



## 9-Questions you must ask your Internship Sponsor

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The decision to approve an internship placement site should rest in part on how a prospective sponsor answers the following questions. Colleges need not limit themselves to these questions, but at a minimum these questions provide enough information for campuses to make decisions on whether to approve the site for an internship or not.

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1. Is the workplace and job relevant to the intern's course of study?
2. Is the company committed to assigning a supervisor/mentor to the Intern for the duration of the internship?
3. Will the supervisor/mentor commit time, energy, and attention to properly assess the intern's achievement and verify weekly attendance records?
4. Will the sponsor provide a professional work environment for the intern and provide the intern with meaningful training and duties?
5. Is the sponsor willing to complete an Internship Sponsor Agreement form?
6. Will the sponsor agree to submit to the institution evaluation forms at regular intervals, final program evaluation and any other evaluative documentation as required by the program and department?
7. Will the sponsor abide by all federal and state laws regulating workplace conditions?
8. Will the sponsor provide an appropriate work space, equipment such as computer and desk for the student intern so that the intern can work effectively and efficiently?
9. Will the sponsor provide orientation materials and other necessary guidelines and information to familiarize the student intern with the goals of the organization, as well as the client population of the organization?

If your potential sponsor answers these questions satisfactorily, then you probably have a good internship site. Your students should benefit from the training and professional experience they will gain as an intern with that company.



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Research has indicated that there are certain conditions that are specific to enhancing the learning process during an internship, which are not quite the same as learning by full time employees.

Beenen and Rousseau (2010), based on a sample of 110 MBA interns across three full time MBA programs in Mid Western universities, highlight two factors that are associated with learning among the MBA interns.

One of these is goal clarity. This is especially important to interns because unlike full time employees, they have a very short period of time to learn and complete the tasks assigned to them. There is a danger of getting caught in translation, as the intern comes into contact with various branches in the company, such as HR, management, and other colleagues. Interns tend to perform much better, when the tasks laid out for them are clear and concise, and leave little room for confusion.

The second important factor is the level of autonomy provided to the intern. Interns tend to benefit from a more structured environment, rather than be allowed free reigns. In the latter case, without much direction, they are prone to getting diverted from learning and may not know how the task assigned relates to the ultimate goal.

In case of clearly defined goals and low autonomy, interns gain a much greater learning and understanding than they would if they were given more autonomy (Beenen and Rousseau, 2010).

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### **Reference**

Beenen, G., & Rousseau, D. M. (2010). Getting the most from MBA internships: Promoting intern learning and job acceptance. *Human Resource Management*, 49(1), 3-22.

This article can be found in the booklet: How to set up an Internship Program on your Campus by Dr. Charles A. Taylor. [You can get your copy here.](#)

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