



Guilford College

SPORTS INFORMATION

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CoSIDA Table Topics
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TRAINING AN INTERN

An intern is a valuable asset to any sports information office when trained effectively. When interns receive proper guidance and direction, they improve an office's productivity and efficiency while gaining valuable experience. A well-trained intern will hopefully gain a full-time position in the field, improving the quality of the work force.

I. Expectations? Great!

A. Establish clear goals and expectations right from the start (job description, interviews).

1. It's hard to provide feedback when the intern doesn't know what is expected.
2. Gives the intern a sense of accomplishment and confidence.
3. Prevents against potential misunderstandings.

B. Inform others of the intern's goals and expectations.

1. Staff - Especially people the intern is likely to interact with often.
2. Student Assistants - Make sure students know the intern is not another student.

C. Inform the intern of others' goals and expectations.

1. Tell them about the staff members, past experiences, personalities, etc.
2. Give them a sense of who they are working with.

D. Be Flexible - Expectations may change from one intern to the next depending on prior experiences.

II. R & R

A. Room to grow - An oppressive, rigid structure limits growth and enjoyment of the job.

1. Delegate responsibility - Let the intern experience as many facets of the job as possible.
2. Major Sports - Give the intern the chance to work with at least one "major" program, depending on the nature of the institution.
3. Don't fear failure - Sometimes it can be one of the best teaching tools.

B. Resources

1. Make sure the intern has the tools to do the job.
2. Give interns a chance to acquire new skills. Let them do things they may not have done before (working with a printer, producing a media guide, etc.).

III. Be a Mentor - A very fulfilling and rewarding aspect of the profession.

A. Feedback

1. Positive
2. Negative

B. Contacts - Introduce the intern to people at your school, within the community and within the profession.

C. Encourage interns to get involved in activities that may provide networking opportunities.

D. Help interns find a full-time position when they are ready to move on.

E. Keep in touch - Hopefully interns move onto full-time positions and can continue to learn from you.

IV. The Voice of Experience

A. A Whole New World - Interns may be newcomers to the community and unfamiliar with the area. Help them become accustomed to the world beyond the sports information office.

B. Communicate - Make sure interns are on the same page as the rest of the staff.

1. Communicate goals and expectations.
2. Encourage questions and suggestions.

C. The earlier the start date, the more time interns have to adjust to their new surroundings.

D. Start interns with duties such as research, updating records, filling out questionnaires. Such activities develop the intern's knowledge of the program and office.

1. Do not give interns every menial task you do not want to perform.
2. Pitch in and help out when possible. As a result, interns will respect you and be willing to do less glorious tasks as needed.

V. Practically Speaking

A. On the intern's first day, introduce him or her to coaches, support staff and other administrators.

B. Help interns feel important because they are important. Treat them with respect as you wish to be treated by your superiors.

1. Do not overwork or under-appreciate interns. Chances are they are woefully underpaid.
2. Reward their efforts with an occasional day off, since they likely do not receive vacation days.

C. Let interns work with the media for their particular sports.

1. Interns can often clearly see the fruits of their own labors in media relations.
2. The intern may have a knack for media relations and do a better job than you!
3. Do not take over for the intern if one of "their" teams is having a great season and attracting special attention.

VI. Conclusion - More and more schools are turning to interns in the sports information office as a means of gaining inexpensive manpower. While perhaps not the best solution to an understaffed office, interns can significantly reduce the work load if trained properly. Make the time to find the right person for your office, give them clear instructions and guidance, and seize the opportunity to enhance their experience in the field.