

INTERNSHIP GUIDE



ELEVATE
RAPID CITY

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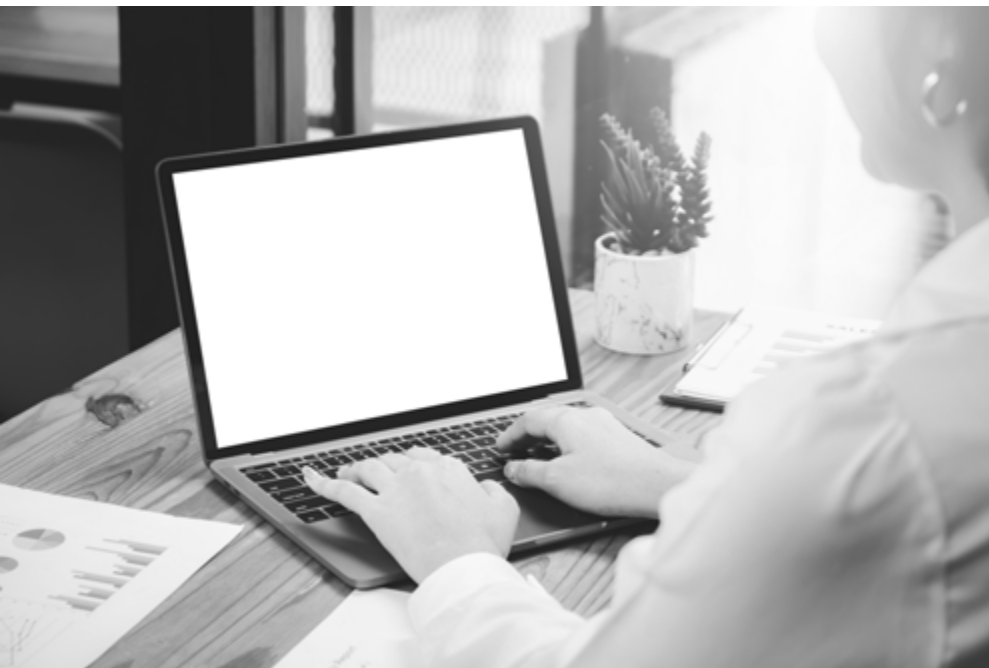


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Introduction

Does your organization want to hire interns? We're here to help! At Elevate Rapid City, we want to provide our businesses with the best resources to allow more opportunities for you to recruit and retain talent. With the workforce demands constantly growing, this guide will assist you in creating an internship program to best suit your organization. Internships are an innovative and low-cost option for the future of workforce recruitment.

What is an Internship?



An internship is a structured work experience opportunity where students or professionals gain practical skills and knowledge in a specific field or industry. Internships provide a mutually beneficial relationship to businesses by providing leadership development skills to existing workforce and access to new talent pools.

Types of Internships

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

These internships typically take place during the summer months and provide students with an opportunity to gain work experience while on a break from their regular academic studies.

PART-TIME/ACADEMIC YEAR INTERNSHIPS

These internships are structured to accommodate students' academic schedules and allow them to work part-time during the school year. They provide hands-on experience while balancing coursework. It's important to be considerate of school schedules.

CO-OP INTERNSHIPS

Co-op (cooperative education) internships alternate periods of work with periods of study, allowing students to integrate academic learning with practical work experience. These internships often extend for several months and may involve multiple work terms.

RETURNSHIPS

A returnship is a specialized internship or program designed for individuals who are returning to the workforce after an extended career break, such as post-retirement, parenthood, or caregiving responsibilities. It offers a structured opportunity for professionals to refresh their skills, gain updated industry knowledge, and rebuild their professional network to facilitate their reintegration into the workforce.

SKILLBRIDGE

SkillBridge is a Department of Defense program that allows transitioning service members to participate in civilian internships and apprenticeships during their final six months of military service. It provides an opportunity for service members to gain valuable civilian work experience and develop skills that can facilitate a successful transition into the civilian workforce.

If you are interested in learning more about how your organization can become involved with the SkillBridge Program, please contact Taylor Davis with Elevate Rapid City at taylor.davis@elevaterapidcity.com.

Wages vs Credits



Internships can be paid or offered in exchange for college credit, depending on the policies of the organization and specific arrangement with the intern.

Wages

Wages refer to the monetary compensation that interns receive for their work during an internship. According to Indeed, the average wage for an intern in Rapid City is \$16.43. Remember that wages can vary depending on factors such as the industry, location, and level of experience. While some internships may offer competitive wages, others may provide minimum wage or a stipend to support interns during their learning experience. Typically pay will align with wages offered to entry level positions. Elevate Rapid City can help determine the market rate for compensation in our region for your industry.

Credits

Internship credits are academic recognitions that students can earn for successfully completing an internship as part of their educational program. These credits are typically awarded by educational institutions and count towards degree requirements or appear on academic transcripts. Internship credits acknowledge the value of practical experience gained during the internship and help students integrate their academic knowledge with real-world applications.

Benefits of Internships



Hands-on Learning

An internship provides a practical and hands-on learning experience where they can apply the knowledge and skills they've acquired in a real-world setting. It bridges the gap between theory and practice.



Professional Development

Interns can develop valuable skills, gain industry-specific knowledge, and improve communication, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities.



Networking

Interns can connect with experienced individuals, build relationships, and expand your professional network, which can be beneficial for future job opportunities.



Industry Insights

Interns can gain valuable insight into company operations, industry trends, and day-to-day responsibilities of different roles. This helps interns make more informed career decisions and allows for easier transition to full-time employment post-internship.

INTERN BENEFITS

EMPLOYER BENEFITS



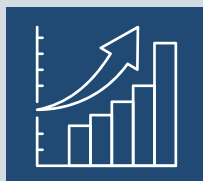
Talent Acquisition

Internships serve as a talent pipeline for identifying and recruiting potential future employees. Employers can assess the intern’s skills, work ethic, and cultural fit before making a long-term employment offer.



Fresh Perspectives & Ideas

Interns often bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas. They can contribute new insights and creative solutions to challenges your organization might be facing.



Increased Productivity

Interns can help boost productivity by assisting with daily tasks, project support, and completing specific projects. This can allow employees to focus on other responsibilities and tasks, as well as add lower cost capacity to the team.



Employer Branding

Establishing an internship program demonstrates a commitment to investing in the development of talent and can enhance the employer’s brand.



Community

Providing internship opportunities frequently aligns with an organization’s commitment to social responsibility and community engagement. It offers a way to contribute to the development and growth of local professionals.

Developing an Internship Program

Developing an internship program involves carefully crafting meaningful learning experiences for aspiring professionals within a specific field. It requires collaborating with various departments to identify project-based tasks that contribute to both the interns' growth and the organization's objectives. Additionally, establishing clear expectations, providing regular feedback, and offering mentorship opportunities are essential elements for fostering a successful internship program. Check out our five steps below to create your very own program!



STEP 1: SET GOALS

Setting goals for an internship program begins with understanding the desired outcomes and learning objectives for both the interns and organization.

1. Determine internal needs
 - identify gaps where additional support could be needed
 - engage with departments & managers to understand challenges and projects
 - pinpoint specific tasks and responsibilities an intern can assist with
2. Define Outcomes
 - establish clear objectives & deliverables
 - Define specific projects, skill development, or contributions
3. Establish Metrics to Measure Success

STEP 2: PLAN

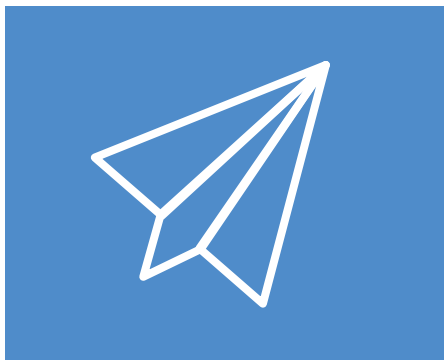
Your Internship Plan will be vital to your program’s success! Consider the following questions:

- Which department will host the intern?
- Who will manage the intern?
- What academic background or skills will you require of the intern?
- What duties will the intern be asked to perform?
- How much will the intern be paid?
- How many hours per week will you require from the intern?
- When and where will you post your internship opportunity?
- What will the interns schedule be?
- How will you assess the intern’s performance and how often?
- Will they have an office or assigned space?
- What resources will the intern need?
- How will you measure your programs’ success?

The duration of an internship can vary depending on several factors, including company policies, industry, and the specific needs of the internship program. The standard length of an internship is 8-12 weeks. It is important to clarify the timeline of your internship during your planning process.

Internship Planning Timeline:

Internship Start Date	Advertisement Start Date	Hiring Process Start Date
Fall - Mid-August	No later than May 1st	No Later than July 1st
Spring - Mid-January	No later than September 1st	No later than November 1st
Summer - Mid-May	No later than February 1st	No later than April 1st



Be sure to familiarize yourself with Fair Act standards, local labor laws, regulations, and ethical guidelines regarding internships. Ensure compliance with minimum wage requirements, working hour restrictions, qualifications for unpaid internships, and relevant legal obligations to protect both the interns and your organization.

STEP 3: RECRUIT

Recruiting for an internship program requires a comprehensive approach to attract and select the most suitable candidates. To recruit interns effectively, start by clearly defining the internship position and its objectives. Develop a job description that outlines the responsibilities, qualifications, and desired skills.

Streamline the application process and provide clear instructions for submitting resumes, cover letters, and any additional required documents. Review applications thoroughly, focusing on candidates' relevant skills, educational background, and passion for the field. Conduct interviews to assess candidates' fit for the organization and their ability to contribute to the internship's objectives. Finally, communicate with candidates promptly and professionally, providing updates on their application status and offering feedback when possible. Effective recruitment ensures that you attract talented and motivated interns who will bring value to your organization and gain valuable experiences during their internship.

There are many resources to advertise your internship. As an investor you can post both your internships and employment opportunities to the Elevate job board for free! Not an investor? No problem. Contact Jason Wittenberg at jason.wittenberg@elevaterapidcity.com for more information.

For a seamless and effective intern recruitment process, we recommend visiting Handshake—a leading platform connecting employers with top-tier student talent. Discover exceptional candidates through Handshake's user-friendly interface, streamlining your search for interns while gaining access to a diverse pool of motivated and qualified individuals.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM CHECKLIST

1. SET GOALS

- Establish the goals and policies for the program.

2. PLAN

- Consider the costs, training and needs of the organization.
- Determine what work the intern will be responsible for.
- Decide on intern compensation.
- Create a team of internal and external leaders, mentors and supervisors.
- Decide which type of intern fits best with your organization.
- Establish internship timeline.

3. RECRUIT

- Write a job description.
- Create internship application process.
- Consider where and how you will post your internship opportunity.
- Establish intern hiring process.

4. ONBOARD & MANAGE

- Develop onboarding process.
- Establish what training is necessary for your intern.
- Create the intern's schedule.

5. EVALUATE & ELEVATE

- Develop evaluation form and exit survey for intern.
 - Establish a company internship program evaluation.
 - Determine your organization's internship to employment transition process.
-

Post your internship opportunity [HERE](#) on the Elevate Rapid City Job Board.

STEP 4: ONBOARD & MANAGE

You will want to develop an onboarding process for your intern just as you would for a new employee. The onboarding process will be the intern's first glimpse into the culture of your company.

Successful management of your intern will greatly impact the intern's experience and increase your chance of retaining them as an employee.

- Schedule regular meetings to check in on the intern's progress, provide feedback, and address any questions or concerns they may have. This allows for ongoing communication and ensures they are on track.
- Assign projects that align with the intern's skills, interests, and learning goals. Provide them with tasks that challenge and engage them while offering opportunities for skill development and growth.
- Offer opportunities for the intern to learn and develop new skills. This can include workshops, webinars, or encourage them to attend relevant meetings and events to expand their knowledge. Check out elevaterapidcity.com/events.
- Foster a collaborative and inclusive work environment where the intern feels comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions. Have them participate in team discussions, meetings, and projects to gain exposure and contribute to the organization's goals.
- Encourage the intern to reflect on their own experiences, set goals, and identify areas for growth. Offer guidance on how they can leverage their internship to further their career aspirations.
- Recognize and appreciate the intern's contributions and achievements. Celebrate their successes!

By effectively managing an intern, you can create a positive and supportive environment that promotes their learning, development, and overall success.

Internship Onboarding Checklist

YOUR OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION

Workspace Location:

Office Phone:

YOUR COMPUTER INFORMATION

Network Login:

Computer Password:

Email Address:

WORK HOURS

Monday: _____

Tuesday: _____

Wednesday: _____

Thursday: _____

Friday: _____

Saturday: _____

Sunday: _____

HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Supervisor Name & Phone:

HR Name & Phone:

GENERAL

- Review Internship Handbook
- Dress Code Standards
- Schedule One-on-Ones with staff
- Review work-related expectations
- Disaster plan and safety procedures
- Map out the employee's first day and schedule yourself to be available at the beginning and throughout the first day

COMPUTER AND COMPUTING ACCESS

- Hardware
- Software
- Networks and shared folders

WAGES AND HOURS

- Complete Payroll Paperwork, I-9 & W-4, with Operations Director, if applicable
- Timecard reporting
- Explain the following:
 - o Pay periods
 - o Pay days
 - o Process for reporting an absence.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Review of workstation
- Tour of facilities, restrooms, and kitchen
- Storage of resource materials, office supplies
- Approved Parking Pass

STEP 5: EVALUATE & ELEVATE



Intern evaluations are essential for assessing the performance and progress during their internship. An evaluation is an opportunity to provide valuable feedback, support their learning journey, and help them transition to their next professional endeavor, or better yet, into your organization!

Develop an evaluation form or template that aligns with your established evaluation criteria. The evaluation form should provide a clear rating scale and open-ended questions to assess performance.

As the intern's time with your company concludes, we recommend scheduling an evaluation, self-assessment, and an exit survey for program feedback.

Be sure to document the evaluation process by including the evaluation form, supervisor comments, and goals established. This documentation will serve as a record of the intern's performance and can be referred to for future reference or employment.

Intern to Employee

Once the evaluation process is completed, you will want to decide if your organization would like to offer the intern permanent employment. Consider the following steps to successfully transition your intern to employee.

1. **Extend a permanent offer:** Schedule a meeting to discuss the intern's future. Clearly communicate the offer, including position details, compensation, benefits, and any additional expectations. Emphasize the value they bring to the company and express enthusiasm for their continued growth.
2. **Facilitate the transition:** Provide necessary resources, training, and support to help the intern smoothly transition into their new role. Assign a mentor or supervisor to guide them, establish clear performance expectations, and set goals for their continued development.

Once you have completed the internship process from start to finish, be sure to evaluate your organization's program. What went well? Where can improvements be made? Be flexible with your internship program based on feedback. This allows you to create a more rewarding experience for interns, attract and retain top talent, improve program effectiveness, foster a positive organizational culture, and strengthen your employer brand. It ultimately contributes to the success and long-term sustainability of your

C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S



We are confident that you are well on your way to a successful internship program that will be beneficial to your organization and our future workforce. By establishing an internship, you are taking a significant step towards investing in the growth and development of up-and-coming talent.

Elevate Rapid City can support you with internship program development and implementation beyond this guide. We offer evaluations of preexisting internship programs, assistance with determining your organization's intern to employee conversion rate, as well as provide guidance on how to improve your intern ROI.

To better tailor our services to your specific needs and objectives, we kindly recommend that you begin by taking the Workforce Assessment Survey, which will assist us in providing you with a more informed and customized approach.

If you have questions regarding the information in the Elevate Internship Guide, workforce support, or would like more information on the workforce assessment, please email Reese Niu.



Reese Niu

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