

CACEE 2014 Year End Professional Development Conference
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60 Ideas in 60 Minutes: Paid vs. Unpaid Internships

Facilitator: Donna Messer

Time: 10:05 AM

- It was found that of similar students, the ones who were using social media properly were getting to the front of the line
- Find common ground between people so you can make connections
- McMaster Engineering has a policy in place that all co-op internships must be paid (of 1200, 1199 are paid)
- Market the program fairly effectively upon admission—a motivating factor for McMaster engineering is the coop program
- Put best practices in place
- A lot of trade-focused programs have paid internships because they are important and well-established (eg. Electrician, millwrights, etc.) and they deal with larger companies
- What is an intern?
- There isn't a definition of an internship provided from the government, so in the absence of a definition, it is applied in so many different circumstances.
- Academically approved internships that lead to graduation are allowed by law, but still not defined.
- Justice program is very placement-driven, need 15 people by Friday
- Media program follows the quintessential internship structure unpaid, but the "cream of the crop"
- Early childhood is largely unpaid and it is a placement structure, not an internship, but there is a large interview process
- When students do not get a placement of an internship through their program, the career centre is the catch all
- The career centre is more reactive not proactive on the employer side, but they give them information to try to connect them to someone in their network, a LinkedIn connection, a mentorship program, 10,000 coffees, alumni
- Google alerts allows you to give Google a job, find interesting articles, post it on LinkedIn, connect to people who are also interested in these topics
- Visibility give the credibility, credibility makes them profitable, profitable means a paid internship, or an opportunity to develop their skills so they can generate their own income
- If it is unpaid, there is more equity that should be put in from the organizations
- In the U.S. model where if the student is unpaid, then they should be getting training and not doing actual work
- Look at the opportunity and measure the opportunity for results
- Opportunities for students outside of the co-op program, arrange interviews, information sessions
- Reach employers via networking events
- A lot of people coming into Canada has income, but can't find jobs so they look into investing in real estate
- Unpaid internships can be really beneficial
- It should be up to the student to review the posting and decide for themselves if that would benefit them
- Sometimes unpaid opportunities would get you more interesting opportunities and more interesting work
- If there is a way to measure results, it could benefit the students to see which type of internship see better results
- Students may not have the financial ability to take an unpaid internship
- For certain industries, unpaid internships may be the only way to get your foot in the door
- Unpaid internships may seem worth it for students if they are travelling internationally
- Academically inclined people may find it hard to find jobs because talking to people is more difficult for them
- BoardMatch training program to become better board members
- Not all interns should be paid because if you regulate that, you are going to wipe out a huge portion of major opportunities in certain sectors
- Exceptions for entrepreneurs with a two or three person business who is pre-revenue, students are allowed to pursue that
- What do you do in an instance like Bombardier who goes through major layoffs, if they just laid off people, how is it justified to pay interns?
- BlackBerry continues to pay interns because they are developing people to hire after graduation
- Students that are working for charities or in a different region of the world where it is the cultural norm not to pay, then that is fine
- If a company that certainly has the means to pay interns but is trying to exploit students, that is disallowed
- The company's rationale is that students are learning and they are invested in and they are often hired on afterwards
- There was a lot of panic at first over the labour law around internships, but now companies are making sure that students are receiving some sort of compensation for their work in terms of school credit
- Teach students how to catch the attention of their prospective employers so it's not the career centre that's doing the work, it's the student as well
- Learn to network to get work
- Online internship fairs
- Internship 101 workshops
- Workplace etiquette
- They should be paid, but if they can't be paid, there should be a measure of results