

RCA Internship Program

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Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to provide you with a basic outline of what should be included in the RCA Internship program. If you already have an internship program, this manual may assist you in adapting your existing program.

Objective

The objective of the RCA Internship program is to provide your business with an opportunity to give Culinary program students real hands-on experience. In addition, by providing internship opportunities you are supporting the educational mission of the Research Chef's Association.

Benefits

The benefits of an Internship program to your company are varied and include:

- exposure to the intern as a potential future employee
- marketing exposure for your company (to other students your intern knows)
- work the intern does during the internship
- new perspectives and thinking an intern provides
- updates on the current Culinary curriculum
- mentoring and teaching opportunities for staff working with the intern
- PR value of participating in the Internship program within the RCA community
- Widening your company's customer network as interns progress in their careers.

Desired Outcomes

Your intern should return to school (in most cases their senior year) having learned about your company, Culinary and themselves. For some it will be the first time they have lived alone, gotten to work in a strange city and worked in a professional environment. Hopefully you will feel you got productive work from your intern, provided a great learning environment, interesting work and a positive impression of your company.

Program Description

Ideally your internship program should give students exposure to both hands-on and academic learning. A wide variety of tasks are recommended to give the student exposure to different disciplines or departments. The best learning generally follows the 4-step adult learning process: explain, demonstrate, observe (the student), correct. Work should be structured as both supervised and independent. Independent tasks can be special projects such as kitchen organization, or creating new document templates. Larger assignments can be used to keep the student busy when there is down time in their regular work

schedule. These tasks should challenge the student to come up with their own solutions and provide a sense of contribution to the company.

Marketing Your Internships

The RCA will provide a central hub on their website for you to post your internships. The posting will be free to RCA members and sponsoring companies. Students from all Culinology programs (currently 12) will be able to sort internship opportunities by job type, geography or pay and contact companies directly for interviews. An ad template is on the website to make it easier to write your job posting. Generally internships are planned 3-6 months in advance of their start date, particularly for summer internships. You will want to post your internship early to have the largest number of candidates from whom to select.

RCA Resources

[RCA Staff member name] supports the students, companies and schools that participate in the Internship program. In addition, they oversee program resources while the Student sub-committee (of the Education Committee) is responsible for developing content. [Name] is the current sub-committee chair.

Mentor

It is best to have one individual in the department be the student's mentor and manager. The student should be able to rely on the mentor for training, advice, encouragement and supervision. The mentor should plan on an average of 5 hours per week training and supervising the intern, more in the two weeks during orientation.

Expectations

Clear expectations regarding what is expected from the intern are critical to their success. Your description of the company work environment, work pace, level of supervision, degree of autonomy and performance expectations will all set the stage of success. Behavior and performance expectations extend from the interview process through hiring to orientation. It is equally important to hear what the intern is looking for. At this point you can acknowledge whether your company will meet their expectations or not. Treat the internship opportunity as a serious hiring decision.

Internship Documentation

It is suggested that you have an Internship Manual (explaining the program) and an Internship Workbook (for each intern to complete during their internship). Of course you can write your own documents or download them from the Internship section of the RCA website.

Offer Letter/Financial

Intern pay varies by area of the country but generally ranges from \$11.00 - \$18.00/hour. Interns are usually hired as contractors to simplify company

paperwork. They do not receive benefits. Rate of pay, start date and general duties should be covered in an offer letter. Generally the intern should at least breakeven after paying all expenses.

Housing

Housing is often one of the more difficult things for students to arrange on their own. It is helpful to have some suggestions for them to ease the search process including:

- Where to source a place to live - local newspapers, Craigslist, etc.
- Recommended neighborhoods
- Estimated cost of 1 bedroom apartments and rooms to rent in houses in each recommended area
- Specific apartments or homes offered for rent in the area

Transportation

Interns are responsible for their own transportation to and from work each day. If they don't have a car they will need to determine how they will get back and forth. Recommending public transport routes could be helpful.

Scheduling

Provide a schedule, or minimum hours the intern will work during the internship. Each school may have somewhat different requirements but 300 hours is typical, (25 hours per week over 12 weeks). Determine the start and stop dates for the internship. Find out if the student has any other obligations during the internship for which need time off.

Assessments

Timely and thorough feedback to the intern is critical. It is recommended that at least 3 sit-downs occur.

- At the conclusion of the orientation - see how things are going.
- At the mid-point of the internship – performance feedback
- At the conclusion of the internship – performance evaluation
- Final presentation by Intern

Learning Goals

Outline the learning goals of the internship. Tell them they are expected to be an important part of the [department name] team making valuable contributions to the company's success. You expect that they will get hands on experience in the following areas during their internship: [Examples]

- Ideation
- Concept writing
- Prototype development
- Sensory evaluation
- Formula writing
- Shelf life studies
- Receiving
- Shipping/Shipping Log
- Competitive benchmarking
- Project planning
- Database management
- Trend analysis
- Analytical analysis
- Descriptive analysis

Our Expectations [Modify]

Dependability – Do what you say, say what you do

Interpersonal Relationships – Be nice, network whenever possible

Timeliness – Be on time

Dress – Casual work clothes

Alcohol/Drugs – We are a drug-free workplace

Proactive – Take the initiative, don't wait to be told

Motivation – Be self-motivated to learn all areas of the internship

Respect – Give it to get it

Personal Laptop and Cellphone – [Required/not required]

Your Expectations [Modify]

Housing – You will be expected to find your own

Transportation – Must have access to reliable transportation

Schedule – We will let you know week to week, generally 20-30 hours

Work Environment – Friendly, casual, collegial, professional

Pay – [\$XX.00 hour]

Work Status – [Employee/Independent Contractor]

Duties and Responsibilities [Modify]

Your mentor will assign you to projects and specific tasks each week. Most of the time you will be working directly with them, but sometimes you will be assigned to work with others to get exposure to different ways of doing things.

Evaluations [Modify]

Your mentor (assigned to you prior to your start date) will be your guide, sounding board, teacher and evaluator during your time here. They will coach you continuously throughout your internship. There will be 3 points during your internship when your mentor will formally check in with you; at the conclusion of your orientation, around the midpoint of your internship and again at the conclusion of your internship.

Orientation Schedule Outline [Modify]

We generally work Monday – Friday, with Saturdays and Sundays off. Start time is generally 8 AM but can vary. End time will generally be between noon and 2 PM. We cannot give you a set schedule because your hours will depend on our workload and the type of work required on each project. Schedules will be determined a week ahead, generally on Thursday.

Week 1 – Orientation [Modify]

- Review of Operations Manual
- Company Philosophy – Capabilities
- Kitchen and Lab Equipment Orientation
- Company Email, Phone Use
- Company Directory
- Review of Your School Internship Requirements
- Review of Your Expectations and Goals (written)
- Cleaning Schedule
- Mentor Check-in
- Project Assignments, Overview and Week 2 Schedule

Week 2 – 11 Project Work [Modify]

- Weekly work assignments
- Week 7 Midpoint Evaluation
- Weekly Company Meetings

Week 12 – Wrap Up and Evaluation [Modify]

- Finish projects and Review Experience
- Evaluation with Mentor

Operations Manual [Modify or Use Other Training Materials]

The Operations manual contains information about how we take care of administrative activities like timesheets, meetings, calendar management, project tracking and the like. Your mentor will cover the manual during your orientation.