center of a college, university, or other postsecondary school. Employment offices not only cover fulltime post-graduate employment, but also part-time employment and internships.
- Specific departments within a college can be queried to send an announcement to students via email.
- Online databases such as [EmployFlorida.com](http://EmployFlorida.com), [internships.com](http://internships.com), the employment section of [craigslist.com](http://craigslist.com), [careerbuilder.com](http://careerbuilder.com), or [monster.com](http://monster.com) all provide for internship advertising.
- Government and community agencies such as a Vocational Rehabilitation Offices, Goodwill, or CareerSource (i.e. workforce office) deal in employment and are able to help identify candidates for internships.

Talent Pool	Positives	Negatives
Colleges/Universities	Large, diverse pool	Possible costs, passive process
Specific Academic Program	More targeted, related qualifications	Smaller pool, may need to develop relationship first
Internet	Large pool, no to low cost	Limited filtering of candidates
Local Agencies	Free, prescreening, often well-focused in matching businesses and candidate pool	May have limited number of candidates

### Interviewing Candidates

Interviewing candidates for an internship position is similar to conducting an interview for a standard employee, particularly if the organization is providing compensation for the internship position. One difference may be that the candidates generally have a lesser degree of experience; therefore questions should be tailored to the degree of experience the business is seeking, and that of the candidate pool. Just as with a standard interview, there are some topics that are off limits including questions of age, race, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, children, pregnancy status, citizenship, height, weight, and military discharge.

*\* Sample interview questions are provided in Appendix F.*

### Checking References

Even though an internship is a short-term association with the individual, it may be prudent to conduct reference checks of the top candidates to assist in narrowing the internship selection process and to protect the organization, its employees, and customers. It is important to note, though, that since many of the candidates may be younger job seekers or not have extensive work experience, prior supervisor recommendations may be slim or nonexistent. If that is the case, other references may need to be sought such as instructors, counselors, agency staff, and

other similar character references. It is important NOT to seek references from relatives and personal relationships if at all possible in order to get the most objective references available.

*\* Sample reference questions are provided Appendix E.*

### III: During the Internship

#### Internships: Orientation

An internship may be the first time a job seeker has worked in a professional setting, and therefore, may be unfamiliar with workplace protocols and procedures. Take time to hold a brief introduction to express performance expectations, describe company policies, make staff introductions, and explain any other information needed for a successful experience. The orientation is an appropriate time to introduce the internship supervisor and mentor employee should one be available. A mentor employee is someone who works in the same department that can answer simple questions, provide a welcoming face, and handle small concerns.

The following list is an example of what to discuss in the orientation:

- Work schedule, including the last day of the internship, lunch hours, dates of evaluation(s), and any prescheduled meetings the intern is expected to attend
- Introduction to supervisor, mentor employee, and other key staff members
- Workplace environment rules
- Protocol for being sick or late
- Rules and policies governing work equipment (internet usage, phone usage, etc.)
- Any necessary forms to be completed (timesheet, emergency contact, confidentiality agreements, etc.)
- Safety regulations
- Review of job description and work expectations
- Goals of the internship
- Hands-on, detailed demonstration of software or other computer needs
- Dress code and other expectations for appearance
- History of the organization and current goals and objectives

*\* A more detailed orientation checklist is included in Appendix B.*

#### Provide Feedback

Just as other employees are provided with feedback during an annual performance evaluation, interns should be provided with an evaluation or feedback during their time with the company. It is important for both the intern and the employer to discuss what areas need improvement and what strengths are appreciated. These experiences provide for growth and development for both the intern and the internship program of the business. It may be helpful to hold less formal evaluations throughout the internship or at least one mid-internship evaluation. This allows for corrective action throughout the internship, and provides the opportunity for ongoing questions and discussion. The following is a list of recommended topics to cover during development sessions and mid-internship evaluation sessions:

- A review of current projects, any shortcomings, unfulfilled expectations, and areas for improvement;

- Whether the internship experience is meeting the goals of both the intern and employer;
- How to use specialized equipment or tools (i.e. computer programs, software, machinery, etc.);
- Professional associations of the supervisor (consider taking the intern to a meeting);
- Importance of community involvement (consider taking intern to a Rotary, Kiwanis, or other civic meeting);
- Career and education goals of the intern;
- Ways that the supervisor can better support the intern.

### **Give Recognition**

One of the best ways to provide recognition of an intern is to provide meaningful work. Including interns in staff meetings and asking for their opinions and ideas is important. By integrating the intern into the workplace, businesses are able to excite interns about work and teach important workplace skills. Some other examples of recognition and workplace integration include:

- Adding interns to mass emails lists and company newsletters;
- Providing a workplace mentor;
- Inviting interns to workplace outings, holiday events, etc.
- Sending entry level job openings to the intern
- Offer of a reference letter in future job pursuits.

### **The Internship: Evaluation of the Intern & Internship Program**

#### **Intern Evaluation**

It is important to provide a formal evaluation at the end of the internship, for the following reasons:

- To provide the intern with a sense of accomplishment;
- To facilitate professional growth and development; and
- To assist the organization in making improvements to the internship program and for future internship experiences.

The final evaluation should be a complete evaluation of the intern and the internship experience.

#### **Recommended items for a formal evaluation:**

- Evaluation of completed projects
- Strengths and opportunities for improvement
- Performance changes between the mid- and final evaluations
- Reflections on the internship and the internship program from both the intern and supervisor perspectives
- Accomplishments related to Internship Program Goals, Objectives, and Tasks
- Areas for continued growth and development

*\*A sample intern evaluation form is provided in Appendix C.*

#### **Provide a Reference**

One of the primary objectives for most internships is for a job seeker to gain work experience. If the intern has done a good job, offer to write a letter of reference for the intern as they search for

permanent employment. The letter should outline their positive work attributes and contribution to the company while working on the internship.

### **Internal Evaluation of Organizational Goals**

Once an internship is complete, time should be taken to reflect upon the original goal of the internship to analyze and improve the overall program. Analyze feedback from the intern and the supervisor, evaluate progress in accomplishing the goals of the business through the internship program, brainstorm solutions and enhancements to the program, and consider offering future internships based upon the conclusions and needs of the company.

## **IV: Best Practices**

**Provide Orientations.** Not just the interns, but for everyone involved. Ensuring your staff is made aware of the expectations of the interns and goals related to the internship program helps to ensure that everyone is on the “same page”. It should also reduce or remove any confusion for all participants.

**Provide Interns with a Guidebook or Toolkit.** This simple tool will contain relevant information such as company’s mission, the department’s mission, corporate structure, who to notify when sick or out unexpectedly, general rules and policies and other simple, yet relevant information that is necessary for the interns to be made aware of.

**Provide real work.** Your interns are there because they want to work, learn new skills, translate their education into the real world and build a resume along with positive references. By providing real work, your interns will remain positive about their internship which will result in positive word of mouth reviews to future interns. Also giving real work to the interns allows for actual production to be done which should benefit the company or organization.

**Allow for interaction with management or other executives.** Interns, especially those in the Millennial Generation, appreciate face time with the “higher ups”. It makes them feel important and gain career and life advice to help them plan out their future.

**Conduct exit interviews.** To ensure your internship program is the best it can be, ask your exiting interns to evaluate their experience so you are able to make improvements and adjustments as necessary. This can be a simple electronic survey or a more elaborate sit down meeting.

**Provide compensation.** First and foremost, paying your interns ensures that you do not need to meet the Department of Labor’s six part test for unpaid internships. Secondly, providing compensation will attract higher quality applicants and reward interns for their work.

**Put the planning time in.** Take the time prior to interns coming on to make sure you have your goals laid out, intern work determined, time schedule and the staff managing the interns is prepared. This should result in less issues and a smoother experience for all involved.

**Evaluate your interns.** An internship is a learning experience and an end of internship evaluation will provide your intern valuable information on how they can improve.

## V: What Interns Are Looking For In An Internship

Just as a business has qualities they are looking for in interns and employees, interns are looking for specific things in internship positions. As a business, you can outshine your competitors and larger, more well-known businesses by offering a higher quality experience that students will desire more. Below is a short list of some items interns are looking for.

- **Compensation.** Whether a stipend or hourly wage all students will appreciate the financial reward, and in some instances the students truly need the pay to be able to afford their schooling and other obligations.
- **“Real/meaningful” work assignments.** Interns do not want an internship where they are fetching coffee, running personal errands and doing busy work. They want substantive work to bolster their resume.
- **Inclusion.** Being made to feel a part of the company and interacting with people across multiple areas of the organization even if only in passing.
- **Interaction.** Being able to interact with supervisors and having their supervisors be accessible.
- **Mentoring.** Having a full time staff be accessible to provide mentoring and career advice.
- **Good Reference.** On the intern’s last day have a letter of reference ready for them that they can take. This will also give them an idea of what you may tell a potential employer if you are ever called for a reference check.
- **Flexible Working Environment.** Often times your interns are students, and as students they have papers, projects and tests. Additionally, they may have classes at odd times of the day, so providing an environment that will work with a student’s schedule is something they will value.
- **Opportunity for full time employment.** This may not be a possibility, but it is the thing that most if not all of your interns will be looking for . Interns benefit companies in that they can mitigate the risks associated with new hire because they already know the intern and their work habits. If you have appropriate entry level positions open definitely consider your interns and still connect with them after their internship concludes in case a future position does open.
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<http://www.internships.com/employer/resources/program/whatis>

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A Sample Job Description

**Name of Company:**

**Position Title:**

**Start and End Date:**

**Description of Company:** This includes who, what, when, where, why, and how of the company and field. This is the chance to sell the organization and internship to candidates. Additionally list if the internship is paid or unpaid, and if paid, what the salary will be.

**Position Description:** This lists more in detail what area or department the internship is located as well as the duties and responsibilities of the position. It is important when listing the position duties and responsibilities to be accurate and thorough. This will ensure expectations meet reality and help the intern to have a more pleasant experience.

**Reports to:** List the supervisor's name or position.

**Requirements:** List the skills or requirements the intern needs to have just as with a standard job description. It is appropriate to list preferred majors or programs, grade point average (GPA) requirements, academic year in school such as juniors or seniors preferred, etc.

**How to Apply:** Explain how an interested applicant can apply for the position. If there is an online application to complete, list the URL. If a résumé is required, list whom to email or mail the résumé. List a closing date. Be sure to provide a fully accessible website and application process.

## Appendix B

### Sample Intern Work Schedule

*Based on a three-day work week, seven hours per day internship for eight weeks (168-hour internship)*

#### Week 1

Day 1: Orientation and introduction to regular job duties and any special projects

Day 2: Continuation of regular job duties and special projects

Day 3: Regular job duties, **weekly education/development session**

#### Week 2

Day 1: Regular job duties

Day 2: Regular job duties

Day 3: Regular job duties, **weekly education/development session**

#### Week 3

Day 1: Regular job duties

Day 2: Regular job duties

Day 3: Regular job duties, **weekly education/development session**

#### Week 4

Day 1: mid-internship evaluation, regular job duties

Day 2: Regular job duties

Day 3: Regular job duties, **weekly education/development session**

#### Week 5

Day 1: Regular job duties

Day 2: Regular job duties

Day 3: Regular job duties, **weekly education/development session**

#### Week 6

Day 1: Regular job duties

Day 2: Regular job duties

Day 3: Regular job duties, **weekly education/development session**

#### Week 7

Day 1: Regular job duties

Day 2: Regular job duties

Day 3: Regular job duties, **weekly education/development session**

#### Week 8

Day 1: Regular job duties

Day 2: Regular job duties

Day 3: Regular job duties, final evaluation, **weekly education/development session**

## Appendix C Sample Orientation Checklist

INTERN INFORMATION	
Name:	Start Date:
Position:	Supervisor:
FIRST DAY	
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide intern with Employee/Intern Guide Book <input type="checkbox"/> Assign and introduce “buddy/mentor” employee to answer general questions	
POLICIES	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review key policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual Harassment</li> <li>• Absence/Leave requests</li> <li>• Holidays</li> <li>• Social media/Cell phone</li> <li>• Dress Code</li> <li>• Performance Reviews</li> <li>• Office Conduct</li> <li>• Confidentiality</li> <li>• Email/Internet usage</li> <li>• Emergency Procedures</li> <li>• On-job injuries</li> <li>• Sick leave</li> <li>• Visitors</li> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Parking</li> </ul>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review general administrative procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office/Desk/Workstation</li> <li>• Keys/Access Cards</li> <li>• Nametag or Badge</li> <li>• General Office Supplies</li> <li>• Special Office Supplies</li> <li>• Conference Rooms</li> <li>• Phone/Voicemail/Conference Calls</li> <li>• Mail/Shipping</li> </ul>
INTRODUCTIONS AND TOUR	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tour of facility and relevant introductions <input type="checkbox"/> Break/meal time procedures	
POSITION INFORMATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> Introductions to team/department members <input type="checkbox"/> Review position description and performance expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Review schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Initial job assignments and necessary training	

## Appendix D INTERNSHIP PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

To be completed by the Employer/Supervisor

Intern Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Internship Dates: From \_\_\_\_\_  
To \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly comment on the Intern's level of success in achieving the standard of performance for each of the following work characteristics.

1. <u>Professional Work Habits</u> : Exhibits enthusiasm and a positive approach towards the work to be performed. Maintains appropriate attire. Demonstrates ability to work independently.
<input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding/4 <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good/3 <input type="checkbox"/> Effective /2 <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement/1

2. <u>Time Management</u> : Intern is punctual. Plans accordingly and manages work time to meet or beat deadlines.
<input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding/4 <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good/3 <input type="checkbox"/> Effective /2 <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement/1

3. <u>Interpersonal Skills</u> : Interacts well with co-workers. Demonstrates cooperation and maturity in resolving problems.
<input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding/4 <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good/3 <input type="checkbox"/> Effective /2 <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement/1

4. <u>Teamwork</u> : Accepts constructive criticism and adapts to change. Works well with others on team projects and assignments. Volunteers to assist others.
<input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding/4 <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good/3 <input type="checkbox"/> Effective /2 <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement/1

5. <u>Problem Solving Skills</u> : Makes cost-effective and timely decisions with a clear understanding of risks and consequences. Offers suggestions for improving work and work processes.
<input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding/4 <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good/3 <input type="checkbox"/> Effective /2 <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement/1

6. **Reliability:** Stays on task with assigned work; does not stray from assignments. Tasks are completed timely and without need for revision or correction. Follows and remembers instructions.

Outstanding/4       Very Good/3       Effective /2       Needs Improvement/1

7. **Written and Oral Communication Skills:** Able to effectively and efficiently inform and convey information; written communications are organized, succinct and on-point, grammatically correct, and error-free.

Outstanding/4       Very Good/3       Effective /2       Needs Improvement/1

8. **Initiative:** Seeks out additional work once task at hand is completed. Provides relevant information before being asked. Fills downtime with work-related activities.

Outstanding/4       Very Good/3       Effective /2       Needs Improvement/1

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_ (32 maximum points)

Summary evaluation comments:

\*\*\*\*\*  
Overall Evaluation     Outstanding     Very Good     Effective     Needs Improvement  
                                  28 or more      25 – 27      22 – 24      less than 22  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Intern Comments:

\*\*\*\*\*  
 Evaluator Name and Title:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Intern Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### Intern Evaluation: INTERN PERFORMANCE EVALUATION RATING DEFINITIONS

#### **Outstanding**

The intern is an individual who consistently exceeds normal or expected performance across virtually all measurement categories.

Equally important, the intern consistently demonstrates the highest level of professionalism in his or her approach toward everyone and is often described as a role model. The intern must be strong both in results and behavior.

The intern recognizes that as he or she grows in experience, expected results must also grow and are usually characterized by individuals who regularly ask to lead projects (or take action) and regularly contribute new and well formulated ideas for improving efficiency and outcomes.

#### **Very Good**

The intern consistently performs above the general performance standard for the position.

The intern is always reliable, volunteers to work late or for assignments that may be outside the scope of his or her expertise because the intern has a passion for learning, and his or her behavior makes it clear that work is viewed as a key element of career growth and development.

#### **Effective**

The intern is one who performs and behaves in accordance with the “a good day’s work for a good day’s pay” mentality. The intern is reliable but only works the official hours and does not often volunteer to work late if needed.

While the intern may occasionally deliver high quality work equal to that of a “very good” employee, he or she usually requires more supervision and coaching to perform at this level, prompting by the supervisor to initiate work or take the lead.

#### **Needs Improvement**

The intern is one with a few key weaknesses but has demonstrated enough of the “right” performance and behaviors to be worth the time investment to try to advance performance to the “effective” level.

Often, the required improvement is in behaviors rather than the fulfillment of job tasks such as slacking on the job or continually arriving late and needing to leave early. This intern believes he or she is doing a good job but fails to see how the individual’s behaviors are interfering with the ability to get the work done. Further, the individual is not voluntarily willing to invest time in training and education in order to improve skill sets and become a more effective producer.

Supervisor invests significant time working with the intern, and that detracts from the supervisor’s ability to provide support for other employees or interns.

## Appendix F

### Sample Reference Check Questions

1. When and in what capacity were you associated with the applicant?
2. What was the candidate's job responsibilities and salary?
3. Was the applicant successful in fulfilling his or her duties?
4. What was it like to supervise the candidate?
5. Was the applicant a valuable member of the team?
6. What unique skill did the candidate bring to your organization?
7. What were the applicant's strengths?
8. In what areas did the candidate need improvement?
9. How would you describe the applicant's absenteeism record in relation to other employees?
10. Did you ever find it necessary to reprimand or discipline this person? If so, what were the circumstances?
11. Considering the job being applied for, do you think the applicant is suitable?
12. Why did the applicant leave your employment?
13. Would you rehire the candidate? Why or why not?
14. Is there anything else you would like to add?

### Sample Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your coursework and how it is relevant to this position.
2. Tell me about your volunteer and community service experiences.
3. What skills do you want to gain and what skills do you have to offer?
4. Why do you want to intern here?
5. What do you know about our company?
6. What are your expectations of the position and working here?
7. What do you know about the industry?
8. What are your goals after graduation?
9. What extracurricular activities are you involved in?
10. Why do you think you will be a good person for this position?
11. Explain a challenge that you have had to overcome.
12. Can you share an example where you had to work on multiple projects at the same time?

## Appendix G

### What You Need to Know about Employing and Working with People with Disabilities

The concept of employing a person with a disability does not need to be a daunting idea, nor does the ADA need to be a scary piece of government regulation. There are a lot of resources available to employers to make hiring a person with a disability a non-issue. Listed below are some facts regarding employment of people with disabilities.

#### Myth

Under the ADA, an employer cannot fire an employee who has a disability, because of the disability.

#### Fact

Employers can dismiss workers with disabilities under any of four conditions:

- The termination is unrelated to the disability (poor work performance).
- The employee does not meet legitimate requirements for the job, such as performance or production standards, with or without a reasonable accommodation.
- Because of the employee's disability, he or she poses a direct threat to health or safety in the workplace.
- Downsizing or closure of the business.

#### Myth

Hiring workers with disabilities increases workers compensation insurance rates.

#### Fact

Insurance rates are based solely on the relative hazards of the operation and the organization's accident experience, not on whether an employer has hired workers with disabilities.

#### Myth

Providing accommodations for people with disabilities is expensive.

#### Fact

Few workers with disabilities need some sort of special equipment or accommodation; 56% of these cost less than \$600, and many cost nothing at all. Available tax incentives make it even easier for businesses to cover accessibility costs.

#### Myth

The ADA forces employers to hire unqualified individuals with disabilities.

#### Fact

Unqualified candidates are not protected under the ADA. To be protected from discrimination in hiring, an individual must first meet all requirements for a job and be able to perform its essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations.

#### Myth

Employees with disabilities have a higher absentee rate than employees without disabilities.

#### Fact

Studies have shown that employees with disabilities actually have lower rates of absenteeism than employees without disabilities.

<http://www.thinkbeyondthelabel.com/Learning-Tools/5Myths-and-RealFacts.aspx>

## Appendix H

### Explaining the American with Disabilities Act (ADA)

*\*\*This section is meant to serve as a guide. You should consult a lawyer or other professional knowledgeable with ADA before making any decisions.*

This section will cover some of the highlights of the ADA as it relates to reasonable accommodations in the workplace for people with disabilities.

A **reasonable accommodation** is any modification or adjustment to a job or the work environment that will enable a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the application process or to perform essential job functions. Reasonable accommodations also include adjustments to assure that a qualified individual with a disability has rights and privileges in employment equal to those of employees without disabilities.

An example of a reasonable accommodation would be providing a visually impaired employee with a larger computer monitor or screen magnifier. A computer monitor magnifier costs under \$150 for a 19" LCD monitor.

*There are several modifications or adjustments that are not considered forms of reasonable accommodation.* An employer does not have to eliminate an essential function, i.e., a fundamental duty of the position. This is because a person with a disability who is unable to perform the essential functions, with or without reasonable accommodation, is not a "qualified" individual with a disability within the meaning of the ADA. Nor is an employer required to lower production standards--whether qualitative or quantitative--that are applied uniformly to employees with and without disabilities.

**Undue hardship** refers not only to financial difficulty, but to reasonable accommodations that are unduly disruptive, or those that would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the business.

There is a two-part test to determine if an accommodation is unreasonable. The first is expense, considered as part of the overall operating costs of a company. The expense is calculated by subtracting all tax benefits from the total cost of the accommodation to get the net cost to the employer. The majority of accommodations needed are so inexpensive that this argument is usually not effective. The second argument which can be used is a demonstration that the accommodation would change the fundamental nature of the business, thus constituting an unreasonable difficulty.

An example of an undue hardship is a convenience store clerk with multiple sclerosis requests that he be allowed to go from working full-time to part-time as a reasonable accommodation because of his disability. The store assigns two clerks per shift, and if the first clerk's hours are reduced, the second clerk's workload will increase significantly beyond his ability to handle his responsibilities. The store determines that such an arrangement will result in inadequate coverage to maintain the same level of service and work. Thus, the employer can show undue hardship based on the significant disruption to its operations and therefore can refuse to reduce the employee's hours. The employer, however, should explore whether any other reasonable accommodation will assist the store clerk without causing undue hardship.

## Appendix I

## Resources Available to Employers

There are several free resources available to employers to help them navigate recruiting and hiring a person with a disability, the ADA, and reasonable accommodations.

**JAN: Job Accommodation Network** is the premier resource for businesses for understanding the ADA, reasonable accommodations and hiring people with disabilities. They offer free information on their website and through calling their office.

<http://askjan.org/index.html>

**Cornell University ILR School Employment and Disability Institute** has a wealth of information regarding the implementation of the ADA:

<http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/edi/accessforall/index.htm?page=implement&CFID=32515696&CFTOKEN=78225173&jsessionid=8430f9fcbba6bb72200b6d7bb356b377d752#undue>

**Think Beyond the Label** has a lot of good information on the benefits of hiring a person with a disability. It also has a very easy-to-use tool to show you the actual monetary value of tax incentives you can realize for hiring a person with a disability:

<http://www.thinkbeyondthelabel.com/Learning-Tools/BusinessCase.aspx>

**Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation** Florida's agency for information on employing people with disabilities. It is geared more toward helping people with disabilities find a job, but it also has information on the programs available to employers for hiring people with disabilities.

<http://www.rehabworks.org>

## Appendix J

### **Tax Benefits for Businesses Who Have Employees with Disabilities\***

Businesses accommodating people with disabilities may qualify for some of the following tax credits and deductions. More detailed information may be found in the IRS publications referenced.

#### **Disabled Access Credit**

The Disabled Access Credit provides a non-refundable credit for small businesses that incur expenditures for the purpose of providing access to persons with disabilities. An eligible small business is one that that earned \$1 million or less or had no more than 30 full time employees in the previous year; they may take the credit each and every year they incur access expenditures. Refer to [Form 8826, Disabled Access Credit](#) (PDF), for information about eligible expenditures.

#### **Barrier Removal Tax Deduction**

The Architectural Barrier Removal Tax Deduction encourages businesses of any size to remove architectural and transportation barriers to the mobility of persons with disabilities and the elderly. Businesses may claim a deduction of up to \$15,000 a year for qualified expenses for items that normally must be capitalized. Businesses claim the deduction by listing it as a separate expense on their income tax return. Also, businesses may use the Disabled Tax Credit and the architectural/transportation tax deduction together in the same tax year, if the expenses meet the requirements of both sections. To use both, the deduction is equal to the difference between the total expenditures and the amount of the credit claimed.

#### **Work Opportunity Credit**

The Work Opportunity Credit provides eligible employers with a tax credit up to 40 percent of the first \$6,000 of first-year wages of a new employee if the employee is part of a “targeted group.” An employee with a disability is one of the targeted groups for the Work Opportunity Credit, provided the appropriate government agencies have certified the employee as disabled. The credit is available to the employer once the employee has worked for at least 120 hours or 90 days. Employers claim the credit on [Form 5884, Work Opportunity Credit](#) (PDF).

\*sourced directly from the IRS’s website, <http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&-Self-Employed/Tax-Benefits-for-Businesses-Who-Have-Employees-with-Disabilities>



*Sponsored by The Able Trust and the State of Florida, Department of Economic Opportunity*



# Legal FAQs for Internships



*Empowerment Education Employment*

## Important Notice

*These internship materials were prepared with the input and expertise of the employment law firm of Allen, Norton & Blue, P.A. These documents, however, are not legal advice and are not intended to create an attorney-client relationship. These materials are for education and informational purposes only. If you have any questions or concerns about how the information contained herein applies specifically to your organization or need legal advice regarding the same, please consult with your attorney.*

There are thousands of Floridians with disabilities who are willing, able and eager to be productive employees. They just need one thing - *opportunity*.

The Able Trust, also known as the Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation, is a public-private partnership foundation whose mission is to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment. In furtherance of its mission, The Able Trust is working with its partners and employers throughout Florida to establish career experiences for people with disabilities. These opportunities allow individuals to obtain additional education, hands-on experience and training in a particular industry or field. The interns are also acquiring marketable skills that can assist them in obtaining future permanent employment. It is the goal of The Able Trust to have qualified, talented individuals with disabilities be matched with the employer needs and objectives for internships. To help better understand the internship process, please review the following question and answer guide.

## **I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

### ***Q: What is an internship?***

There is no single definition for “internship” or “intern” because there are many laws, both state and federal, which govern the relationship created when people perform services for others. Generally speaking, however, an internship refers to the type of work experience for entry-level job seekers during which individuals gain valuable experience working in a particular field for a defined term. Internships are hands-on, practical learning experiences. Traditional internships are distinct from the typical employer-employee relationship. Internships are viewed as a form of “experience-driven” education affording participants an opportunity to apply learned skills in a practical setting.

As discussed in more detail, internships can be both paid and unpaid. Your intentions for the intern, their day-to-day tasks, and the structure of your relationship with the intern all help shape the overall experience and the associated rights and obligations. Paid interns are akin to “temporary employees” with the rights and obligations associated with that type of employment relationship. Federal law governs when an internship is unpaid and there are certain guidelines employers must follow to create an actual unpaid internship. (See questions below for more details about paid and unpaid internships).

### ***Q: How can an internship benefit my organization/business?***

Internships are immensely beneficial to employers. Internships provide organizations with an opportunity to evaluate a group of individuals for future employment before a permanent offer of employment is made. In the observation of interns during a work environment, employers substantially reduce the risk of a poor hiring choice.

Internships also allow employers to benefit from an influx of eager personnel who bring new ideas and a fresh perspective to the business or organization. Internships provide employers with skilled workers at a modest cost while serving as a valuable recruiting tool. Additionally, people with disabilities are an untapped resource in today's job market. This internship enables an organization/business the opportunity to see firsthand how an individual with a disability can fit into your workforce as a productive contributor.

***Q: Are interns with a disability limited in the work that they can perform?***

Each individual with a disability is unique and the limitations associated with a disability will vary on a person by person basis. Representatives of The Able Trust and its partners are available to answer any questions or alleviate any concerns regarding the ability of an intern to perform an expected task.

As a general matter, *for any internship program*, interns must be closely supervised by one or more employees of the business or organization. The purpose of the internship experience, and therefore the work performed, should be educational in nature. In other words, interns should primarily be performing work and training akin to attending a vocational school. **Interns are not meant, and cannot, be replacements for full-time employees.** Internships should be designed as a learning experience rather than as an inexpensive or free source of labor.

***Q: How long do internships last?***

The length of internships is at the discretion of the employer, but typically most interns last for a summer or academic term. An internship should, however, have a definite duration communicated at the onset. Otherwise, it begins to resemble an employment relationship.

***Q: Can an internship be part-time?***

Yes. Internships can be part-time or full-time. The parameters of the internship should be clearly established at the outset and communicated to all parties.

***Q: Can internships be used as an evaluation period for the intern's potential employment?***

Although one of the benefits to using interns is the early opportunity to evaluate new talent, this is not the purpose of an internship. The law will consider such arrangement as an employee probationary period which will subject the employer to the variety of employment laws associated with hiring a full-time employee. Interns should be notified at the onset that the internship is not a precursor or promise of future employment.

**Q: *Will interns be covered by my worker’s compensation and liability insurance?***

Florida’s Worker’s Compensation statute broadly defines “employee” to include “any person who receives remuneration from an employer for the performance of any work or service while engaged in any employment under any appointment or contract for hire or apprenticeship, express or implied, oral or written, whether lawfully or unlawfully employed, and includes, but is not limited to, aliens and minors.” There is also no intern exception to Florida’s Worker’s Compensation law.

As a general matter, persons coming from an academic setting who serve as interns as part of their degree program are not considered “employees” under workers’ compensation law. Courts have held that education received in exchange for payment of tuition is not remuneration for purposes of workers’ compensation coverage.

When interns receive monetary payment, however, it becomes less clear and more likely that the intern will be treated as an employee for purposes of workers’ compensation. If there is any question as to whether an intern is covered, it is recommended that employers err on the side of caution and provide coverage. Employers are encouraged to contact their workers’ compensation carrier to obtain more detailed information.

## **II. PAID INTERNSHIPS**

**Q: *What is a paid internship?***

In paid internships, interns are generally considered company employees (albeit “temporary employees”) who are entitled to minimum wage for all hours worked as well as overtime pay. Notably, interns who receive a small stipend unrelated to services rendered are not considered “paid interns.” Employers who wish to compensate their interns on an hourly basis, however, will have more flexibility in assigning work assignments and managing the intern’s performance. By designating employees as “temporary”, employers can avoid paying benefits to paid interns as discussed below.

**Q: *Must interns be paid minimum-wage?***

In paid internships, interns are generally considered company employees who are entitled to receive minimum wage for all hours worked as well as overtime pay.

**Q: *Are paid interns entitled to 401(k) plans or other benefits?***

As a general rule, no. Most internships are relatively short in duration and many employers have benefit plans that delay eligibility until after the employee's one-year anniversary. Additionally, since internships have set durations, interns are considered temporary employees and as such, they are not entitled to any benefits. Information related to benefits' packages and compensation should be communicated at the outset of any internship.

**III. UNPAID INTERNSHIPS**

The primary focus of an *unpaid* internship is education. An ideal internship will be both educational and productive, but the principal focus of an unpaid internship should be on education. Unpaid internships must be carefully structured in accordance with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act, the federal statute that governs wages and hours of work. The U.S. Department of Labor considers the legality of unpaid internships pursuant to the following six factors:

1. The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;
2. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
3. The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern; and on occasion its operations may actually be impeded;
5. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and,
6. The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.

Each of the above factors must be met in order for an unpaid internship to comply with state and federal law. Otherwise the interns will qualify as employees and must be paid at least minimum wage plus overtime for all hours worked in excess of forty. If your primary motivation in using unpaid interns is to achieve free additional labor, you are likely to be in violation of state and federal labor laws.

***Q: Can an intern be paid a stipend and still be considered an “unpaid internship”?***

Yes. Companies are able to pay their interns a small stipend without running afoul of the legal requirements for unpaid internships. Thus, if an employer pays a stipend of a predetermined amount that is not tied to the performance of any services rendered by the intern, the internship is still considered an “unpaid internship.” If this stipend payment is associated with work performance or is of more than a nominal amount, it may be considered a “wage” that must meet the requirements under wage and hour laws. All issues regarding the compensation of interns should be communicated at the outset of any internship. If the stipend is for more than \$600/year, the intern will need to receive an IRS Form 1099.

***Q: Will unpaid interns be considered employees under anti-discrimination laws?***

Generally, no. Unpaid interns who are not considered employees will typically not be covered by federal laws that apply to “employees.” The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has suggested such laws are limited to individuals who receive “significant remuneration” for services rendered. Inconsequential compensation generally afforded to unpaid interns may not be enough to qualify under the law. As a practical matter, however, all interns should be treated equitably and fairly irrespective of age, race, gender, religion, disability, or national origin.

***Q: What are my obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?***

The ADA applies to all employers with fifteen or more employees. Under the ADA, those with a qualifying disability must be reasonably accommodated unless doing so would cause undue hardship. There are several avenues for getting assistance for determining an accommodation for an employee from local service providers to numerous online resources to state agencies.

***Q: Can unpaid interns receive academic credit?***

As described above, interns are much more likely to be deemed non-employees if they receive academic credit or participate in school sponsored internships or training programs. Interns may also benefit from the academic credits. Many colleges and universities grant such credits for internships so you may either request or require applicants to check with their schools to obtain such credits.

**Q: *Are there liability concerns associated with employing interns?***

There are no liability concerns specific to using interns. Internships should be a mutually beneficial experience for the student and the organization/business. Provided that the internship program is well-structured and designed for the educational benefit of the intern, internship programs can be a highly rewarding experience for all parties involved.