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The Value of an Internship Program: An Intern’s Perspective

In our evolving world of recruiting and talent management, the role of an intern has emerged as a necessity for identifying talent, remaining competitive, and embracing innovation. As current interns with a cumulative four internships of experience, we have had the pleasure of seeing firsthand how interns can make a significant contribution to the overall firm and the future success of the organization. Interns provide critical support to a variety of teams, enabling them to focus on more complex tasks and initiatives. By handling the more routine tasks such as data entry, preliminary analysis, and generating reports, interns help improve the efficiency of operations. In our experience, managing these tasks allowed supervisors to concentrate on high-impact activities, helping the overall productivity of the firm.

As accounting majors, having an internship at a public accounting firm has been beneficial. In one’s studies, the courses give background knowledge about their major, but an internship gives experience in the industry in which they are studying. The education is beneficial, but the experience is eye-opening as one gets to apply what they are studying to real-life work and clientele.

Internships offer invaluable learning opportunities for young professionals to gain exposure to real-world challenges, equipping them with practical skills and knowledge of various industries that cannot be gained through traditional education. These real-world

experiences enhance the understanding and ability for future growth in a way that interns will never have a chance to experience again. Gaining these skills in a lower stress role where there is encouragement to ask questions and make mistakes is not something those going directly into full-time roles ever have a chance to discover. This environment of helpfulness gives interns the chance to have a proactive and enthusiastic outlook on their work, which can translate to a fervent desire to continue down a career path and excel in it, leading to a stronger talent pool and long-term firm success.

At Belfint, Lyons & Shuman, PA, our intern class learned about the different services they offer to their clients through hands-on exercises. We prepared tax information for individuals, businesses, and estates/trusts. We also conducted an employee benefit plan audit from start to finish. Finally, we worked with the nonprofit and government audit practice groups. We feel that employers should incorporate internship programs within their companies, as it helps interns to gain knowledge and hands-on experience in their specific field of study.

This test-like environment that exists within internships allows employers to evaluate the skills interns start with and what they can develop over their program. By evaluating this performance, recruiters will analyze which members of the intern group align with their talent expectations and how they fit into the firm's culture.

In our experience, this internship and those in the past have cultivated technical skills and the necessary communication and networking skills to build a successful career. It is also an opportunity for one to see how they fit into various roles, as well as the overall firm culture.

It can be hard to apply the knowledge in college, so when one gets experience in the workplace as an intern before graduation, they know what is expected of them and are ahead of their peers. Having an internship helps grow a professional network within the business industry. Throughout our internship, we met many people working in roles similar to our future aspirations. Creating a network with these people is a wonderful way to make lasting connections that can help in the future.

Interns are far more than just temporary aid for the more mundane workloads; they are an integral aspect to the success and, more importantly, the future of any firm. They can bring fresh perspectives, a desire to learn

and get better, and most importantly, can be potential future employees that could become valuable assets to the overall business. As current interns with a variety of experiences, we can attest to the significant contributions interns make and their importance in driving innovation and growth for the future.

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