



step up

Supervisor Handbook

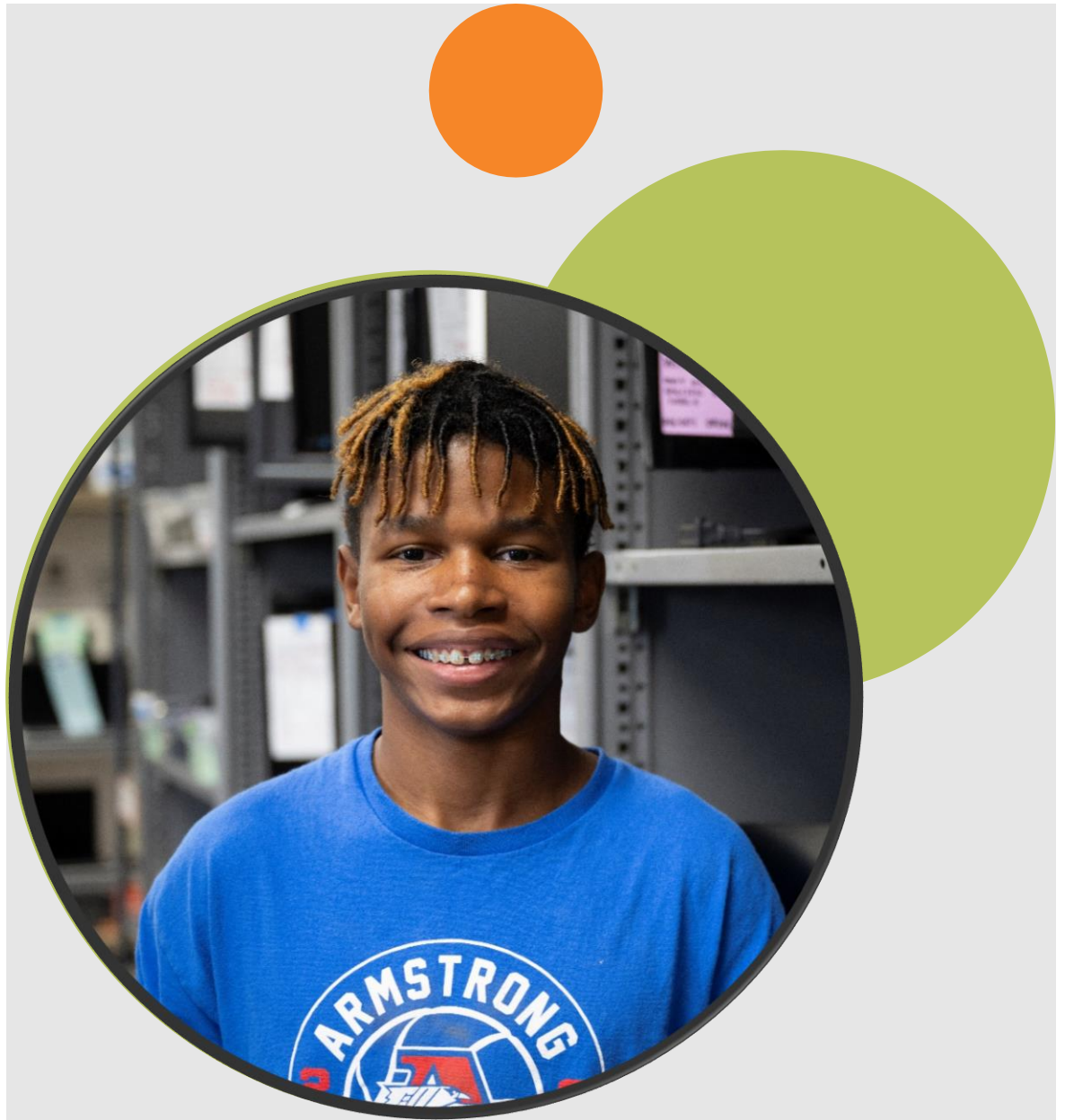
A Guide to Supervising and Mentoring Step Up Interns
2024



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Section 1 - Introduction to Step Up



WHAT IS STEP UP?

The City of Minneapolis launched the Step Up youth employment program in 2003. Step Up is more than a program; it's a way forward for hundreds of Minneapolis youth each year. Working with core partners, Step Up has offered more than 34,000 internships since inception. It is a bridge that connects youth to people and places that will get them where they want to be, providing opportunity for young people to be daring, explore careers, and create a vision for the future alongside professional mentors. Along the way, interns gain real-world knowledge, broaden their networks, and get a foot in the door to life-changing careers. Yes, Step Up bolsters resumes and launches careers, but more importantly, it expands horizons.

MISSION

To bring together Minneapolis young people who face barriers to employment with Twin Cities employers through internships and training that build equitable access to careers and lead to a diverse, skilled, and prepared workforce.

THE PARTNERSHIP

Step Up is a program of the City of Minneapolis in partnership with Achieve Twin Cities, the Minneapolis Department of Employment and Economic Development, and Project for Pride in Living. The City of Minneapolis administers the program and contracts with each partner to operate specific parts of the program.

- The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) is the lead partner for Level 1.
- Achieve Twin Cities is the lead partner for Level 2.
- Project for Pride in Living (PPL) is the lead partner for training youth at both levels.

stepup



PROGRAM TIMELINE

Intern Recruitment | January - February

Step Up recruits young people ages 14-21 through schools and community partners. To qualify, applicants must live in Minneapolis, meet income or other eligibility guidelines, and successfully complete a competitive application and work readiness training.

Work Readiness Training | February - March

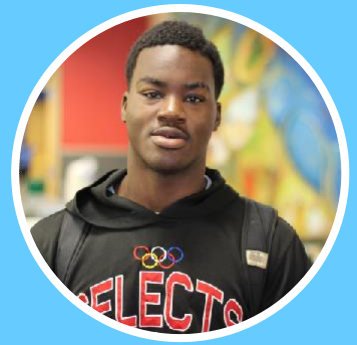
Typically, Step Up participants have trained in person. Since 2020, our participants are invited to complete a 10–12-hour virtual Work Readiness Training, developed and supported by licensed teachers.

Intern Launch and Placement Days | April - June

Step Up matches participants in positions based on the alignment of their interests, skills and experience with the position's requirements. If you determine that your intern isn't a good match, please contact your Job Coach to discuss next steps.

Key Summer Dates—Mark Your Calendar!

- **Official Internship Start Date | June 24**
First official day of work for Step Up interns (individual interns may start earlier or later if arranged).
- **Financial Training with ECMC group for Level 2 | July 10**
More details will be shared at the supervisor training and in weekly emails.
- **Financial Training with ECMC group for Level 1 | July 17**
More details will be shared at the supervisor training and in weekly emails.
- **Reality Fair Finance event for Level 1 | August 1**
More details will be shared at the supervisor training and in weekly emails.
- **Reality Fair Finance event for Level 2 | August 8**
More details will be shared at the supervisor training and in weekly emails.
- **Official Internship End Date | August 16**
Last official day of work for Step Up interns (individual interns may end earlier or later if arranged with the intern)



New hire letters

With older, level 2 interns, it is a good practice to send out an official new hire letter acknowledging employment. This letter should include:

- Job title
- Hourly wage
- Name of employer and location
- Department, direct supervisor's name and contact info
- Date and time for first day of work

A sample template is located in the [Resources and Forms](#) folder linked in the Appendix.

PROGRAM LEVELS

Step Up is divided into two levels based on the age of the participant.

Level 1 (14 -15 years old)

- Internships at this level are foundational experiences appropriate for youth who are new to the workforce
- Youth work at public agencies, nonprofits, parks, and community organizations
- Wages are paid by the City of Minneapolis

Level 2 (16 – 21 years old, not yet attending college)

- Internships are more advanced, resume-building experiences offering professional experience and exposure to a variety of industries and careers
- Youth work at private sector companies, public agencies, and nonprofits across 15 industries
- Wages are paid by the employer



ABOUT OUR YOUTH

Step Up works to serve young people who face barriers to employment. All eligible interns must meet these program guidelines

- be between the ages of 14 – 21 before internships start
- live in Minneapolis
- not currently be enrolled in college
- be eligible to work in the U.S. before internships start

AND must also meet one or more of these requirements:

- meet low- to moderate family income guidelines
- receive public assistance
- qualify for free or reduced lunch
- have a with a disability, IEP or 504 plan
- be an English language learner
- be pregnant or parenting
- be experiencing homelessness or high mobility
- be involved with the foster care system
- have been involved in the justice system

Interns represent the diversity of our community and bring a variety of perspectives and experiences to employer partners.

Of the nearly 3,000 youth who apply for Step Up each year, over 85% come from low-income families and 93% identify as youth of color/BIPOC. Over 50% come from first- or second-generation immigrant families, the majority of whom are East African. Nearly 25% of Step Up interns report having a disability, and smaller percentages of youth are in foster care, justice involved, teen parents, or have housing instability. All of our youth are seeking opportunity and the chance to build skills and gain experience!

KEY CONTACTS

Overall Program Administration/Injury Reporting

Tammy Dickinson, Step Up Director
City of Minneapolis

Tammy.Dickinson@Minneapolismn.gov

Step Up General Mailbox

StepUpInfo@minneapolismn.gov

Step Up Level 1 Program Management

Level 1 Step Up Team

StepUpMinneapolis@gmail.com

Step Up Level 2 Program Management

Level 2 Step Up Team

StepUpInfo@AchieveTwinCities.org

Step Up Level 1 Employer Engagement

Maryan Sharif Abdinassir, Program Manager
City of Minneapolis

Maryan.Sharif-Abdinassir@Minneapolismn.gov

Step Up Level 2 Employer Engagement

Scott Kosloski, Employer Engagement Manager
Achieve Twin Cities

SKosloski@AchieveTwinCities.org

Work Readiness Training

Project for Pride in Living Team

StepUp@ppl-inc.org

LINKS TO RESOURCES

- [Step Up website](http://StepUpMpls.org) (StepUpMpls.org)
- [Supervisor Resources](#) (handbooks, videos)*
- [Supervisor Forms](#)*
- [Quickbooks](#)
- [Forms Packet](#)

*The City of Minneapolis Step Up Team must grant access to these folders to individual email addresses



Section 2 - The 9 Elements of the Successful Worksite Supervisor



ELEMENT 1: Use Your Supervisor Orientation Resources

In addition to this handbook, the Step Up Team offers several resources to help your summer go smoothly:

- **Videos:** Take the time to watch the [Step Up Videos](#) located in the Resource and Forms folder to get an overview on selected topic areas. Watch before the supervisor orientation training sessions to get familiar and/or watch them during the summer as a reminder.
- **Supervisor Orientation Training:** All supervisors must attend Step Up training. Training is separated based on which Level of Step Up interns are working at your organization.
- **Forms:** Both required and optional forms help the program run smoothly each summer. Use the [Links to Resources](#) section to access the link to online, fillable and downloadable forms
- **Worksite Agreement:** Don't forget about the Worksite Agreement that you signed. This has valuable information on roles and responsibilities. Keep a copy of this document handy at the worksite for reference. A link to a sample copy is available in the Appendix.
- **Step Up Staff:** Questions or concerns?
 - **Job Coaches** – Reach out to your assigned Job Coach, as needed. They are here to support the interns and YOU! In addition, they will be visiting the worksite a minimum of two times during the summer.
 - **Weekly Emails** – Weekly emails will be sent to your inbox to remind you of timelines, provide tips and give you a heads up on any upcoming events.
 - **Coffee Corners** – Network with your peers! Weekly calls with a Step Up staff person is available to cover a specific topic or just facilitate a discussion with your fellow supervisors.

ELEMENT 2: Take Time to Prepare

Use your resources linked above. In particular, use the [Supervisor Checklist](#) and [Work Plan](#) form to help you ensure that you have covered your bases and are prepared for your intern to arrive. Links are also available in the Appendix.

ELEMENT 3: Provide a Workplace Orientation

Each intern should be provided with an orientation during their first day on the job. Be sure to review program/agency rules and expectations using the Step Up Handbook and Checklist. Level 1 supervisors must review the Youth Handbook with each intern and document that it has been completed. Job coaches will collect that documentation when they visit each work site.



ELEMENT 4: Provide a Safety Orientation

Teach proper use of equipment before use, safety precautions, and how to maintain a safe work environment.

ELEMENT 5: Provide Supervision and Frequent Communication

- Provide appropriate supervision based on youth's age and job duties. Plan for a back up supervisor in the event you are not available and ensure your interns have their contact information.
- Provide sufficient materials and work for the youth.

ELEMENT 6: Report Injuries!

Immediately report injuries occurring at the worksite and ensure that any injured employee receives the appropriate medical attention. After providing or arranging any necessary medical care, all injuries for Level 1 interns should be immediately reported by submitting a First Report of Injury form to Tammy.Dickinson@minneapolismn.gov.

ELEMENT 7: Track Attendance and Submit Time (as needed)

Keep accurate attendance records including the date, hours worked. Level 1 employers are encouraged to use the [Daily Work Attendance](#) sheet found in your forms packets. More information about how to track and submit time for Level 1 interns can be found in Section 9, starting on page 46.

ELEMENT 8: Abide By All Applicable Laws

Abide by all state and federal labor laws, as well as the Equal Employment Opportunity laws:

- [Right to Know Act of 1983](#)
- [Anti-Harassment](#)
- [Child Labor Laws](https://www.dli.mn.gov/child-labor) (<https://www.dli.mn.gov/child-labor>)
- [Equal Employment Opportunity Act](#)

ELEMENT 9: End on a Positive Note!

- Celebrate accomplishments at the worksite
- Act as a future reference for youth



Section 3 - Preparing for a High-Quality Internship Experience



CREATING A GREAT SUMMER EXPERIENCE

With over 34,000 internships created since 2003, we've observed many best practices that make for a high-quality internship experience both for you and your intern. Creating a successful internship takes effort and intentionality. However, being planful about the internship before your intern even arrives can set you and your intern up for a successful summer!

Elements of a High-Quality Internship Experience



Work Plan

Create a detailed work plan to guide your intern's work.



Professional Development

Provide chances for your intern to build skills and learn about your career field through professional development opportunities.



Mentorship

We encourage each intern to have a mentor in the workplace, whether it's their direct supervisor or another employee.



Communication With Your Intern

Like any relationship, communication is key to a successful internship experience.



Commitment

A successful internship will require commitment from both you and the intern. It may not always be easy, but if you persist, the rewards for you and your intern will be great.



Cultural Competency

Often our interns come from backgrounds that are not common in your typical workplace, so cultural competency is important for both of you to feel comfortable.

An Example of a High-Quality Internship

Eden interned at Boston Scientific. She had the opportunity to provide input into her work plan, which led to her finding projects that helped her understand what interests her and what doesn't. Projects assigned by her supervisor were chosen to help her get the most out of the experience while also giving back.

Eden was encouraged to network with her colleagues and learn about their careers and their journeys. Her supervisor helped her by setting up opportunities with employees from different areas as well, which helped Eden learn about the many different aspects of the company. Eden's supervisor also worked hard to create an inclusive environment that made Eden feel welcome.



Eden stated that her supervisor treated her as someone who is valuable and knowledgeable, and that made a huge difference in her ability to acclimate to the professional world.



WHAT YOUTH DO TO PREPARE

Work Readiness Training

All Step Up interns have completed 6-8 hours of Step Up Work Readiness Training. Work Readiness Training explores content that helps students prepare to be successful employees through online practice in skills ranging from interpersonal communication and responsibility, to resume building and interview practice. The training typically ends with a mock interview for those interns who are 16 or older. The curriculum is designed to be developmentally appropriate, more challenging, and comprehensive as interns get older and move through the program. Generally, interns learn the following components of work readiness:

Communication Skills

- Written communication
- Situational communication
- Verbal communication
- Receiving feedback
- Interviewing

Decision-Making Skills

- Problem solving
- Taking initiative
- Responsibility
- Ethics
- Integrity
- Respectfulness

Life-Long Learning Skills

- Good attitude
- Character
- Etiquette
- Promptness
- Dependable
- Attendance
- Asking questions

WHAT SUPERVISORS CAN DO TO PREPARE

“

I would suggest making sure co-workers aren't saying/being rude to other workers. That can make everyone feel unwelcome and uncomfortable.

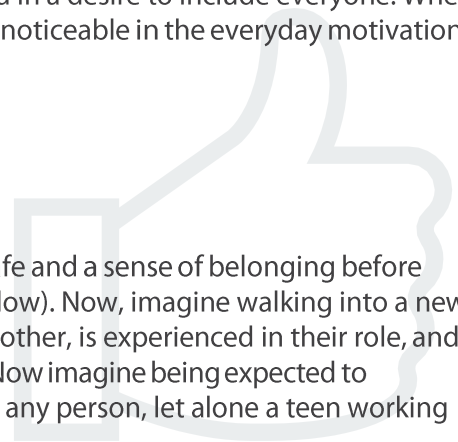
- 2017 Step Up Participant

Building a Welcoming Environment

Creating a welcoming work environment is not a one-time activity, it is an on-going attitude and approach rooted in a desire to include everyone. When done well, the impact of this work will be noticeable in the everyday motivation of the interns at your site.

WHY?

We know all humans need to feel safe and a sense of belonging before they can contribute and grow (Maslow). Now, imagine walking into a new space where everyone knows each other, is experienced in their role, and may look much different than you. Now imagine being expected to perform your best. That's a lot to ask any person, let alone a teen working in a new field for the first time.



Before interns can challenge themselves to develop their job skills and support others in the group, first their biological need to belong must be met. A sense of belonging is vital for teenagers' success and as a result should be a priority for supervisors. This is not to imply that interns shouldn't be held to high standards or that supervisors shouldn't address performance and behavior concerns (see Section 5).



Interns need to feel like they belong in a group to be successful. As a supervisor you can make that happen. We encourage you to utilize your colleagues to create an atmosphere that is fun and productive for everyone involved.

HOW?

Creating a welcoming environment is easy, but it takes time and effort. Here are a few suggestions on how to help a Step Up intern feel welcome and part of the team:

Prep the Space

- Have their workspace ready (include a welcome sign or trinkets)
- Gather the tools and equipment they will need to be successful

Prep Your Co-Workers

- Let co-workers know the interns are starting, ask them to show enthusiasm about their presence
- Prepare an ice breaker or name games to get to know each other and build trust and comradery
- Promote a bias free work environment
- Remind everyone (including yourself) to use respectful language and avoid sarcasm
- Encourage your peers to regularly interact with your interns
- If not you, identify mentors to individually connect with your interns

Prep Yourself

- Print your materials, such as work plans and handbooks, if needed
- Plan opportunities for interns to connect with each other
- Identify professional development opportunities for your interns
- Ask them about themselves, learn about their interests
- Be prepared to share about yourself
- Arrange time in your schedule to do a quick check-in every day (how are you today?)
- Plan to continue meeting throughout the summer
- Schedule out the interns' first week (see the next section for details)

Define Work & Develop A Work Plan

Our program expectation is that you develop a work plan that provides clear work goals for your intern. Here are some tips for developing the [Work Plan](#).

Identifying Work for Your Intern

Review the Job Description Form you submitted to Step Up and the key responsibilities for the position.

Job functions listed on the Job Description Form

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Ask colleagues for projects they have on the “back burner” they could use help with.

“Back Burner” Projects from Colleagues

1. _____
2. _____

Connect with previous supervisors and get their ideas on what worked.

Structuring the Work Plan

Develop one or two large projects that your intern can work on throughout the summer and then additional smaller day-to-day tasks or activities.

Large Projects

1. _____
2. _____

Day-to-Day Tasks or Activities

1. _____
2. _____

Assign projects that start simple and increase in difficulty. Use these starter projects to help determine your intern’s level of proficiency in certain areas and adapt the work plan to your intern’s skillset moving forward.

Involving Your Intern in the Work Plan Development

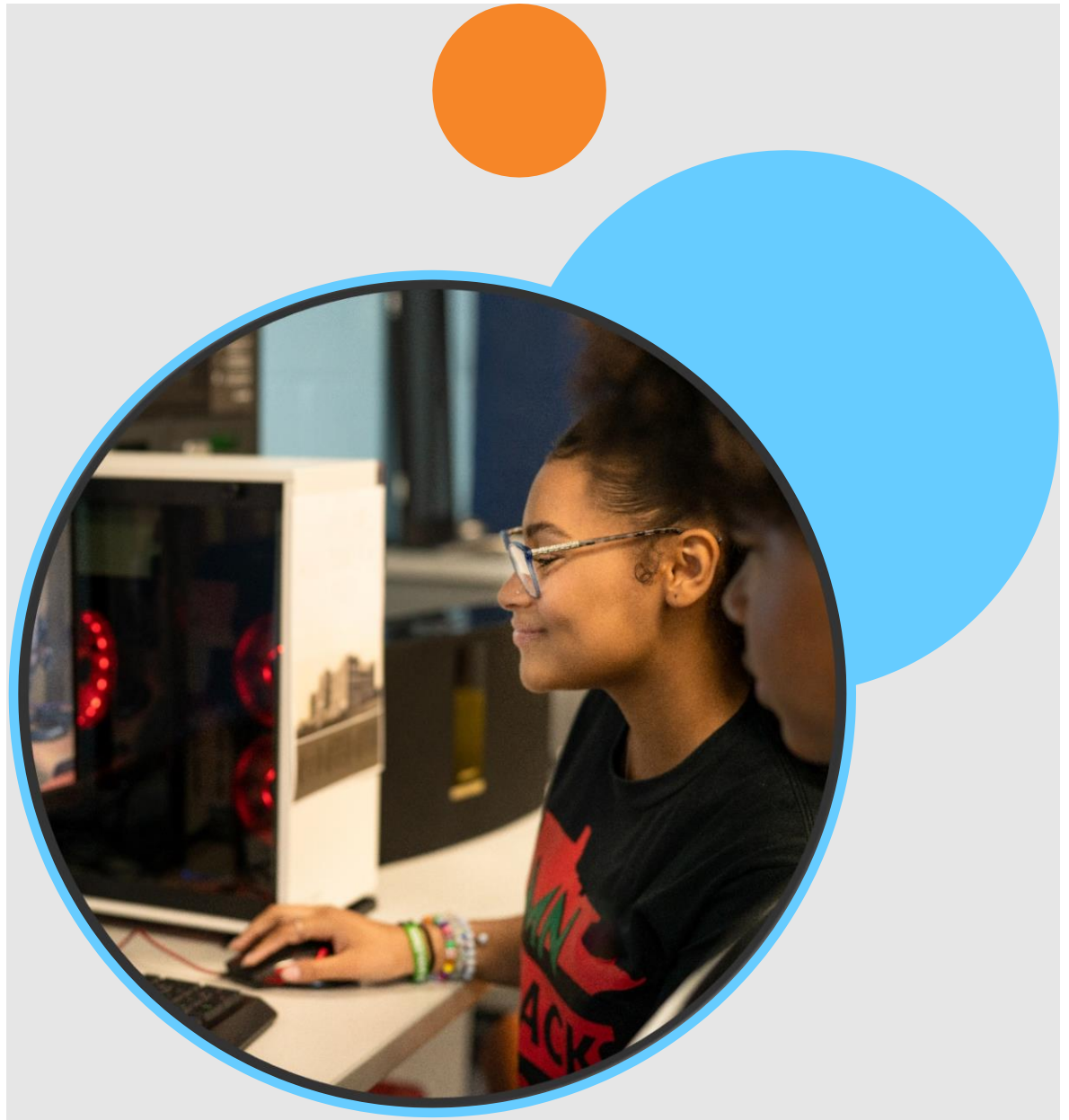
- Meet with your intern during the first week and review the proposed work plan. Ask your intern what types of opportunities would help them meet their career goals and strive to incorporate them into the work plan.
- Giving young people choice in their workplan is an incredibly powerful tool for creating buy-in to help them have some control over what they do. Last year, interns who reported they had a significant amount of input in their workplans reported a higher level of satisfaction with their internships.



Making the Work Meaningful

Since these are entry-level internships, it’s important to keep your intern motivated by making the work meaningful. Here are some tips:

- Identify projects that are adequately challenging and interesting but require little supervision after initial training.
- Provide variety in work tasks.
- Allow your intern to build new skills by selecting projects that focus on deeper development of skills.
- Select projects that will have an impact on your workplace.
- Establish clear and measurable goals.



Section 4 - Important Activities for the Intern's First Week



PREPARE FOR A STEP UP INTERN'S ARRIVAL

- Know what projects they will work on for the summer
- Create an internship calendar
- Plan and prepare for orientation; print your materials, if needed
- Recruit a mentor or prepare to become a mentor
- Inform colleagues that a Step Up intern will be starting soon
- Invite interns to join introductions during orientation
- Schedule time for connections with other departments to help build context for their role and the work
- Allow time for the intern to participate in Step Up sponsored enrichment activities
- Utilize Step Up support staff
- Plan an end of the summer recognition event



What to Expect the First Day/Week of Work:

The first week of work is critical to ensuring your intern has a successful summer. As a supervisor, it is your responsibility to make sure they are appropriately oriented to your workplace. Your standard new employee orientation is a good place to start but adapt the content to meet the needs of a young person who may be in a professional setting for the first time. Welcome your intern with excitement and provide a tour of the facilities (workspaces, breakrooms, restrooms, etc.). Be sure to review workplace expectations (attire, use of phone, noise level, personal computer use).

Introductions (include as many colleagues as possible)

- Plan team-building and “get-to-know-you” activities
- Prepare an overview of who to ask for help—be specific

Work Breaks

- Explain meal and break logistics, including how time is documented
- If the intern requires a space to pray, work together to find an appropriate place
- If food items are provided or shared at the workplace, discuss how this is done

Attendance and Timeliness

- Teach your intern how to record their time worked (timesheets)
- Let intern know who to contact if they will be late or absent
- Explain policy on being late to work and the consequences

Work Responsibilities

- Review the job description and discuss creating the intern’s Work Plan
- Set individual goals for the summer



Sample Orientation Schedule

8:00	Interns arrive
8:10	Welcome & introductions
8:15	Ice breakers/Name games
8:45	Quick tour
9:00	Orientation overview
9:15	Workplace expectations
9:45	Position overview/Goals
10:15	Break
10:30	Ice breaker
10:45	Jeopardy (Policies and Procedures review)
11:15	Summer overview/long-range projects
11:30	Timesheets (what to do if you are late or absent)
11:50	What to expect the rest of the week
12:00	Dismiss



Review the Step Up Youth Handbook together

- The interns have a handbook as well that outlines important items they need to know
- Reviewing the handbook together will help you understand what they see and will provide an opportunity to answer some of their questions upfront

Provide a Workplace Tour

- Show the intern(s) common and staff only areas. Where is the break room, restrooms
- Are there backdoors that may be used?
- Where can the intern get supplies they need for their job?
- Introduce your intern to others who they can go to in case they have questions

Provide a Safety Orientation

- Where does your intern go in case of severe weather? A fire? What are the emergency procedures?
- Do you have an AED onsite? First aid kit?
- Ensure that your intern(s) does not operate equipment prohibited by law
- Do you have any hazardous materials onsite? How are they marked?

Review Workplace Technology and Policies

- Many of our youth are digital natives but that doesn't mean that they are familiar with all of the workplace technologies
- Help your intern to log into any needed systems and understand how to use them
- Some technology youth use often, like cell phone; make sure that your intern knows when they are and are not allowed to use their phone, the internet or other technologies

Set Appropriate Expectations and Communicate Them Clearly

- Don't assume that your intern knows the unwritten rules of your organization
- Help interns understand your expectations on work hours, being late or sick
- Discuss logistics of lunch and other breaks
- Don't forget to discuss appropriate work attire

Provide Your Intern with Context of the Larger Organization

- It is helpful to your intern to understand the main purpose or mission of your organization
- Help the intern learn your organizational structure and understand how their role fits within the larger organization
- How different tasks impact others is not always evident; help your intern understand how what they do impacts others and the larger organization

Discuss the Job Description and Refine the Intern's Work Plan

- Ensure that your intern understands the main job responsibilities
- Identifying your intern's interests and determine if there are ways that these can be woven into job duties
- Identifying if there are additional opportunities to enhance your intern's growth

Learning the Job: Let the Intern Hear It, See It, Do It and Teach It

- Reviewing the job description and work plan is a good start in getting the intern prepared for success
- Explain the pieces of the task, and then demonstrate the proper way to do it
- Allow the intern to try it themselves and provide them with feedback on what they are doing correctly and how they can do better
- A good way to make sure that they understand, ask the intern to pretend that you are brand new and have them teach you how to do the task

*See the link in the Appendix for Guidance on How to Effectively Work Remotely, if needed.

Professional Development Opportunities

Importance of Providing Professional Development

Because Step Up internships are about learning and work, providing professional development opportunities for your intern is critical.

These opportunities enrich the work experience, help your intern build skills, and further introduce them to your profession. Be intentional about scheduling professional development into the internship.

Ideas for Professional Development Opportunities

- Have your intern job shadow you or a colleague
- Schedule informational interviews with professionals from inside and outside your organization that align with your intern's career interests
- Invite your intern to attend staff trainings or professional development opportunities in your workplace
- Have your intern participate in or even plan a service project for other interns and team members
- Provide opportunities for your intern to network with other people in your workplace, including senior leaders
- Have your intern participate in specialized assignments in other departments for a few days
- If you also employ college interns, invite them to mentor your Step Up intern



Work habits - things to keep in mind

The example you and your co-workers provide is the best method of teaching work habits to any intern. Remember to be clear, concise, and consistent in your expectations and responses to successes and struggles throughout the internship. The following outlines some key steps a supervisor may take to ensure the development of positive work habits.

Be clear about workplace expectations, such as:

- Working scheduled hours
- Being punctual and in attendance daily
- Coming to work appropriately groomed and dressed (explain what appropriate grooming and dress means for your work setting)
- Using language and vocabulary appropriate to the work setting
- Notifying you (or your designee) if they will be late or absent
- Limiting social time
- Phone use/break time

Set high standards of behavior and performance to:

- Make sure interns are aware of these standards
- Make sure interns can carry out the necessary tasks to reach the standards
- Help interns take pride in their work and progress

Get to Know the Intern as an Individual by:

- Speaking with your intern about how they are doing on the job
- Advising them on ways to improve job performance
- Giving recognition
- Giving opportunities to choose within tasks

Provide Immediate Feedback:

- If there is a performance issue, address it right away (see Section 5: Supervision & Communication)
- Utilize work plans, performance improvement plans, and goals to provide weekly/bi-weekly feedback
- Don't let personality traits influence you in judging performance
- Check yourself—Were instructions clear? Were expectations reasonable? Were you being fair?
- Emphasize strengths

Allow Time:

- In your schedule to provide support and answer questions
- In the interns schedule to learn new skills
- For opportunities to explore career opportunities and learn from your peers
- To reflect on what was learned



Developmental Suggestions

- Young people are developing the ability to integrate memory and experience into their decision making, this is a new process for them and will require multiple chances to get it right
- Changes in the brain at this age create inconsistent behavior and as a result interns need calm repetitive reminders
- At this age, interns are looking to become independent and to give back to their community. Utilize this to find ways they can help (or support others) while building their skills



Section 5 - Supervision & Communication



Supervision

Step Up relies on site supervisors to make the program great. The experience of each intern is immeasurably impacted by the quality of supervisor they have. We are relying on you to set the tone and help prepare youth for the workforce.

Youth Development Reminders:

- **Have difficult conversations** – Interns are learning to manage multiple responsibilities, don't hinder their progress by ignoring difficult conversations. Have honest conversations with them about how they are doing.
- **Have boundaries** – Interns are at a stage when they are more willing to push boundaries than adults. Remember when disciplining interns that they'll need multiple chances to get it right and reminders of why certain behaviors are not acceptable at work.
- **Peer Acceptance** – Acceptance from peers is important at this stage in an intern's development and will likely play a role in how they relate to or approach their work.
- **Give respect, get respect** – Like all people, teens desire respect. Show them respect right away, don't expect them to earn it. By starting your time together respectfully you are demonstrating to your intern that they are valuable, and you believe they can contribute to the work you are doing.
- **Reward, success & growth** – People like being rewarded and recognized by their peers and superiors. Acknowledge your interns when they do well and commend them in front of your colleagues.
- **Have fun** – Everyone likes to have fun at work, teach them how to make work fun.

“

It's been awesome having someone from the next generation at our company. The energy, spirit, and excitement our intern brought to the workplace has been amazing!

- 2021 Step Up Supervisor, Alyse from Mercury Mosaics

General Supervision Reminders

- **Stay positive** – During interactions with interns, keep things positive. People generally respond better to patient instruction than to criticism or sarcasm. Ensure interns know who is responsible for providing them with direction and who to go to with questions. Always demonstrate respect, honesty, positive communication, and reliability in the workplace.
- **Lead by example** – If you expect the intern to not use their cell phone throughout the day, then you should also not use your cell phone throughout the day. Step Up interns are most successful and gain the most from their internship when they see the broader context of their work.
- **Provide context** – Dedicate time to discuss the relationship of the different organizational roles and responsibilities to the primary business mission. Take the intern on a tour of another department that is directly impacted by the intern's job duties.
- **Foster connections** – Organize a lunch with members of a related department to help your intern understand interconnections between departments. Tour another organization or worksite together.
- **Be a guide** – Mentorship helps shape their success and reinforces the lessons they learned in training.



Provide Instruction

When giving instructions, do not assume that an intern knows how to do the job. Be as clear as you can about who, what, where, when, why, and how.

- **Who** should carry out the work and is responsible for it
- **What** is supposed to be done and what is expected to happen
- **Where** the task is to be completed
- **When** the task is to be completed
- **Why** the task needs to be accomplished you may also wish to explain why this youth was selected to do it
- **How** the task needs to be done—have patience with the youth while teaching tasks—you may have to show them more than once if the task is new

Delegate Responsibility

- Be sure interns understand they are doing a task that is important to the supervisor and the organization and agree to complete the assignment
- Give youth the resources, equipment, and authority to do the job properly
- Allow the intern a reasonable amount of time to finish
- Provide feedback upon completion, demonstrating support and trust in areas that need improvement, encourage the intern to present solutions

Be Consistent

Remember, a failure to consistently enforce expectations makes unacceptable behavior acceptable. Be consistent in your:

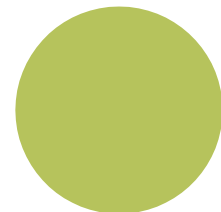
- Expectations and assessment of performance or behavior
- Delivery of feedback
- Interactions with all interns (try not to have favorites)
- Response to poor performance or behavior

Set Professional Boundaries

Teach and respect personal and professional boundaries. Supervisors should not:

- Loan money to interns
- Engage in personal counseling of interns
- Initiate contact with interns outside the workplace without parental consent
- Undermine parental authority

If personal issues arise, supervisors should contact their job coach for support.



Types and Frequency of Feedback

We recommend providing continuous feedback to your intern throughout the summer. This feedback is critical to helping your intern learn and grow as a young professional. Highlight what your intern does well and provide constructive advice on areas for growth. There are multiple opportunities to provide different types of feedback during the internship.

Connect All Feedback to Skills

When you give feedback, every action your intern takes—good or bad— should be connected to a skill. Consider what skill they used that allowed them to perform well on a given task or what skill was lacking that led to a problem? This approach avoids generalizations about the person and assumptions about their intent and allows you as a supervisor to adopt a coaching mentality and help your intern build tools for success.

Calendar-Driven Feedback

In addition to continuous feedback, we recommend completing a formal review at the mid-internship points and at the end of the internship.

Daily	Weekly	Key Milestones
<p>Event-driven feedback should occur daily and focus on specific moments.</p> <p>It should become part of the routine, day-to-day work.</p> <p>Be intentional about recognizing your intern when they do something well and provide critical feedback when there's room for improvement.</p> <p>Use prompts like:</p> <p>“How do you think the meeting went?”</p> <p>“What parts of your presentation do you think went best?”</p>	<p>Schedule a set time to sit down with your intern each week for a check-in meeting to discuss work plan progress and skills development, including successes and areas for improvement.</p> <p>Weekly check-ins are a management best practice. Even if you work near your intern and interact daily, it is critical to have a regularly recurring sit-down meeting to provide a forum to review progress and allow your intern to ask questions or offer input.</p>	<p>Formal reviews at key milestones allow for you to reflect on your intern's growth and help them synthesize the learning they've done over the course of the internship.</p> <p>We recommend completing a formal review at the mid-internship points and at the end of the internship.</p>

Utilize the evaluation templates located in the [Resources and Forms](#) folder. Complete the forms and then schedule a time to meet with your intern to share your feedback.

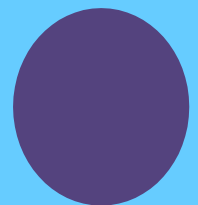


What if my intern is unreceptive to feedback or struggles with it?

Some interns struggle with feedback initially because this may be their first professional work experience.

If the struggles persist, contact your Job Coach for additional suggestions.

Your Job Coach can also reach out to the intern directly and discuss their receptiveness to feedback.



Tools for Feedback and Improved Conversations

Providing feedback, particularly about improvement, can be difficult. As a supervisor, you can make it easier on yourself by developing a healthy work relationship with your intern, making expectations clear, meeting regularly to discuss performance, providing support, and offering time for questions. To make these conversations easier, we've included two tools: the COIN Method and the Stances of Inquiry.

COIN Method

When you need to provide feedback to your intern—positive or negative—use this easy, four-step process to make the communication easier and ensure the conversation serves as a learning opportunity for your intern.

Connect

It's important to provide context for the feedback so your intern understands the specific instance you're referring to and why it matters. Begin with a phrase like, "Remember that team meeting that you presented at last week?" The feedback becomes even more effective if you can connect it to a specific goal for your intern: "I know you've been trying to work on your writing skills, so I wanted to talk about the newsletter article you drafted this week."



Observation

Describe the specific work behavior, good or bad, that you observed—"you sought out additional work from Bob when you finished the filing project early," or "the email you sent had some spelling and grammar errors." Being specific and using factual statements rather than generalizations or evaluative statements will help your intern learn and prevent them from feeling confused or accused.

Impact

Explain how the observable behavior impacted the business in a positive or negative way. For example, "finishing the project early really impressed our customer," or "customers lose faith in our company if our emails include frequent typos."

Next Steps

Identify action steps that can build on the positive impact or remedy the negative impact in the future. Keep the actions focused on the future and engage your intern in coming up with ideas to increase their buy-in. "That report you produced was so helpful to me, I'd like you to present it at the next team meeting," or "Try outlining your goals for a phone call in the future before placing the call."

See the Forms Packet for a Helpful Form

Want help providing feedback to your intern using the COIN method? See the form in the [Resources and Forms folder](#) for a form that will walk you through the COIN method. The form has also been shared with the interns during their work readiness training.

Adapted from Negstad Consulting, LLC, and other sources.

Stances of Inquiry

Differences in age, culture, and experience can mean your intern often views the world very differently from you. To help facilitate conversations with your intern, shift from a mindset of judgment to one of inquiry. Below is the “Stances of Inquiry” framework to help shape your interactions.

Turn Assumptions into Curiosity

When we adopt a mindset of curiosity, we set aside our assumptions and come to better understand the motivations behind something that may be bothering us.

- Clarify your intern’s motivations and expectations.
- Consider what external influences may be causing the intern to act in a certain way.
- Explore what information or experiences your intern may lack that is causing a particular action.

Turn Disagreements into Mutual Exploration

Avoiding anger and engaging in a dialogue to jointly consider the issue at hand allows for greater learning by both parties and can more quickly identify and resolve the root of any challenges.

- Encourage dialogue by asking questions like “Can you tell me more?”
- Check meaning and interpretation by repeating back what you think you’ve heard. “So, what you are telling me is...”
- Determine a course of action that meets the goals of both parties. “So, what options for action might serve us both?”

Turn Defensiveness into Self Reflection

Defensiveness makes us dig in and avoid engagement. Communication thrives when we reflect on our own capacity to grow in new ways. Shared self-reflection allows us to see and act differently.

- Help your intern sort through feelings. “It sounds like you feel pretty angry about what happened.”
- Encourage both parties to take stock of what assumptions or beliefs may be leading to misunderstanding.
- Contemplate how the issue may be viewed by a young person.

Turn Judgments into Questions

Both parties thrive when they abandon quick judgment and instead pursue a journey of learning together.

- Keep in mind that interns don’t have years of professional experience, so ask about the intern’s background and plan ways to fill any gaps so they will succeed in this area moving forward.
- Encourage your intern to develop a vision. “Forget the rules for a moment. If you had a magic wand, what would you do?”
- Remember this is about preparing your intern for the future.



Dealing with Outside Personal Issues

By using the Stances of Inquiry, you may discover the source of your intern’s challenges at work are outside personal issues like an unstable home situation, mental health, or conflict with a parent.

The Stances of Inquiry may allow you to jointly identify these challenges with your intern and develop ways to prevent them from interfering at work. Explore the resources in the Appendix for ideas.

If challenges persist, contact your Job Coach for assistance.





Difficult Conversations

As you prepare to meet with your intern about their performance at work, remember that your words, body language, and approach all matter in the delivery. The models discussed on the previous pages will help you through the conversation. Here are a few more tips:

- **Prepare** for the meeting, have specific examples ready, do not wing it or use generalizations
- **Show engagement** and openness through your body language and facial features (upright relaxed position)
- **Resist making assumptions**, jump to conclusions, or accuse the intern—remember to use stances of inquiry (“I noticed that...can you tell me more?”)
- Give the intern **multiple opportunities** to speak or share their perspective, if they are nervous or unprepared give them time to think about the situation (“What’s your take? Can you tell me what happened?”)
- **Talk less** than the intern—really listen
- **Validate their feelings**, listen to why they are having a difficult time (“I can see how that would be hard on you”).
- **Stay positive**, focus on how things can be better
- **Communicate respect** and support in your words, body language, and potential solutions. Be present, try not to rush, make sure the conversation is private. Young people are very self-conscious
- **Together**, discuss and reach solutions (“Let’s write some goals”)
- Remember it is not about winning, but about **developing your interns’** skills and abilities for their future

Youth Development Reminders!



Many interns experience social anxiety and have a desire to do well and fit in with their peers. This may play a role in how they receive any direction or feedback you are trying to provide them.



Some youth weigh risks and rewards differently than adults, this can result in consequences not having the same impact you hoped they would. Work with your intern to determine a course of action for improvement. Their buy-in will lead to a better result for everyone.



Teenagers sleep cycles are different than adults. As a result, they are often tired at work making them more irritable and less open to hearing criticism. Be kind.

Fight, Flight, or Freeze - Common Reactions to Stress

Fight—A natural reaction for many people is to defend themselves or their actions. This is particularly common with young people who are still developing their communication skills. Giving the youth time to express or share their point of view without judgment will make them more likely to help you find a solution to the current issue and open up to you later as other issues arise.

Flight—Many people try to avoid conflict, this can be true of young people as well. For teens who know they have done something wrong it is often difficult for them to come back to work. Continue to reach out to the intern if they are struggling and help them understand it is alright to make mistakes especially if you take the time to learn from them.

Freeze—Shutting down during a conversation about performance is a common occurrence. If the intern is barely responding or not responding at all give them some time. Ask them if it is alright to take a break and start again in a few minutes. Allow them time to reflect on their own and remember to encourage the intern and highlight their strengths throughout the conversation. Often young people don’t think about themselves from a strength-based approach. That’s where you can really bring this full circle.

LEARN Model of Cultural Communication

The LEARN Model of Cultural Communication can be helpful when you encounter cultural differences. Let's apply it to a scenario that could arise in the work environment.



- L** **Listen** with empathy and understanding to the person's perception of a situation
- E** **Explain** your own perception of the situation
- A** **Acknowledge** and discuss differences and similarities
- R** **Recommend** solutions
- N** **Negotiate** an agreement

Scenario:

Your intern, who is 17, has come with you to an important meeting with a client. The intern has no significant role during the meeting, and when you look over, you notice that they are texting someone. You need to have a follow-up conversation about this being inappropriate in this setting.

L = Listen with empathy and understanding to the person's perception of a situation

Text messaging is a norm for young people. Many young people do not consider it impolite to be texting while they are having conversations or in other in the company of others. They may also not be familiar with the culture of your company's work environment.

E = Explain your own perception of the situation

Tell your intern that at this workplace texting is not an appropriate activity during a meeting. Give some background as to why this is the case. Allow your intern time to explain why they were texting and why they felt it was alright to text during the meeting.

A = Acknowledge and discuss the differences and similarities

Be sure to be kind about discussing the differences you and your intern have. You may want to acknowledge that you understand that your interns' values are likely different than what your employer values and that this is where the conflict generally lies.

R = Recommend solutions

Brainstorm ways that your intern could stay connected with friends without compromising the values of your organization.

N = Negotiate an agreement

Be open to negotiating a solution that is workable for your intern, you, and your employer.



Performance Improvement Plans

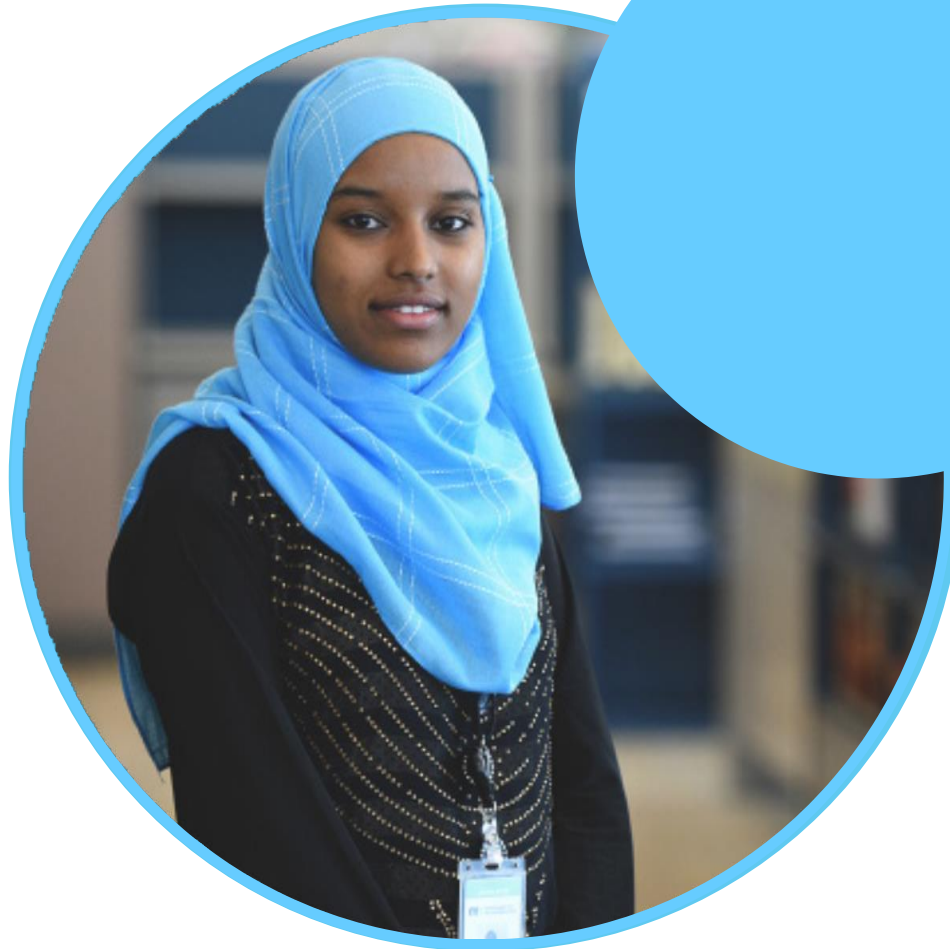
Performance Improvement Plans work to correct unacceptable behavior such as absenteeism, tardiness, poor performance, or personal phone use. Usually verbal or written warnings, and occasionally, suspensions are appropriate responses to these kinds of behaviors. See the [Resources and Forms](#) folder for a copy of the Intern Performance Improvement Plan.

All warnings, including verbal warnings, must be documented using the Intern Performance Improvement Plan, found in your policies and procedures manual. **A copy must immediately be sent to your Job Coach and a copy should be kept in your files.** In very rare cases immediate termination may be necessary.

A gross offense such as theft, physical assault, possession of a weapon, threatening language, or intoxication may be grounds for immediate dismissal. You must discuss this with your Job Coach or Step Up Youth Services Coordinator before terminating an intern.

Remember your Job Coach is here to help you manage or discuss any disciplinary problems as they arise. Please review the Discipline and Termination Procedures (link in the Appendix) and contact your Job Coach for assistance.





Section 6 - Working with Youth



Adolescent Development and Implications for Supervisors

In addition to developing employment skills this summer, interns also experiencing significant physical, mental, and emotional changes as they navigate adolescence. Here are some examples of what is changing and the impact it often has on teen behavior. A quick reminder that stress, fatigue, or external challenges can impact just about all these changes and how young people react to them.

Typical Changes During Adolescence	Typical Teen Responses to Changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The brain begins to develop stronger links between the hippocampus, a sort of memory directory, and frontal areas that set goals and weigh different agendas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teens begin developing the ability to integrate memory and experience into their decision making. Developing the ability for abstract thinking.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The young person's brain is learning to use its new neural networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While creating new ways to learn and think it can also create inconsistency in behavior as neural networks are developing, sometimes resulting in challenging behavior.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people participate in increased risk taking, not because they don't understand consequences, but because a young person's brain weighs risk vs. reward differently than the adult brain, usually placing a higher value on reward than risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teens willing to push boundaries more than adults to try new things and discover new opportunities /solutions. What may seem like "common sense" to an adult, is not perceived the same by a teen.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The young person's brain is especially attuned to oxytocin, a neural hormone, which (among other things) makes social connections more rewarding than most interactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building relationships is often a top priority This focus can be an asset in building supportive relationships or developing communication and teamwork skills. This can also be different across cultures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people gravitate toward peers to invest in the future rather than the past. They enter a world made by parents and caregivers but will live and prosper (or not) most of their lives in a world run and re-made by their peers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceptance/respect from peers often takes precedence over pleasing adults to earn their respect or acceptance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing personal sense of identity and value system and learning about how the two are related. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open to trying new things, discussing ideas and concepts, pushing accepted norms. Can result in drastic changes in social choices, attitudes, and beliefs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing sense of independence from family/ caregivers combined with taking on more responsibilities begins the creation of self-reliance and self-efficacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excited to give something to their community, renegotiating their relationship with caregivers/adults, ready to take on new challenges, and prove they are capable.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bodies are maturing, often rapidly changing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjusting to a new physical sense of self, discovering sexuality and learning to manage the often-dramatic shift.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circadian rhythms of adolescents are dramatically different than younger children and adults, causing a sleep-wake cycle that is not in line with most of society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a harder time waking up or falling asleep (even if tired). This lack of sleep can impact their ability to learn or remember new concepts and cause irritability.

For more information on how to provide a quality workplace environment for young people, please reference the Youth Program Quality Assessment tool in the [Resources and Forms](#) folder.

ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

Working with Young People

Much has been written about Generation Z in the workplace, but many of the differences between the younger generation and more experienced employees come down to the simple fact of being young people.

It's important to keep in mind that your intern is still developing as a person—intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally. Furthermore, for many Step Up interns, this is their first time in a professional work environment. It's not uncommon for them to be overcoming challenges at home, or even outright homelessness, while also navigating challenges that come from being from a minority race or religion.

What can you do as a supervisor? Number one—listen to your intern. Make them feel valued and recognize them for the contributions they are making to their communities. Challenge them and teach them useful information and skills. Support them when they make mistakes and honor them when they succeed. Allow them opportunities to learn about themselves and others.

Aspects of Adolescent Development



Intellectual

No longer want to be told how things are—want to make their own interpretations based on what they see, feel and experience.



Physical

Brain pathways for positive choices, healthy relationships, regulating emotions and reactions and planning are being hardwired.



Social

Desire respect and want adult leadership roles but may be apt to reject goals set by others.



Emotional

Gain greater confidence and autonomy while developing values and beliefs but look to others for confidence in their decisions.



“A growing body of evidence suggests that employees of all ages are much more alike than different in their attitudes and values at work.

To the extent that any gaps do exist, they amount to small differences that have always existed between younger and older workers throughout history.”

CULTURALLY SMART RELATIONSHIPS

Culture is defined as a set of guidelines, both explicit and implicit, which individuals inherit as members of a particular society, and which informs how they view the world, how to experience it emotionally, and how to behave in relation to other people, to supernatural forces, and the natural environment.

Culture includes race, ethnic groups, religions, age, socio-economic differences, sexual preferences, physical ability, gender differences, and so much more. For example, each generation has its own culture.



This summer you will have an opportunity to build a bridge across at least one aspect of culture in your relationship with your intern. Building a culturally smart relationship takes a commitment and willingness on your part and is a unique learning opportunity for you as a supervisor.

Culturally Smart is NOT:

- ✗ A trivia game of who can list off the most facts of a culture
- ✗ Limited to only race and ethnicity
- ✗ About making zero mistakes
- ✗ One-sided: learning only about another culture
- ✗ A destination

Culturally Smart IS:

- ✓ An ongoing process of learning about other cultures
- ✓ Being aware of the many aspects of culture
- ✓ About having the courage to make mistakes and wisdom to learn from them
- ✓ Multi-faceted: learning about another culture and about yourself
- ✓ A journey

The Goals of Culturally Smart Relationships

- **Cultural knowledge:** Knowledge of your interns' culture promotes an understanding between the both of you.
- **Cultural awareness:** Appreciate and accept differences between yourself and your intern.
- **Cultural skills:** From the knowledge you gain of your interns' culture, learn to assess situations and approach them through a different lens.
- **Cultural encounters:** Let go of the security of stereotypes; be open to and appreciate individuality.

Relationship-Building Guidelines:

1. Make a commitment to connect with your intern. Initiate dialogue and invest energy.
2. Establish the opportunity and framework for dialogue about culture. Agree to work toward an understanding. Select a time and location that is best for the process.
3. Be brave. Take a risk in being vulnerable and share a piece of yourself with your intern.
4. Make it a conversation. Balance between telling, asking, and listening.
5. Remember that it is a process and will take time and effort. Accept that each of you will make mistakes, but the effort is well-intended.



Implicit Bias

According to the researchers at the Pew Research Center, “most humans display a bias against out-groups—people who are different from them.” This phenomenon is called implicit bias. Below we outline some of the biases that might be present in Step Up internships and how to address them.

Recognizing Implicit Bias

Definition of Implicit Bias

“Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner,” according to the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.

Jumping to Conclusions

Diversity consultant Verna Myers calls biases “the stories we make up about people before we know who they actually are.” Rather than trying to be “colorblind,” recognize the times you’ve jumped to conclusions about someone before you know who they are.

Strategies for Addressing Implicit Bias:

Implicit bias in individual interactions can be addressed and countered if we become aware of our bias and take actions to redirect our responses. It’s important to understand and respect the tremendous power of unconscious bias, have a basic understanding of the cultures your interns come from, and recognize situations that magnify stereotyping and bias.

- **Stereotype replacement**—Recognizing that a response is based on stereotype and consciously adjusting the response.
- **Individuation**—Seeing the person as an individual rather than a stereotype.
- **Counter-stereotypic imaging**—Imagining the individual as the opposite of the stereotype. The strategy makes positive examples significant and accessible when challenging a stereotype’s validity.
- **Partnership building**—Re-framing the interaction with the intern as one of collaboration, rather than between a high-status person and a low- status person.
- **Perspective taking**—Try putting yourself in the other person’s shoes and adjust your perspective. Although you will never be able to understand someone else’s perspective if it’s different from your own, this can be a helpful example on how to try and meet someone where they are at.
- **Increasing opportunities for contact with individuals from different groups**—Expanding one’s network of friends and colleagues or attending events where people of other racial and ethnic groups, gender identities, sexual orientation, and other groups may be present. Look for opportunities to increase the diversity of your network.

Source: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3603687/

Microaggressions

In our roles as supervisors and mentors, as well as co-workers and neighbors, we are all likely to be involved in some form of microaggressions. In our work as Step Up supervisors it is important that we not only think about how we participate or don't in microaggressions, but also how we teach and model the behavior to the young people watching us.

Microaggressions are brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership. They are often behaviors or statements that do not necessarily reflect malicious intent, but which nevertheless can inflict insult or injury.

Some people hear about microaggressions and think that they are no big deal, but public health researchers have proven that regular discrimination has long-term health effects on its recipients. Many people compare microaggressions to little cuts or bug bites, individually they are not a big deal, but overtime they add up. Basically, when people are repeatedly dismissed, alienated, insulted, and invalidated it reinforces the differences in power and privilege and perpetuates racism and discrimination.

Tips for Confronting Microaggressions:

Everyone Involved

- Model the behavior you want from the person or people you are confronting.
- Avoid being sarcastic, snide, or mocking.
- Remember that the goal is to educate. It's not about winning or making someone feel bad or wrong. It's about helping them understand something from a different perspective.
- Keep the focus of the conversation to the behavior or event, not the individuals involved.

Target of Microaggression

- Ensure you are safe from any physical or emotional immediate harm.
- Consider the context of the situation and if or how you want to address it.
- Take care of yourself, cultivate a peer group you can process incidents with.

Bystander to Microaggression

- If no one else says something, say something. Speak for yourself, "Here is why I am offended, upset, or hurt by your comments..." don't speak for others.

Instigator of Microaggression

- Try not to be defensive, be open to learn and listen.
- Acknowledge you've hurt the target or bystander and apologize sincerely.
- Reflect on where the idea came from and how to avoid it in the future.
- Take responsibility for understanding your own privileges and prejudices.

Micro-aggressive Comment	...Message it Sends
Where are you from? Where were you born? / What are you?	You are a foreigner. You don't belong.
You are a credit to your race. You are so articulate.	People who look like you are not smart.
I believe the most qualified person should get the job. Everyone can succeed in this society.	People who look like you are lazy or incompetent and need to work harder.
Telling a person to not be so loud or animated, just calm down or dismissing an individual who brings up race/culture in work.	Assimilate to the dominant culture. Leave your cultural baggage outside.

Working with Gen Z

Each generation coming into the workforce brings new complexities and considerations. Gen Z, generally considered the generation born between 1997 – 2012, is no different. While individuals have their own unique perspectives, there are some characteristics that are common.

- Community is very important to this generation. They are interested in connection to others and want to get to know their colleagues in a meaningful way.
- Transparency is key. Your new Gen Z colleagues don't like uncertainty and want to understand what is going on and how they fit into the bigger picture. Explain to them how their contributions – big or small – matter.
- Not unlike previous generations, provide constructive feedback. Gen Z likes to know where they stand and appreciate constructive coaching and mentoring that demonstrates that you are invested in their success.

Neurodiversity

The value of diversity is well documented. A newer area of diversity being explored is neurodiversity. The term “neurotypical” describes individuals who display typical intellectual and cognitive development. Neurodiversity is the product of natural variations in human neurology that lead to differences in cognition, sensitivities and perception. This includes ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Epilepsy, OCD, learning differences and more. Twenty-five percent (25%) of young people we work with identify as having some sort of disability.

In the general population, we know that 80% of those who are neurodiverse are underemployed or unemployed. However, when placed in the right environment with the right supports, neurodivergent individuals are 30% more productive and can help raise the productivity of a team.

Clear, up-front communication is important. Clearly define what end goals are important for success. What does a job well done look like in your company? Learn about your intern, their personal values and special interests, their strengths and what accommodations may be helpful to support their success in the role. Build strong communication between their work team members, including you, their mentor (if different), their Step Up job coach and other stakeholders. Use this team and other available resources to support a productive and successful internship.

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

Fostering positive mental health has always been important, but in 2022 the U.S. Surgeon General declared a mental health crisis. Proactively supporting positive mental health is more important than ever. The challenges of the pandemic and civil unrest over the past few years have been particularly challenging for our youth. Adolescents are going through a myriad of developmental changes that drive young people to seek approval from their peers. With the online culture cultivated during the pandemic, most of this approval seeking was through social media. Teens have been reporting more anxiety and depression since the pandemic shutdowns.

Nurturing youth to see positive images of themselves and the impact that they can have on others can be valuable. Set and clearly communicate reasonable expectations. Support stress management. Help them set and achieve goals. Celebrate, understanding how your intern likes to be recognized for a job well done.



MENTORING & DEVELOPING

Intern Mentorship

While employers should treat Step Up interns like real employees in many respects, we also acknowledge they need and benefit from additional guidance about succeeding in the working world and achieving their career aspirations.

Step Up internships are about both work and learning.

For this reason, we strongly recommend identifying someone to serve as a mentor to your intern throughout the summer. The mentor should provide opportunities for the intern to reflect on their work and the work environment, conversations with their colleagues, and feedback from their supervisors. The mentor is an ally who is there to support the intern.

Identifying a Mentor

The supervisor should identify who will serve as your intern’s mentor before the internship starts and ensure your intern is receiving proper mentorship throughout the summer.

Many supervisors ask a colleague from their workplace to fulfill this role. Others take on this role themselves and intentionally set aside time to remove their “supervisor” hats and have conversations with their intern about the intern’s professional aspirations and how they should structure their career and educational plans to achieve those goals.

Tips for a Successful Mentoring Relationship

<p>1. Build Trust As the “foundational principle that holds all relationships” according to Stephen Covey, focus on establishing trust with your intern to facilitate effective communication.</p>	<p>2. LISTEN! Practice active listening. Strive to understand your intern’s point of view and reflect it back to them. See the Stances of Inquiry on page 27 for more on listening.</p>	<p>3. Explore from Their Perspective Reflect on your experience in your first job. Think about your concept of career goals in high school.</p>
<p>4. Encourage Reflection As you explore topics with your intern, ask good questions. Reflect what you hear to your intern. Provide context and encourage a future-oriented lens.</p>	<p>5. Withhold Judgment Rather than jumping to conclusions and making judgments, turn your judgments into questions. See the Stances of Inquiry on page 27 for more specifics.</p>	<p>6. No Assumptions Similarly, avoid making assumptions about what your intern is facing. Instead, adopt a mindset of curiosity. See the Stances of Inquiry on page 27 for more specifics.</p>

Continued on next page.



<p>7. Boundaries Are Key Recognize the limits of your role as a workplace mentor. Contact your Job Coach since they may have additional resources, they can connect your intern to for help.</p>	<p>8. Be Yourself! Help your intern see the true you. Share your “imperfect story”— a time when you failed or learned a key lesson. Talk about your experiences as a young professional</p>
<p>9. Be Open to the Possibilities Set aside preconceived notions about your intern and how the mentor relationship will develop. Follow the intern’s lead on where your advice is needed most.</p>	<p>10. Follow Up Make sure you’re meeting regularly with your intern. Most importantly, follow through on the commitments you make. This is critical to building that trust.</p>

Talking about Your Education and Work History

As a mentor, you can help your intern shape their professional path by sharing about your education and work history.

Talk About Your Education

- Where did you attend high school?
- Did you attend post-secondary education? What factored into your decision to apply or not apply? Did your chosen career path have a specific route?
- What types of education did you consider?
- What did you study?
- Did you volunteer or complete any internships or study abroad programs?
- Does your field of study help you in your current job? Why or why not?
- How did you balance all of this with your personal life obligations?

Share Your Work History

- What was your first job and what did you learn?
- How did your early experiences help you as an adult in the workplace?
- What types of experiences did you have as a young person that influenced your career path?

Adult Experience

- What types of jobs have you held? What do you like about your work?
- Have you changed career fields? Why or why not?
- How did you end up working in your current position?
- How do you balance work and personal life as an adult?



Help your intern understand the importance of “Starting Somewhere”

As a mentor, you can play an important role in helping your intern understand the value they bring to the workplace, especially if their work is not particularly sophisticated.

If you notice your intern not engaged in the work, provide context for the impact of their work.

As one intern said, “My internship was filing papers, but if I didn’t do it, it would not have been done at all.”

Explain that everyone has to start somewhere in the professional world.

Step Up internships are about both work and learning.





Developing Your Intern's Skills and Strengths

Step Up internships are a chance for you to highlight those assets your intern already brings to the table and improve upon those that could use some work for them to become a well-rounded employee. These internships should be about building skills. But what skills should you focus on?

MHA Labs, a partner of Step Up, has developed a "Winning at Work" framework. Based on research from thousands of employers, MHA Labs has identified a core set of 12 skills that are critical for entry-level and internship job performance.

Focus on building these 12 skills in your intern during the summer

Personal Mindset

- » Needs minimal supervision to complete tasks.
- » Attempts to complete tasks independently before asking for help.
- » Follows rules/directions as required by the task/situation.
- » Maintains focus on tasks despite internal (e.g., emotional) and/or external distractions.
- » Avoids actions that have produced undesirable consequences or results in the past.
- » Strives to overcome barriers/set-backs, seeking assistance when needed.
- » Adapts approach in response to new conditions or others' actions.

Planning for Success

- » Sets and prioritizes goals that reflect a self-awareness of one's capabilities, interests, emotions, and/or needs.
- » Breaks goals into actionable steps.
- » Accurately estimates level of effort and establishes realistic timelines.
- » Manages time to complete tasks on schedule.
- » Applies existing/newly acquired knowledge, skills, and/or strategies that one determines to be useful for achieving goals.
- » Monitors progress and own performance, adjusting approach as necessary.
- » Demonstrates a belief that one's own actions are associated with goal attainment.

Social Awareness

- » Recognizes the consequences of one's actions.
- » Balances own needs with the needs of others.
- » Takes into consideration others' situations/feelings.
- » Develops and implements strategies for navigating in different contexts (i.e., manages different patterns of behavior, rules, and norms).

Communication

- » Organizes information that serves the purpose of the message, context, and audience.
- » Uses and adjusts communication strategies as needed based on the purpose of the message, context, and audience.
- » Signals listening according to the rules/norms of the context and audience.
- » Seeks input to gauge others' understanding of the message.
- » Asks questions to deepen and/or clarify one's understanding when listening to others.

Collaboration

- » Completes tasks as they have been assigned or agreed upon by the group.
- » Helps team members complete tasks, as needed.
- » Encourages the ideas, opinions, and contributions of others, leveraging individual strengths.
- » Provides feedback in a manner that is sensitive to others' situation/feelings.
- » Clarifies areas of disagreement/conflict that need to be addressed to achieve a common goal.
- » Seeks to obtain resolution of disagreements/conflicts to achieve a common goal.

Problem Solving

- » Defines problems by considering all potential parts and related causes.
- » Gathers and organizes relevant information about a problem from multiple sources.
- » Generates potential solutions to a problem, seeking and leveraging diverse perspectives.
- » Identifies alternative ideas/processes that are more effective than the ones previously used/suggested.
- » Evaluates the advantages and disadvantages associated with each potential solution identified for a problem.
- » Selects and implements best solution based on evaluation of advantages and disadvantages of each potential solution.

Source: MHA Labs "The Hirability Assessment: Winning At Work" Validation Information: The correlation between the predicted and actual value of employer ratings for this 12 item work core profile is $R=0.89$ ($R^2=0.79$). This means youth who rate highly on all 12 items will end up nearly always receiving a high average employer hirability rating.

Strategies for Building Your Intern's Skills

Focusing on skills, including the 12 Hirability Skills, is an important tool to facilitate discussions, set expectations and evaluate performance. Here are some ways you can help your intern build skills throughout the summer.

Set Goals for the Summer to Build Specific Skills

Review the 12 Hirability Skills and brainstorm with your intern other skills that are important in your career field. Have the intern pick a few skills to focus on this summer and create a plan to build those skills.



Skills Goal 1:

Plan:

Skills Goal 2:

Plan:

Skills Goal 3:

Plan:

Track Progress on Skills Goals

Return to these skills goals frequently, ideally during your weekly check-ins. Review progress, and, if necessary, set new goals or identify new paths to reach established goals.

Turn Growth Areas Into Strengths

As you discuss these key skills at weekly check-ins, mid-internship and end of internship evaluations, highlight specific ways your intern can turn areas of growth into strengths. Coach your intern to successfully build those skills.

Explore Skills Required for Future Career Possibilities

- Ask open ended questions about your intern's career plans and actively listen to them to reflect on what they want for their future.
- Help them identify skills they already have that will serve them well in that career and highlight skills they still need to build for a successful career.
- Discuss educational paths and other opportunities for your intern to build the skills necessary for career success.

Goals and Growth

Setting goals and creating plans to achieve them is a vital step in creating a successful internship. Together you and the intern should talk about what skills the intern wants to develop and what projects or tasks at the worksite can help them do so. Visit www.StepUpMpls.org for additional information.

Summer Growth Goals

Help an intern reach their summer growth goals by using SMART goals as a guide. Not only will setting, working towards, and attaining goals help your intern build job skills, the process itself is a learning experience they can take with them in school, work, and life.



Project Goals

Also known as a work plan, project goals are related to the tasks that the worksite needs completed by the intern. To ensure the work being completed for the organization aligns with the intern's growth goals the intern and the supervisor should identify what projects relate or can be modified to help the intern achieve their summer growth goals. This is a great opportunity to give youth the autonomy of choice to feel a sense of ownership over their work.

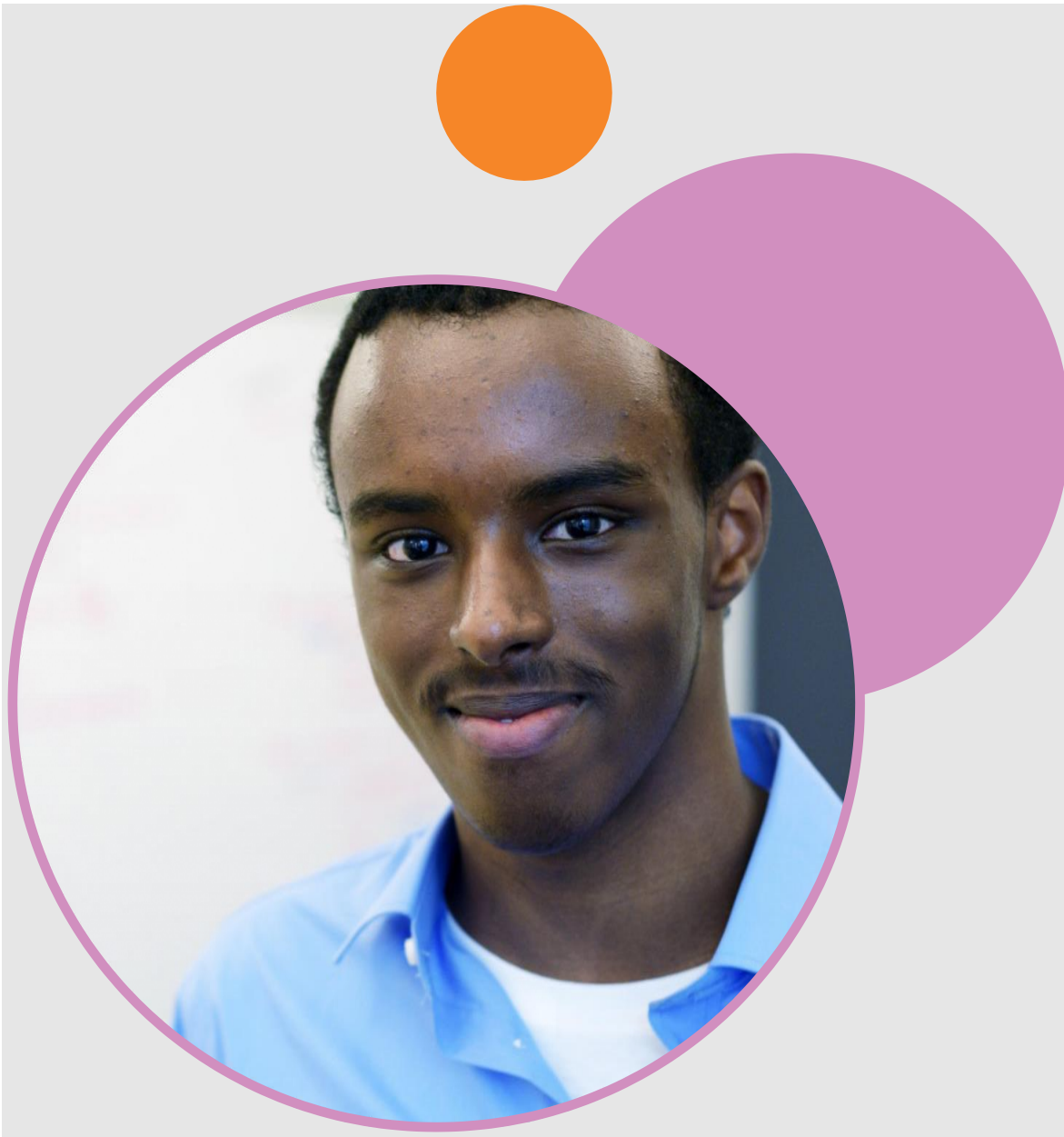
Professional Development

Learning new skills doesn't always have to come from on-the-job training. Help the intern set up professional development learning opportunities. You can send the intern to a training offered by Step Up or your organization, or you can connect them with a peer who has different skills or experiences from you.

Hirability Core Skills

MHA Labs Building Blocks are the basic competencies young people need to be successful at work now and in the future. This tool is set up to help supervisors and interns have a conversation about how well they are doing and what areas could use improvement, as well as demonstrate growth throughout the summer. At the end of the summer Step Up will ask supervisors to report on each of their interns using this scale in an online survey.

Reference the Mid- and End of Summer Evaluation Form in the [Resources and Forms](#) folder.



Section 7 – Supporting You



SUPPORTING YOU

The vast majority of Step Up interns successfully complete their internship without a problem. Occasionally, an issue does come up, and Step Up is here to help. In addition to this handbook, we have program staff, weekly emails, videos and training, and a support network just for you!

STEP UP JOB COACHES

Each intern-supervisor pair will have the support of a Job Coach. Your Job Coach will serve as your main point of contact for the summer. The Job Coaches will support in making sure the intern and supervisor have everything needed for a successful summer internship. You will meet your Job Coach in or before the first week of the internship.

Type of Help Job Coaches Can Provide

On-going Support

Your Job Coach will regularly be in touch throughout the summer to share helpful tips and best practices, alert you to upcoming events, and remind you of key program milestones.

Acute Issues

Your Job Coach can help with any acute issues that arise with your intern over the summer like trouble showing up on time or difficulty accepting constructive feedback.



When to Reach Out to Your Job Coach

First, address the issue directly with the intern and discuss why the situation is occurring. It may simply be a misunderstanding that can be easily addressed. If the issue persists or your intern doesn't understand or becomes defensive, reach out to your Job Coach. We can suggest new approaches, talk to the intern to reinforce the message, and share additional resources for you.

What If It Just Isn't Working Out?

First, contact your Job Coach to inform them if the intern is not working out. The Job Coach can help. The Job Coach will follow up with the intern to confirm they understand the situation, help them learn from the experience, and see if there is any way to improve their performance. You may terminate the employment at any time, but always contact your Job Coach if you do.

If there is still time to create another meaningful internship experience this summer, we will place another intern in the position if there is a well-suited candidate.



“I feel like... this cohort has been running fairly smoothly... but, I feel like if there were hiccups along the way, I know exactly where to go... who to reach out to. I feel there’s a lot of backing for the employer when it comes to having a Step Up intern.”

2023 Step Up Supervisor, Keegan from Tree Trust

WEEKLY JOB COACH EMAILS

Every week throughout the summer, you will receive an email from your Job Coach. These emails will offer tips, provide insights and update you on upcoming dates and deadlines. If you are not receiving these important messages, please reach out to your job coach as soon as possible.

VIDEOS AND TRAINING

The Step Up staff have created orientation trainings held each Spring to provide your staff with an overview of important content and the opportunity to ask questions and connect with others. Sessions are recorded and available for review later.

COFFEE CORNER

If you are looking for an interactive group with other Step Up supervisors, sign up for a Coffee Corner. These group calls are scheduled in advance and designed to dive a little deeper on a pre-determined topic. However, there is always flexibility to tackle a hot topic suggested by you or one of your peers. Bring your questions, share your ideas and connect with others. Watch for the schedule to be posted and communicated in the Weekly Communications.

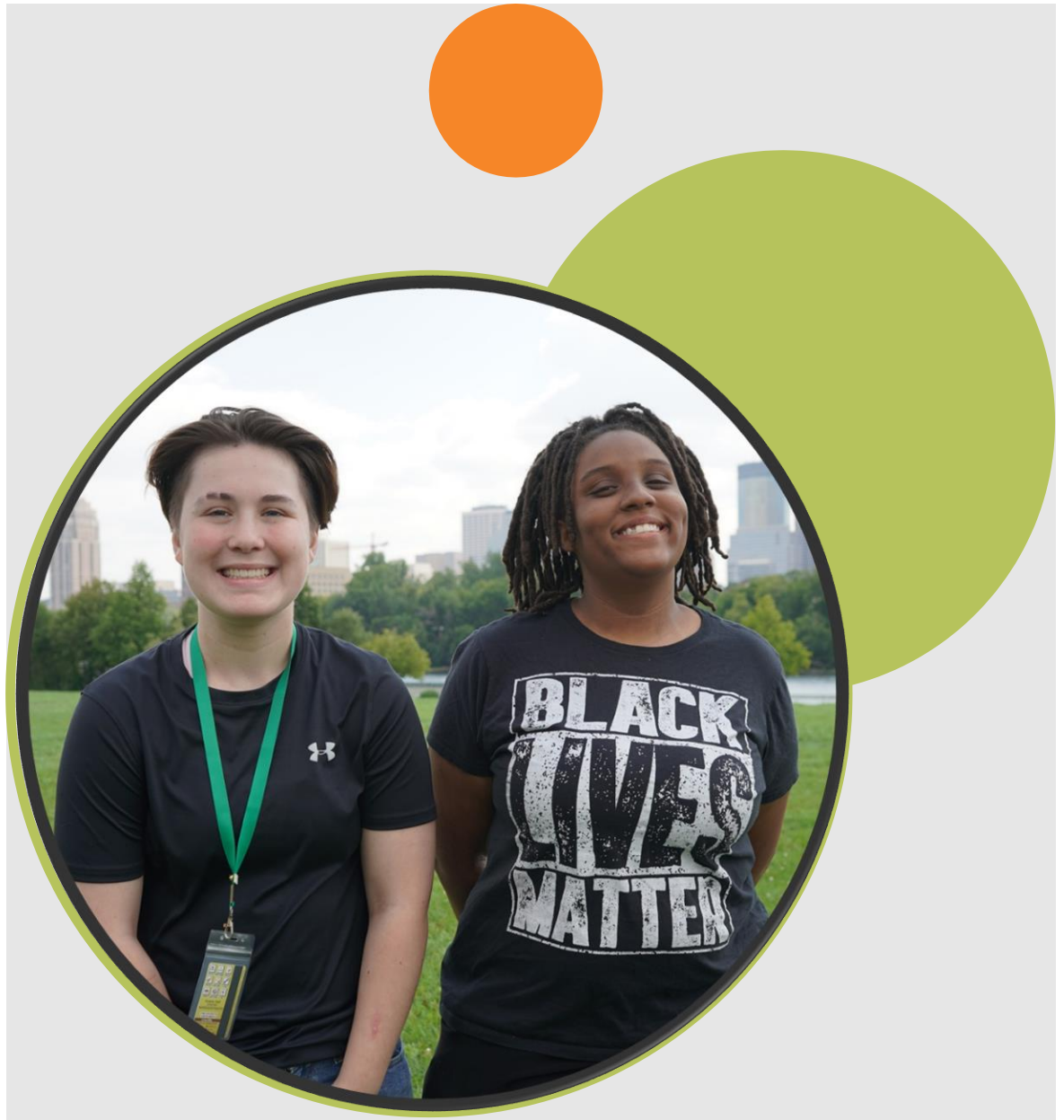
PROGRAM OR DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS

We strive to proactively head off issues before they become serious. If you are having an issue with the program, we ask that we start the discussion with program staff – your assigned job coach, the program manager or program director. However, you may also make a formal complaint by using the Complaint procedure.

We also have zero tolerance for harassment of any kind. Please see the resource in the [Resources and Forms](#) folder for details and the most up to date reporting procedures.

INTERN SUPPORT RESOURCES

You will be spending a lot of time with your intern this summer and may hear about a need for resources. Maybe they are skipping lunch because they don’t have enough food or maybe they don’t have the appropriate clothes for work. In addition to contacting your job coach for help, you can check out the listing of community resources located in the [Resource and Forms](#) folder.



Section 8 - Finishing Strong





FINAL PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Some worksites will have a culmination of work that is organized into a final project. If not already part of the scope of work, consider arranging for a presentation to leadership of the department or organization as an additional professional development opportunity for the intern. Seeing a project through from beginning to end is a valuable, measurable accomplishment that helps define success and provides closure.

WORKPLACE CELEBRATIONS

End the internship on a positive note. Whether or not there is a final project or presentation, something as simple as a small gathering with co-workers makes the final days of the summer experience a positive one. Some suggestions for celebrations include:

- An informal morning gathering with a light snack with the small team
- A larger gathering of co-workers over a catered or potluck lunch
- Involvement of leadership can add a special touch
- Offering words of appreciation, support and encouragement

Workplace celebrations will look very different based on the size and type of organization you have and what feels most comfortable for your intern or interns. Have fun and be creative!

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

As your intern is building their portfolio of experience, it is helpful to have letters of recommendation from people who have worked with them along the way. If you are able, we encourage you to write a letter for your intern that outlines what the intern's role was during the summer and includes any details about positive characteristics, growth and skills learned. See the Appendix for a link to a sample letter of recommendation.

STAYING CONNECTED

Building a network is a key strategy for a successful career. We encourage you and the intern's mentor to stay connected to your intern, if possible. Your professional insights and knowledge can continue to help develop them as they continue on their path. And you never know where they may end up... Several of our alumni have landed leadership roles at companies and in government; they have become elected officials and radio personalities. Staying connected could be beneficial for your network too!



Section 9: When Step Up is Paying the Intern



SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

We are thrilled to partner with you to provide a paid work experience for your intern. To implement this, there are several steps that you, as the supervisor, needs to complete.

WORK HOURS

- If an intern works more than the hours allowed per pay period, the agency will be in violation of program rules, and they will be responsible for all payroll costs for any hours in excess of the allowed.
- All hours worked must be paid, including orientation. However, program regulations prohibit paying youth for lunch breaks.
- Keep in mind that if you require their attendance at a special agency event, youth must be paid.



Level 1 Step Up Interns can work a maximum of
8 hours
per day



Level 1 Step Up Interns can work a maximum of
25 hours
per week

DAILY WORK ATTENDANCE SHEETS

Step Up interns must sign in and sign out every day using the Daily Work Attendance Sheet (or other approved format). A blank form is provided in your forms packet. **You must keep the completed forms for 5 years and be able to produce them, on demand if requested, both during and after the program ends.**

QuickBooks (Electronic Timecard System)

Step Up workers are temporary summer employees. Every other week, according to the payroll schedule (see [Resources and Forms](#) folder), each supervisor (or agency designee) must complete an electronic time sheet for their Step Up interns. Interns will sign in and out each day at work and record their total hours worked for the day. At the end of the pay period, the intern and their supervisor must date and sign the time log to verify its accuracy. The supervisor (or agency designee) will use this verified time log to complete the QuickBooks Timecard for each intern.

All electronic QuickBooks submissions are due on the last Friday of the payroll period. QuickBooks will lock any additional submissions after that point. If you fail to submit your timecards by that time, you will need to contact your assigned Job Coach.

If an intern is fired, by law, they can demand their final paycheck within 24 hours. **Be sure the youth sign their Daily Work Attendance Sheet before they leave your agency.** Then, immediately notify your Job Coach.

NEW: EARNED SAFE AND SICK TIME (ESST)

Employees in Minnesota are entitled to earned sick and safe time, a form of paid leave. Employees accrue one hour of earned sick and safe time for every 30 hours they work. Most Step Up interns will earn a total of just over 6 hours if they work the full summer.

The earned sick and safe time hours that interns have available, as well as those that have been used in the most recent pay period will show up on their payroll advice. Interns may use earned sick and safe time for all or part of a shift, depending on your need.

Earned sick and safe time can be used for:

- An employee's mental or physical illness, treatment or preventive care;
- The mental or physical illness, treatment or preventive care of an employee's family member;
- Absence due to domestic abuse, sexual assault or stalking of an employee or their family member;
- Closure of an employee's workplace due to weather or public emergency or closure of their family member's school or care facility due to weather or public emergency; and
- When determined by a health authority or health care professional that an employee or their family member is at risk of infecting others with a communicable disease.

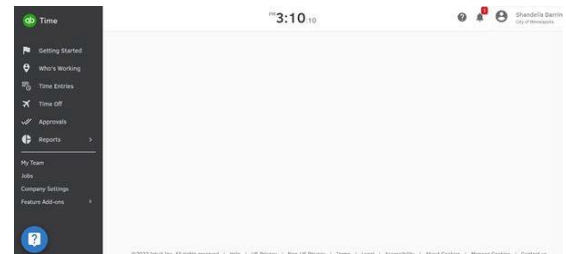
An intern who is using ESST must notify their supervisor so the time can be entered appropriately in Quickbooks. More information on how to report ESST will be provided in the payroll training video.

More information about ESST can be found on the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry website located here: <https://www.dli.mn.gov/sick-leave>

SUPERVISOR TIMECARD INSTRUCTIONS

1. If you're new to using Quickbooks, start by accepting the email invitation from Quickbooks to join. If you've used Quickbooks in the past, log in using your email and password. If you have trouble remembering your login info, follow the "Forgot?" link to be walked through the retrieval process.

2. "X" out of all 3 pop up's that appear so your home screen looks like this:

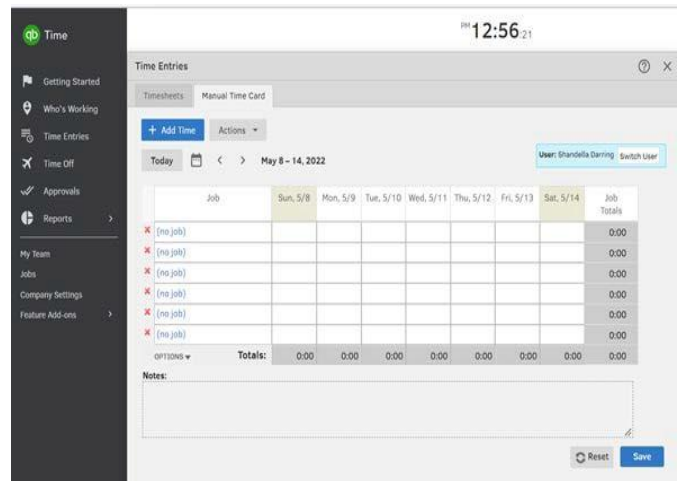


3. Click "**Time Entries**" located along left column then click the "**Manual Time Card**" tab in the upper left of the new pop-up window.

This is what your Time Entries window should look like when entering time for your interns.

In the Time Entries window, click "**Switch User**" in the top right corner and begin typing the name of a Step Up intern.

Select their name when it appears. You are now viewing the time card for that intern.

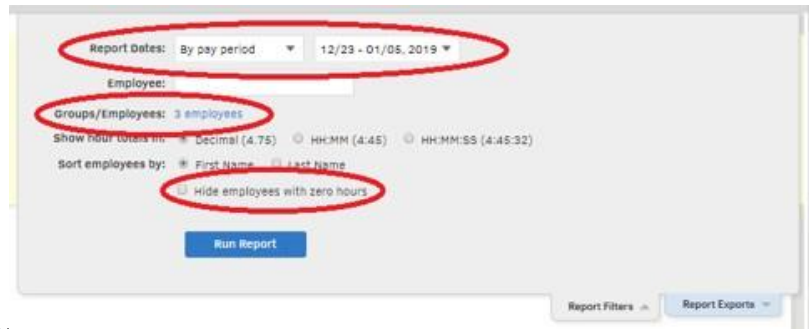


4. Using the completed AND verified *Daily Attendance Sheet* for that intern, enter the hours worked (using decimals if needed) for each day during that week on the top row. Be sure to round all hours entered to the nearest .25 hour. Click the blue "**Save**" button in the bottom right.

5. Click the right arrow in the top of the Time Entries window to switch over to the second week of the pay period. For convenience, you may click the "**Action**" button in the upper left corner "**Copy Previous Week's Time-sheet**" to duplicate the hours you entered the week prior and simply edit as needed. Click the blue "**Save**" button in the bottom right.

6. Repeat steps 3-5 for each Step Up intern you are responsible for until you've completed hours for all interns in your Group.

7. Once you've entered all hours worked for each of your interns for that pay period, it's a good idea to double-check everything before submitting. To do so, click **"Reports"** along the left column and then **"Payroll Report"**.



A new popup window will appear. For **Report Dates**, select **By Pay Period** and the appropriate pay period date range. Make sure that only your Group is selected for Groups/Employees. Make sure to **UNCHECK** the box that asks to **"Hide employees with zero hours"** (in case you may have missed someone, you want them to show up so you can catch it and add hours for them). Click the **blue** button to **"Run Report"**.

8. This *Payroll Report* allows you to view all interns in your Group with their total hours worked for that pay period.



You may also click the **"+"** symbol before their name to see total hours worked per day and type of hours worked.

9. Once you've double-checked all hours for that pay period, it's time to approve your time cards. Click **"Approvals"** on the left column. For Report Dates, select **"By Pay Period"** and the appropriate pay period date range. Make sure that only your Group is selected for *Groups/Employees*. Click the **blue** button to **"Run Report"**.

10. First, check to make sure the hours listed match your records for each intern and then click the **blue "Approve"** button. If you have multiple interns needing approval, it may be quicker to check the



box next to each intern you'd like to approve and click the **"Approve Selected"** button to approve multiple interns at once. When interns are successfully approved, the **"Approve"** button fades to grey and their information.

If you have any questions regarding intern hours, please contact your assigned Job Coach. If you have questions regarding technical issues while using Quickbooks, please contact Customer Support at 888-836-2720 or use the Live Chat feature on their website.

HELP



APPENDIX



LISTING OF AGENCY RESOURCES

*Copies of each resource are located in the [0 - Resources and Forms](#) folder on the Step Up SharePoint site

Americans with Disabilities Act
Anti-Harassment and Complaint Procedure
Cell Phones, Texting and Emails
Child Labor Laws
Clothing Resources for Interns
COIN Template
Daily Work Attendance Form
Discipline and Termination Procedures
First Report of Injury Form
Hennepin County Resources
Intern Evaluation Form
NETSPEND PayCard FAQs
New Hire Letter Template, Level 2
Payroll Schedule
Performance Improvement Plan Form
Right to Know Act of 1983, Safety, Emergencies & Workers Comp
SAMPLE: Letter of Recommendation
SAMPLE: Worksite Agreement
Summer Checklist for Supervisors
Technology Resources for Interns
Weekly Check In Form
Work Documents for Interns
Work Documents – I-9 Documents
Work Plan Form – Level 1
Work Plan Form – Level 2
Youth Program Quality Assessment Tool



step up



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#StepUpMpls:

