

an employer's guide to

internships



baker university

Career Services

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Definition of an Internship	4
How Internships Benefit Employers	5
Baker Students Make Great Interns	5
Designing a Successful Internship	6
Earning Academic Credit	8
Developing a Position Description	9
Top Ten Concerns of Interns	10
Orienting and Training Interns	11
Developing Work Activities & Measurable Learning Objectives	13
Supervising Your Intern	14
Evaluation	15
Evaluated Professional Qualities	16

Introduction

One of the most valuable ways students can prepare for life after college is to engage in an internship. This type of experiential learning is an important complement to the classroom instruction that occurs at Baker. Career Services recognizes the importance of our role in connecting students with internship opportunities. We invite you to partner with us by hiring Baker interns. Our students bring energy, a positive attitude, and fresh ideas to the workplace as well as new perspectives to old problems. Baker interns are anxious to be challenged in a work environment and to apply their classroom knowledge to real-world situations.

This guide provides you with the basic information necessary to establish a successful internship program. Much of the information is relevant to internships in general, but we have also included details on how to hire Baker interns specifically. We hope you will find it a useful resource.

Additional information about Baker University and how Career Services can assist you can be found at www.bakerU.edu/CareerServices.

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D efinition of an Internship

An Internship is any carefully monitored work or service experience in which a student has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what she or he is learning throughout the experience.

Characteristics include:

- Internships can be in January Interterm, Fall or Spring semester, or during the summer but a typical experience for a Baker student usually lasts from 3—15 weeks, for 120 hours.
- An effort is made to establish a reasonable balance between the intern's learning goals and the specific work needs of an organization
- Generally a one-time experience
- Part-time or full-time opportunities
- Paid or unpaid
- An intentional "learning agenda" is structured into the experience distinguishing the internship from a short-term job or volunteer work
- Learning activities common to most internships include learning objectives, observation, reflection, evaluation and assessment
- Internships can be part of an academic program and carefully monitored and evaluated for academic credit by a faculty sponsor, or internships can be part of a learning plan that a student develops individually for no academic credit
- Internships promote academic, career and/or personal development

H

ow Internships Benefit Employers

An internship is a win-win situation for both student and employer. Students clearly gain valuable work-related experience as well as information necessary to the career decision-making process. You, as the employer, also receive many benefits from hiring Baker interns. Here are just a few:

- A year round source of highly motivated pre-professionals
- New perspectives to old problems
- Increased visibility for your organization on the Baker campus
- Quality candidates for temporary or seasonal positions and projects
- A flexible, cost-effective work force not requiring a long-term employment commitment
- Freedom for professional staff to pursue more creative projects
- An enhanced image on campus as you contribute your expertise to the Baker community
- A proven, cost-effective way to recruit and evaluate potential employees

B

aker Students Make Great Interns

Baker University offers you the opportunity to connect with some of the best and brightest students in the country. Our students are prepared for success and leadership. Baker students are trained in the liberal arts tradition, to think critically and analytically, as well as how to effectively communicate their ideas.

Baker students have:

- Strong oral and written communication skills
- The ability to work efficiently and effectively as part of a team
- Strong critical investigation skills
- Familiarity with a wide range of academic disciplines
- Capability to gather and evaluate information
- Exposure to global issues and global solutions

All students participate in courses that allow them to engage as speakers, thinkers, and writers. They have the ability to conduct research alone or with a faculty member in which they apply techniques and knowledge learned in class to a specific problem. Baker students have numerous opportunities to develop leadership skills both in the classroom and through extracurricular activities.

D^esigning a Successful Internship

As varied as organizations are in age, size, industry and product, so too are their internship activities. Designing an internship program to meet your needs can be accomplished in five easy steps:

Step 1: Set Goals

A careful discussion with management can create a consensus on program goals that can be understood by all involved. The program and internship can be designed to best meet those expectations. As many staffing professionals may know, in order for a program to be successful, it will require the commitment of management.

Step 2: Write a Plan

Carefully plan and document your internship program and goals. Managers, mentors, interns, faculty sponsors and Baker Career Services staff are all going to be reading what you write about the internship. Draft a job description that clearly explains the job's duties. Do you want someone for a specific project? What about general support around the workplace? How about giving the intern a taste of everything your organization does?

Structure the internship ahead of time so that you can be sure to meet your goals and not find yourself floundering partway through. Things to think about include:

- *Compensation.* Wages vary widely from field to field, so be sure you are competitive or offer competitive incentives.
- *Work Space.* Do you have adequate facilities for your interns? Will you help make parking arrangements, living arrangements, etc.?
- *Background and Skills Required.* Decide on standards for quality beforehand. It will help you narrow down the choices and find the best Baker candidates.
- *Assignment of a Supervisor.* Will that person be a mentor or merely a supervisor? This person doesn't have to be a teacher per se, but should be selected because he or she likes to teach or train and has the resources to do it. If the person you select has never mentored an intern before, give him or her some basic training in mentoring.
- *Job Duties.* Be as specific as possible. Interns, like others in the process of learning, need structure so they don't become lost, confused or bored.

Step 3: Recruit Baker Interns

How will you find those ideal candidates to fill your internship position(s)? Organizations that want the very best interns should begin searching three to four months before you need a student to begin. Starting early has other advantages: the longer you accept applications, the better your chance of finding the best Baker student for the job. Choose your interns just as carefully as you would choose permanent employees. After all, they might be permanent employees some day. You are making an investment; time and money will go into this person. Will the intern fit into your organization's culture? Does he or she have the skills and background you need? With careful consideration of whom to hire at the beginning, you can avoid some of the most common pitfalls of internships. (See "Developing a Position Description" on page 9 in this manual for more details.)

Step 4: Manage Your Intern(s)

The beginning days of the internship are often its defining days. When you give interns their first tasks, you're signaling what can be expected in the future. If you give them nothing or very little to do, it sends a message that this job will be easy—and boring. Baker students don't want that, and of course, neither do you.

Orientation: Introduce your intern to his or her new workplace. This might take the form of a conventional orientation program or merely a walk around the facility, depending on the size of your organization. After all, even though they may not be permanent employees, they'll be spending a great deal of time in your workplace. Making your intern at home in your organization is your first step to bringing him or her back.

Resources: Give your intern a desk, point out the supply room, and introduce the tech support people. That may sound obvious, but you'd be surprised at how many employers stick their interns out in the hallway or transfer them from desk to desk. That sends a potent message you don't want to send: Interns aren't important.

Supervision: This doesn't mean to watch their every move, but do make sure you know what's happening with their daily tasks. Watch for signs that your intern is confused or bored. It is easy to be shy in a workplace full of older strangers who all know each other. Paying attention early helps you head off problems in the initial stages of the internship. Along those same lines, it's important to give them lots of feedback! Especially if your interns have never done this kind of work before, they will want to know if their work is measuring up to your expectations.

Step 5: Beyond the Internship

Take on interns now and you'll have a competitive advantage in recruiting the best Baker graduates, because you will already be known to the employees you want most. Your new employees will already be trained for your workplace and loyal to your organization, lowering training time, recruiting costs and turnover rates. You'll build a reputation that will pay off with students, the University and the community. And your organization will save money while benefitting from the input of talented, enthusiastic, innovative Baker students. With all of these advantages, you might find that you can't afford not to do internships.

Earning Academic Credit

Baker University recognizes the value of internships as part of the learning experience and thus, offers academic credit for internships. Prospective interns must have their internship approved prior to the start of the internship by Career Services. Students must be at least sophomore standing to engage in a credit-based internship.

Requirements for earning academic credit vary by department, but most require weekly journal entries, a final paper, and scheduled meetings with a faculty member supervising the internship. The faculty sponsor may request a meeting or site visit with the employer. The employer will be requested to provide an evaluation of the intern's performance at the conclusion of the internship.

Baker students identify a faculty sponsor within their academic department to work with during their internship. The faculty sponsor will assist them with developing their learning objectives and completing their assignments to meet the requirements for internship credit. Students must complete and submit their signed Career Involvement Agreement prior to the start of the internship. (Generally agreements are due prior to finals week of the semester preceding the internship.) Only sophomores, juniors and seniors are permitted to engage in credit-based internships.

Questions should be directed to Susan Wade, Director of Baker University's Career Services.

D

eveloping a Position Description

The more detailed the internship position description, the more likely you are to attract Baker students who are a good fit for the position and your organization. Baker's Career Services can work with you to develop a position outline. Especially important is the listing of job duties and the desired student background information. The more specific you are, the less pre-screening you will need to do later on.

To submit an internship posting, create an employer profile at www.CollegeCentral.com/bakerU. Once your employer profile is approved, you will be sent an ID and password for your CollegeCentral account. Use this ID and password to login and post any internship opportunities you may have. Once on CollegeCentral, this position will remain posted until the application due date you specify. Students will apply directly to you based on the application method you outline.

One of the most effective ways to recruit Baker interns is to come to campus to meet and interact with students. You can do this by attending our Fall and Spring Mock Interview Evenings, attending our Network 2 Get Work event in the Spring, scheduling a day for on-campus recruiting or interviewing, or participating in one of the various area career fairs Baker University co-sponsors. Career Services is happy to work with you on these and other ways to select Baker interns.

Career Services cannot pre-screen students, but we will send out targeted job alerts to students as well as solicit recommendations from faculty. We also recommend appropriate internships to students as part of the personalized career guidance that occurs at Baker.

Top 10 Concerns of Interns

1. Give us real work!

It can't be said too many times that interns want to work and learn. An intern can help you get a job done that you couldn't otherwise do. If you've brought on Baker interns as a recruitment tool, then how will you be able to assess their abilities? It just makes sense to utilize your interns well.

2. Do what you say, and say what you do!

Be honest with your interns about what they can expect during their internship. If the job will require stuffing some envelopes, then make that clear. But if you tell the intern they will be researching a project, and they spend 90% of their time doing "grunt work", then bad feelings will develop. Honesty doesn't cost you anything, and it will make the interns feel that much more respected.

3. We like feedback!

Remember that interns are students, and they may not have the professional experiences that you take for granted. If your Baker intern makes a mistake, just pull him or her aside and explain how the situation should be handled in the future.

4. We want to be included too!

Is there a staff meeting that they can attend? Can they quietly tag along to that next project meeting? Headed to lunch with a couple of people in the office? Please include them in the daily life of your workplace.

5. Please explain.

When you assign work, make sure you give a detailed explanation. While the work may seem trivial and obvious to you, it may not be obvious to someone who's never done it before. Patience and a few extra minutes at the beginning will pay off later when your intern produces good work independently.

6. I want a mentor!

Make sure that interns have a mentor or supervisor to provide guidance. Make it someone who truly likes to teach, and the experience will be even better.

7. A minute of your time please.

The best mentor in the world is useless if he or she can't or won't spend the necessary time mentoring. As newcomers, interns may not speak up if they're feeling ignored, so the burden of making sure they're okay is on the mentor. If the busiest person in the office wants to be the designated mentor, he or she should schedule regular times to meet with the intern.

8. Be prepared!

That wonderful day has arrived and your Baker intern goes to start their internship only to learn that no one knew they were coming, and there is no place for them to work.

9. Um . . . I need a chair.

It is amazing how many employers hire an intern and don't think about the fact that they will need a desk, chair, phone and a computer in order to do the task assigned. It is no fun, and not efficient to move an intern from desk to desk as people are out one day to the next. If you want to get a job done, you need to supply the intern with the tools to do the job.

10. Show me the money (as best you can).

While all internships are different, and each industry has its own culture, remember that interns have expenses. Your organization may not be in a position to pay much, but anything can help. Maybe you can help pay for their parking, take them to lunch every so often, or develop some other creative way to assist them.

orienting and Training Interns

Even though your interns may have worked part-time, these experiences may not have exposed them to organizational politics, the need for confidentiality or the profit-making orientation of business. It is this orientation and training dimension of the internship experience that emphasizes the partnership role of the sponsoring organization.

Develop a thorough orientation and training plan to be implemented when your interns begin work, so they will learn quickly and become productive members of your team. Invest supervisory time to establish an important bond with interns, and set a crucial tone for the internship experience.

Experience shows that employers who take adequate time at the beginning of the internship to orient the student reap productivity and effectiveness more quickly than those who don't.

Explain the Mission of the Organization

- How did your organization start? Why?
- What is unique about your product or service?
- Who benefits from your product or service?
- What are your organization's current objectives?
- How can the intern contribute to those objectives?

Explain the Organization Structure

- Who reports to whom?
- Who, specifically, is your intern's supervisor?
- What is your intern's department responsible for?
- How are decisions made?
- Which staff members can answer different kinds of questions?

Outline Organizational Rules, Policies, Decorum and Expectations

- Is there special industry jargon?
- What are the specific work standards and procedures?
- What access to the supervisor (days, times, and duration) does your intern have?
- How should interns process requests?
- How do the mail and telephone systems work?
- What are the approved forms for correspondence?
- By what safety regulations must interns abide?
- Is there a procedure for signing off completed work?
- What periodic forms or reports need to be completed?
- Are there security or confidentiality issues your intern should be aware of?
- What is acceptable with regard to dress and appearance?
- How should your intern maintain the premises and personal work area?

Define the Intern's Responsibilities

- What is your intern's role?
- What projects will be assigned to him or her?
- What resources are available to your intern?
- What training is necessary?
- How does your organization want your intern to deal with clients and vendors?
- What tasks can be completed without supervisory approval?
- Do other employees understand the intern's role?

Monitor the Intern's Adjustment

- Make yourself visibly available to your intern.
- Assign someone who can periodically "check in" with your intern.
- Provide feedback and constructive criticism.
- Remind your intern to ask questions.

The following are suggestions for communicating the information described above:

- Take your intern on a tour of the facilities and introduce him or her to the other employees.
- Give your intern materials to read such as newsletter, annual reports, an organization chart, or memos from top management.
- Provide access to your organization web site.
- Encourage your intern to spend breaks and lunchtimes in places where other employees gather.
- Schedule regular one-on-one meetings with your intern.
- Give your intern opportunities to observe or participate in professional meetings.
- Allow your intern to interview other staff.
- Encourage your intern to walk around and observe others at work.

The success of an internship depends on the partnership between representatives of the organization of the Baker student. Both parties need to agree on the conditions of the internship, the responsibilities of each party, and the reporting requirements. The site supervisor is the critical link. You guide your interns by providing direction and feedback. If a problem occurs, you counsel the students and contact the faculty sponsor or Career Services staff when necessary.

D

eveloping Work Activities & Measurable Learning Objectives

A large part of producing effective position descriptions involves the development of challenging work assignments that complement students' academic programs. One way to do this is to design a preliminary list of work activities that will fit the needs of your department. A detailed description of typical tasks will help Baker's Career Services to promote your internship, and to direct the appropriate candidates to the position. Later, when the interns you select join your team, you will have a chance to review the work activities and modify them according to the interns' knowledge and personal work and learning goals.

As part of the educational process, internship work activities should focus on projects specifically related to the academic major and the degree your interns expect to receive. Students who perform menial tasks will learn nothing about applying their expertise to a work environment. While everyone needs to pitch in and perform these tasks to make an organization run, we suggest that you keep clerical activities to less than 25% of the intern's day.

Students expect and appreciate clear direction regarding what is expected of them and frequent feedback concerning what and how they have done. In the Baker academic environment, direction and periodic feedback is the way of life. It is also most important that your interns perceive their work as making a useful contribution to your organization.

Examples of work Baker interns have performed:

- Conducting laboratory tests
- Writing handbooks or manuals
- Designing posters, charts, graphs
- Generating financial forecast and cost recovery reports
- Performing software/hardware modifications
- Conducting studies and surveys
- Developing slide/sound presentations
- Compiling technical reports
- Creating academic lesson plans
- Conducting research
- Generating marketing plans
- Conducting training packages
- Preparing budgets and financial reports
- Planning events

Developing challenging work assignments relative to the students' abilities is a major thrust of the position description. Your final internship description will incorporate the needs of your organization as well as the abilities and academic goals of the students you employ.

Supervising Your Intern

As an intern supervisor, you perform the functions 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 Baker classroom to the work environment. Since the internship is an extension of the learning process, you will need to provide opportunities to bridge the two experiences.

We suggest that you 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 needing growth and development, and get a sense of what kind of work lies ahead. 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 provide them with a sense of accomplishment. In addition, it will give you a basis to discuss their professional growth.

Specific work documents to include in a portfolio may be any of the following:

- Organization Newsletters
- Financial Reports
- Performance Appraisals
- Displays and Exhibits
- Proposals
- Charts/Graphs
- Manuals
- Correspondence
- Citations and Awards
- Research Reports

Evaluation

A few weeks after the internship begins, it's time to see how well you and your intern are meeting the goals outlined earlier. Evaluation processes differ. Yours might be as formal as written evaluations every three weeks or as informal as occasional lunches with the intern's mentor. Some organizations have the intern evaluate the experience and the organization as well. Again, the structure is largely up to your organization's culture and needs. As an added bonus, these evaluations will be handy later if you decide to interview a former intern for full-time work, or to publicize how successful your program has been.

If the student is planning to earn Baker credit for the internship, you should expect to provide a formal evaluation for the faculty sponsor. You may also be asked to discuss the intern with the faculty member either on the phone or during a site visit. **The professional qualities on which Baker asks you to evaluate your interns can be found on page 16.**

Career Services is always interested in learning about the internship experiences of Baker students. Any feedback you can provide to us concerning student preparedness and performance is appreciated. Although we do no formal evaluation for internships NOT done for academic credit, your opinions are important to us as we prepare future Baker interns.

Evaluated Professional Qualities

As a supervisor, you will be asked to evaluate your Baker interns on the following professional qualities:

Quantity of Work – Definition: Meets productivity standards; completes work in a quick and timely manner; strives to increase productivity.

Quality of Work – Definition: Demonstrates accuracy and thoroughness; displays commitment to excellence; looks for ways to improve and promote quality; shows good attention to detail.

Work Ethic – Definition: Demonstrates a good work ethic; offers assistance and support to co-workers; willing to go the extra mile; makes maximum use of time.

Job Knowledge and Competency – Definition: Competent in required job skills and knowledge; exhibits ability to learn and apply new skills; keeps abreast of current developments in field; requires minimal supervision.

Teachability – Definition: Shows an openness and eagerness to learn from others; accepts criticism and feedback; applies feedback to improve performance; open to new ways of doing things.

Communication – Definition: Exhibits good listening and comprehension; expresses ideas and thoughts effectively; keeps other adequately informed; resolves conflict effectively and timely.

Attitude/Self Control – Definition: Is positive about the company, co-workers, and management; displays positive outlook and pleasant manner; takes a solution-focused approach to problems; maintains self-control under stressful situations.

Organization – Definition: Sets goals and objectives; prioritizes and plans work activities; able to minimize distractions; works in an organized manner; able to multi-task and balance competing demands.

Adaptability – Definition: Adapts easily to changes in the work environment; changes approach or method to best fit the situation.

Initiative – Definition: Seeks increased responsibilities; undertakes self-development activities; takes independent action and calculated risks; effectively deals with issues before they become problems; asks for help when needed.

Reliability – Definition: Meets attendance and punctuality expectations; completes assigned tasks completely and timely; keeps commitments to co-workers and supervisors; takes responsibility for own actions.

Overall Satisfaction With Student Intern – Please use the following scale:

1 = Low Satisfaction

3 = Average Satisfaction

5 = High Satisfaction