

Internships 101

UD Hosts Internship Workshop for Employers

BY JESSICA SMITH

THINK ABOUT THE WORST JOB you ever had. Were you fetching coffee and lunch orders all day? Or were you slammed with daunting tasks and endless data entry?

The biggest problem employers face today is how to manage interns. Too little work can be fruitless or demeaning; too much can be overwhelming. An unbalanced internship experience is frustrating for both parties.

“Employers might not have the time each day to manage their interns, but definitely need the support of interns for work to be done. In the moment, it can be hard to think of tasks on the fly,” says UD Career Center Assistant Director of Employer Engagement and Events Jenni Kaper.

That’s why the University of Delaware is hosting the Total Internship Management Workshop for the second time on April 16, 2020.

The program is the brainchild of Intern Bridge, a higher education research and consulting firm owned by Dr. Robert Shindell who authored “Total Internship Management: A Guide to Creating the Ultimate Internship Program” in 2016 to assist companies of all sizes in designing mutually beneficial internship programs. The guide details everything from

partnering with colleges and universities, to establishing daily duties and providing effective feedback.

Co-sponsored by the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce and the Delaware Prosperity Partnership, the workshop will target engaged and thoughtful employers who will offer meaningful

opportunities for students. “Our goal is to add value to our employers and we want to provide resources that can make a positive impact in the work that they do,” says R. Lynn Sydnor-Epps, senior associate director of employer and alumni engagement. “We want to help employers create amazing internship experiences as this in turn benefits both students and employers.”

UD Career Center staff first attended a Total Internship Management Workshop at Temple University in November 2018. Sydnor-Epps and Kaper were so compelled by the event, they knew UD would be the perfect place to host. “Dr. Shindell is highly engaged, passionate and energetic about this topic area,” says Kaper. “He delivers the message clearly without sounding like it’s intangible. Every employer can work within these parameters.”

Whether you’re seeking summer interns or need help during the school year, paid or unpaid, this program can meet your needs; the most important aspect is to clearly define those needs. As Dr. Shindell observes,



“just as there is no single definition of an internship, there is also not one single way to structure an internship program, either. However, creating a structure that works with your organization and that coincides with a structure put forth by the college or university, this certainly sets the tone for a successful internship program.”

“This workshop provides an opportunity for employers to explore the full cycle of the internship experience,” says Sydnor-Epps. “The comprehensive program provides tools and resources that can be used by the employer that is just starting an internship program, as well as the employer that has extensive experience.”

Kaper encourages employers attending to consider the lasting impact. “As we work with businesses who want to expand their presence on campus or revamp a program they already have, this workshop can help take the guesswork out of creating a successful program, as well as help convert interns into full-time employees.” ■

If you’re a UD graduate interested in engaging talented Blue Hens, there’s an opportunity to test your new knowledge and show off your workplace. The **UD Summer Delaware Job Shadow Program** is accepting employer applications to connect with current students for a one-day learning experience at your job site. Contact henshiringhens@udel.edu for more information.