

Teacher Tip Sheet

Internship

A tip sheet for teachers on how to help students get the most out of an Internship. Internships are a unique opportunity to support and augment the curriculum and get students more deeply engaged in their learning. If you are coordinating an Internship, have a look at the Coordinator Tip Sheet in the WBL Toolkit.

Internship

An internship is a highly structured, time-limited, Career Preparation activity in which a student or young adult is placed at a workplace for a defined period of time to participate in and observe work first hand within a given industry. Internships provide students and young adults the opportunity to learn by doing real work and being productively engaged in the workplace. They may provide the opportunity to work in teams, rotate through a number of departments and job functions, or to work on a project of interest and productive value for the employer partner. Internships generally run a minimum of 60 hours, with 144 hours or more being optimal. They may be paid or unpaid, depending on whether the intern is performing productive work for the employer and other factors.¹ They are designed to give students and young adults hands-on experience in a field of interest, the chance to learn and practice occupational skills and the opportunity to learn about their career options.

Internships are designed to promote:

- Exploration of and experience in a field of interest
- Exposure to a wide range of careers and jobs within the industry
- Opportunities to develop, practice and demonstrate work-readiness skills
- The acquisition of occupational knowledge
- Awareness of the skills and education needed to be successful in the industry

Teacher Tips

Internship Success Factors

When designing and implementing an Internship, keep the following in mind.

Before the Internship

- Provide the P-TECH coordinator with as much information as you can about the students who are seeking and ready for an Internship placement. Share how many of them will be ready for placements, the types of internships they are interested in and when the best time for the internship would be.
- Review the Internship Activity Guide with the P-TECH coordinator to understand the systems that are in place to support the internship and decide who will facilitate each activity.
- Distribute and collect appropriate permission forms.
- Help match students to specific internship opportunities.
 - ✓ Identify interested and qualified students.
 - ✓ Match students to specific internships based on their skills and interests and the employer's needs.
- Prepare students for the internship.
 - ✓ Help the students prepare for the interview with the employer.
 - ✓ Let them know what you expect from them and what they can expect from their

- internship.
- ✓ Have students research the employer and identify two to three career options or pathways that are of interest.
- ✓ Help them understand workplace norms such as dress and safety procedures.
- ✓ Work with the intern and employer to define learning objectives for the internship. Include personal, academic, occupational and work-readiness related objectives.
- ✓ Let students know how they will be evaluated on their performance.
- Build excitement for the Internship by exploring what concepts in the classroom might be demonstrated in the workplace through the internship.

During the Internship

- Provide intern support. Work with the P-TECH coordinator to conduct the following activities.
 - ✓ Document learning objectives and discuss them with the intern and the internship host.
 - ✓ Support interns in sharing and developing new learning objectives with internship hosts.
 - ✓ Set regular check-ins with the intern and internship host.
- Regularly assess progress and impact of the internship with the P-TECH coordinator.
- Make the classroom connection.
 - ✓ Design and coordinate concurrent learning activities in the classroom, so the Internship is not an isolated activity but is connected to academic learning.
 - ✓ Provide opportunities for interns to reflect on their internships in the classroom, both verbally and in writing.

After the Internship

- Review completed evaluations or assessments with the intern and discuss and record next steps.
- Work with the P-TECH coordinator to conduct follow-up activities.
 - ✓ Document intern learning and record the experience.
 - ✓ Assess the effectiveness of the Internship and make recommendations for future adjustments.
- Make the classroom connection.
 - ✓ Provide opportunities for interns to showcase their work through presentations or demonstrations.
 - ✓ Provide classroom experiences that help students connect internship to work goals.

Go Deeper

Here are some activities that can help deepen the impact of an Internship.

- Discuss behavioral and communication expectations for the experience by guiding students through a comparison of the culture and style of the workplace with others they have observed (either formally through your program or informally on their own).
- Maintain ongoing communication with and/or provide reports to the employer's lead contact.