

Internships @ the Center of Learning and Experience

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Session Objectives:

- ▶ How to promote the internship using community connections
- ▶ How to provide structure for the internship that benefits both the library and the intern
- ▶ How to build learning and reflection into the internship
- ▶ Share our experiences from the perspectives of a public library, an academic library, and a former intern

Definitions

- ▶ In this session, we are using internships as a term that includes practicum and field experiences, all falling under the broad category of experiential learning.

Benefits of Offering an Internship

- ▶ Having an intern asking questions about what we do, forces us as professionals to reflect on why we do what we do and how we do it
- ▶ For MSLS/MSIS interns, new professionals to add to your network
- ▶ Combats burnout for the librarians to be exposed to fresh thinking
- ▶ Fosters community connections (VBPL--VWC; VWC-TCC)
- ▶ Backburner projects get done!

Challenges

- ▶ For the supervisor, it's like having another new employee
- ▶ If you had an internship or a practicum, use your own experience
- ▶ Get buy-in from staff; get input on projects for the intern
- ▶ Develop a job description - adjust to intern's interests and skills
- ▶ Academic requirements for a formal internship

Crafting a Job Description

- ▶ VBPL
 - ▶ Created job descriptions
 - ▶ Partnered with local college to tailor experience for their students
 - ▶ Tailored the documents (application, learning objectives) after the college's model
 - ▶ Highlight transferrable skills (outreach, customer service, etc.)

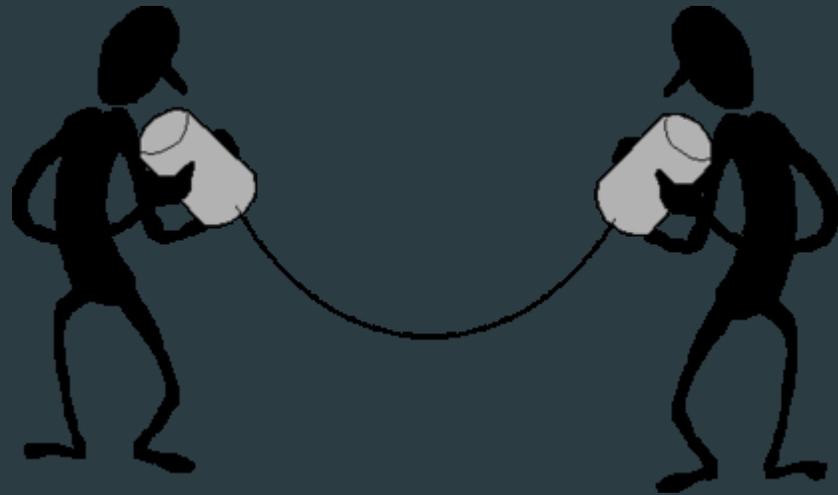
Importance of the Interview



Structuring the Experience

- ▶ Conduct an interview; Include all staff who will work with the intern
- ▶ Learning objectives
- ▶ Duration and schedule
- ▶ Memorandum of Agreement

Communicating



Ensuring the Learning Experience

- ▶ Vocalize decision-making
- ▶ Ask questions
- ▶ Reflection
- ▶ Learning goes both ways!



Evaluating the Internship Experience

- ▶ Midway check-in
- ▶ Seek feedback from the intern
- ▶ Give feedback to the intern



Getting Closure

- ▶ Have a clear end-date
- ▶ Celebrate the intern!
- ▶ Can you give a reference?
- ▶ Keep in touch!
- ▶ Networking



Lessons Learned

- ▶ Be realistic about how much time it might take to set the internship up.
- ▶ Don't expect success overnight, getting all the pieces into place takes time.
- ▶ Think about timing - if someone is interested in a fall internship, the connection needs to be made in February.
- ▶ Move toward a more self-directed approach.
- ▶ Get established procedures in place and document them to make it easier the next time.
- ▶ Take advantage of existing frameworks (training checklists, volunteer program).
- ▶ Be flexible, adapt the intern's interests and abilities.
- ▶ Recognize gap between course preparation and learning objectives/internship projects .

Next steps

- ▶ VWC has created a LibGuide to promote the internships
<http://guides.vwc.edu/internships>
- ▶ VWC will work on creating an undergraduate internship opportunity for students to explore librarianship
- ▶ Hiring freeze at VBPL - how could an intern help fill the gap?

Recommended Resources

- ▶ Effective Library Internships: A toolkit for Success - created by Multnomah County System
interns.multcolib.org/EffectiveLibraryInternshipsFULL.pdf
- ▶ Eyler, Giles and Schmeide (1996). A Practitioner's Guide to Reflection in Service-Learning.
- ▶ Bird & Crumpton (2014). "Real Learning Connections: Questioning the Learner in the LIS Internship," *Journal of Education for Library Science*, 55 (2).
- ▶ Dahl (2011). "Creating Undergraduate Internships for non-LIS Students in Academic Libraries," *Collaborative Librarianship*, 3(2).
- ▶ Kander, D., & Potter, S. V. (2015, June 1). All in start-up for libraries: exploring the common ground between library leaders and entrepreneurs. *Library Journal*, 140(10), 48+. Retrieved from

Questions?



Contact Us!

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Title: Outreach Coordination Intern

- ▶ Virginia Beach Public Library Volunteer Job Description
- ▶
- ▶ Associated fields of study: Business, Communications, Recreation & Leisure Studies
- ▶
- ▶ Goal: The intern will gain project management experience along with making community, business, and civic contacts.
- ▶
- ▶ Qualifications:
- ▶ Time Commitment:
- ▶ Benefits:
- ▶ Supervisor: Adult and Disabilities Services Librarian/ Library Branch Librarian/ Volunteer Resource Manager
- ▶ Level: Library Information Specialist II
- ▶ Duties:
- ▶ Establish a schedule of targeted outreach activities and tours of the Special Services Library.
- ▶ Develop collaborative outreach programs with civic groups, community and faith-based organizations, local senior centers and assisted living facilities.
- ▶ Assist in creation of a database using Excel to track adult outreach and tour activities.
- ▶ Establish an inventory of adult outreach supplies.
- ▶ Other duties as assigned.
 - ▶ Examples of other duties:
 - ▶ May assist staff with facilitation of adult programs
 - ▶ May compile outreach materials
 - ▶ May observe and assist with adult outreach programming and services
 - ▶ May assist with data analysis and create reports.

Title: Special Event Intern

- ▶ **Associated fields of study:** Business, Communications, Recreation & Leisure Studies
- ▶ **Goal:** The intern will develop organizational skills related to developing and implementing public programs, event coordination, and make valuable community, business, and civic contacts.
- ▶ **Qualifications:**
- ▶ **Time Commitment:**
- ▶ **Benefits:**
- ▶ **Supervisor:** Adult and Disabilities Services Librarian/ Library Branch Librarian/ Volunteer Resource Manager
- ▶ **Level:** Library Information Specialist II
- ▶ **Duties:**
 - ▶ Represent Library at special events such as resource fairs, community events, and local schools.
 - ▶ Maintain database to track adult outreach and tour activities.
 - ▶ Maintain the inventory of adult outreach supplies and informational packets.
 - ▶ Create displays for outreach events.
 - ▶ Develop collaborative outreach programs with civic groups, community and faith-based organizations, local senior centers and assisted living facilities.
 - ▶ Other duties as assigned; examples of other duties:
 - ▶ May assist staff with facilitation of adult programs
 - ▶ May assist staff to plan and present talks for civic groups and other organizations
 - ▶ May assist with data analysis and create reports.