

## Tips for Managing Students

Supervising a student can take more time and guidance than working with a full-time employee, since many interns are still learning how things operate in a professional setting. **In general, interns need explicit expectations, clear communication, and a lot of support.**

Every student will have different strengths, experience and learning goals. Developing strong communication, feedback, and reflection practices will help ensure that the student has the appropriate level of instruction and support required to be successful in their tasks and learning.

### Here are some suggestions for how to supervise students:

1. Identify a project that is discrete (has a beginning and end), challenging, valuable, and that includes well-defined parameters and successful outcomes. Research has shown that these make the best projects for students. Ensure that this project aligns with and supports the student's academic pathway and expectations.
2. Identify one person as the student's primary supervisor and point of contact. Projects may have multiple sources, but students need a single person to report to. This person should have some authority in your workplace. Identify a secondary contact who is able to carry out the role if needed.
3. Be explicit from the start about stipends/pay (if applicable), expectations of hours, specific workplans, workplace conduct, whether remote or hybrid work is allowable, and expected outcomes. Provide more leeway gradually with successful students as they earn it. Continue to highlight successful students' accomplishments so that others know whom to observe and emulate.
4. Ask students what they want to learn or improve, and try to incorporate those elements into their experience.
5. Set up an intentional supervision structure, e.g. weekly check-ins, regular rounds of feedback, dialogue and reflection on what they are observing and experiencing.
6. If there are any performance or behavioral problems, nip them in the bud immediately, firmly, and clearly. It's up to you to teach students what is and is not appropriate. Connect with the student's advisor if needed.
7. Ensure that the student has what they need to succeed in the role, e.g. an ID badge for building access, parking or transportation cost reimbursement, office space, a computer, etc.

8. Be very clear with students that you are available for questions and they should ask you for help.  
Academic norms often push being independent and figuring it out yourself, which may not be the norm at your workplace.
9. Teach students what they are entitled to from the work world, e.g. professional development, paid time off, networking, conference and travel expenses, etc.
10. Make it a priority to connect with peers and staff to build their support and mentorship network.  
Encourage students to participate in any office and social activities.
11. Have some sort of culminating experience at the end of the studentship. They could present their work to staff, write a reflection paper, or something else that gives them a feeling of accomplishment and an opportunity to synthesize what they learned through this experience.
12. Remember that students are still learning, which may require you to adjust your supervision with them.  
While they are a part of your organization, they are still learning workplace cultures and norms and may need support.