

SUPERVISING THE INTERN

As an intern supervisor, you use all the skills necessary in any effective supervisory relationship:

- Providing Leadership
- Motivating
- Delegating
- Communicating
- Developing and training
- Evaluating

Additionally the students will look to you as a mentor who will assist their transition from the classroom to the work environment. Since the internship is an extension of the learning process, plan to provide opportunities to bridge the two experiences. Meet with your interns regularly to provide feedback concerning their performance. During these meetings the students can:

- Report on the status of a project
- Ask questions
- Learn how their work is contributing to the organization
- Participate in an evaluation of their strengths, discuss areas of development
- Get a sense of what kind of work might be in store if they stay in this profession/field

At the same time you will have an opportunity to coach, counsel and reinforce positive attitudes and performance. Encourage your interns to keep a portfolio of work accomplished during the experience. This will give you a basis to discuss their professional growth. Specific work documents to include in a portfolio might include:

- Job Descriptions
- Legislation
- Proposals
- Manuals
- Citations & Awards
- Contracts
- Program Outlines
- Company Newsletters
- Performance Appraisals
- Charts/Graphs
- Correspondence
- Press Releases
- Certificates
- Research Reports
- Financial Reports
- Displays & Exhibits
- References
- Survey Reports
- Cost Analyses
- Marketing Plans

In addition to spontaneous and informal meetings, you should do a formal evaluation of the intern's performance at the midpoint of the internship, so the students know where they stand. Consider the growth and timeliness of the work produced to date, ability to take and follow direction, work habits, and areas needing growth and development. This information will also provide data for the final evaluation and serve as a reference point for the students' subsequent performance.

KEY POINTS

- Maintain an open channel of communication with formal and informal meetings.
- Keep the interns busy and directed towards their learning objectives. Students rarely complain of overwork, but they do complain if they are not challenged.
- Provide opportunities for increasing responsibility.
- Encourage professionalism by assisting the interns in developing human relations skills, decision-making abilities, and managing office politics.
- Remember that you are a role model.