

What Interns Really Want

Interns want to be successful in the work environment and will need some of your time and attention to do so. Specifically, Interns want:

1. **To be challenged.** Interns want to work and learn. They want to contribute to your organization and want to be utilized. Our students have a lot of expertise to offer!
2. **You to be honest.** Interns want to know what they can expect during their internship. Too often interns feel that they are just given tasks and don't understand how these tasks fit into their learning.
3. **Feedback.** Interns want to know when they are doing good work or when and how they need to improve.
4. **To be included.** Interns want to be part of the team but sometimes they may not know what they need to do to be included. Attending staff meetings and being part of a lunch group will help them to feel that they are a team member.
5. **To understand what they need to do.** Give the intern a detailed explanation when work is assigned to them. There may be times when interns don't know the questions to ask to fully understand what is expected of them. If the expectations are very clear, it will be easier for all involved to have the expectations met.
6. **A mentor.** Make sure interns have a mentor in the workplace to provide guidance. 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 are feeling ignored. The burden of making sure they are 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.
7. **A place to work.** Interns need their own chair and work space. Other staff members need to know what the intern is there to do.