

HTHLA – Internship Handbook

High Tech High Contact Info

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Expectations and Responsibilities

Always ask questions

Be on site for at least 3 hours each Tuesday and Thursday

Check in with your mentor when you arrive and leave

Plan a small, challenging project with your mentor

Follow the rules of your internship site

If you are late, or sick, call your mentor and HTH-LA

Leave messages if you call and get voicemail

Internships are a graded, course

Internship Coordinator will grade the course and assign work

Your work performance will be assessed by your mentor

Keep your mentor's business card with you at all times

Coordinators may make site visits

Introduction

Your experience in the professional world is beginning. The High Tech High design principle of “Adult World Connection” is coming into play, where you will work and learn in an adult environment. You will be learning by doing, with advice from a mentor and guidance from a teacher during your internship.

Refer to this field manual when you have questions such as:

- How should I prepare for my first day?
- What do I do when I am sick and can not make it to my internship?
- What assignments am I responsible for?
- Where can I get information about my workplace?

Your internship is a great opportunity to explore your interests, discover areas for future study, and make professional connections. You will also be making important connections to your learning back at school.

Your internship may have little to do with your present career interest, but for some of you this may be the opportunity to experience on the job training for your ideal career. The goal of the internship is learn about careers, the world of work—and yourself! In any case, have fun and learn all that you can.

The Program

Program Overview

Throughout the years young people have worked side-by-side with older accomplished people in order to learn. Apprentices learned the specific skills of their mentors by helping them on the job and progressively took on more responsibility as they gained additional skills and experience. Modern internships resemble apprenticeships, except in one crucial way; modern internships are designed to teach young people general work skills, not the specific skills of their mentor.

Program Summary

- *Insurance:* Interns are covered by HTH-LA liability insurance while on-site.
- *Pay:* Unpaid. Program is academic in nature. Interns may be paid after successful work, or in the summer at mentor's discretion.
- *Schedule:* Semester long, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons for 3 hours each day.
- *Transportation:* Provided (either by the students own car, mass transit, or parent.)
- *Goals*
 - Teach students workplace and academic skills through project-based learning in a real-world environment.

- Provide local organizations with a well-supported intern who provides a modest return on investment.
- Foster students' personal growth and understanding of the adult world of work and learning.
- *Structure*
 - On site: Each student is paired with a caring and motivated mentor who understands and supports the HTH-LA philosophies. A project is planned for at least half of the intern's time.

Interns

A minimum of one successfully completed internship is required for graduation at HTH-LA.

Successfully Completing an Internship

Interns

Complete the following criteria according to the details established by your teacher. You and your teacher are responsible for these assignments, not your mentor. See Section 7 for specifics on assignments.

- Be on time and onsite 6 hours per week (at least 3 hours on both Tuesdays and Thursdays)
- Communicate clearly and ask for feedback
- Work with your mentor to contribute to the organization's success
- Conduct and write a mentor interview
- Write a project description
- Turn in weekly journal entries
- Work on your project
- Complete and present your project
- Update your résumé on your Digital Portfolio, including details of your internship experience

The Workplace

Starting Your Internship

- Dress to impress on your first day. Wear a shirt (tucked in) with a collar, nice shoes, no jeans, etc. You will have time to adjust to the dress code once you see the work culture on site.
- Get two business cards from your mentor. Give one to your parents and keep one with you so you can contact your mentor as needed.
- Schedule times to talk to your mentor about your project.
- Get set up in your workspace and familiarize yourself with the office technology.
- Request a quick tour and introduce yourself to coworkers.

Workplace Behavior

The workplace is very different from school. You are not graded and tested, and you can be fired. Your responsibility at the work site is to help the organization be successful. Along the way you are expected to learn, communicate, ask questions, be considerate of your co-workers, come to work on time, and have a positive attitude.

Communication

You may be surprised at the level of continuous communication at the workplace: email, cell phones, meetings, hall discussions, lunch, meetings, etc. Keep your mentor's business card with you. If there is something you are unsure of and require assistance with, you can call, email, or ask for a meeting with your mentor.

Computer/Internet/Phone Use

A true story: One intern at a downtown media production agency was put in charge of setting up a Yahoo email account for people to reply to a job posting. Easy stuff, or so he thought. As he was filling out the endless Yahoo forms online he started getting bored and put inappropriate wording in one of the seemingly meaningless form fields. The job posting went up and many people applied.

When the hiring process was complete his mentor asked the intern to email the rest of the applicants a polite letter informing them the position was filled. The intern sent out an email to scores of unemployed San Diego professionals. Within a few hours the intern began receiving replies to the email asking why the email had come from the listing it had. Was this notification really from the company? The inappropriate wording was placed in the "From" listing of all the emails he sent out from that account. He didn't know what to do, but as it was the end of the day, he went home.

The next day the intern told his humanities class about his mistake. His teacher told him to leave class immediately and call his mentor. He did so, but his mentor was not in his office. His teacher told him to leave class again and call his mentor and leave a message explaining what had happened. He did. The next day his mentor called him into the office. He informed the intern that his previous actions were not appropriate and that it made the company look bad. The mentor also stated that he was glad he had heard about it from the intern first, instead of from his boss or from someone in the office, as he would have if the intern had kept quiet. It showed the intern was able to take responsibility for his actions. The intern didn't get fired, but he did have to write a new email to all the applicants explaining what happened and apologizing for his mistake.

What's the moral of this story? Assume that all you do electronically at work is visible to your boss and the world. Organizations own their technology and pay for its upkeep so it can be used to keep the organization running well. Because it is owned by them, they can legally monitor and record all employee surfing, emails, phone calls, server access etc. Do not fool around on company computers, Internet connections, or phones.

You'll have to use your judgment regarding inappropriate content and uses while at your internship as there will most likely be less monitoring and blocks than on school computers, as well as less adult supervision and guidance.

If you need to check your personal email via the web, do it on breaks or at lunch. The same applies to office phones. If another employee is making personal calls on the phone or paying the bills online, it does not mean you should mirror this behavior. If you need to talk to friends or family, keep it brief and try to make all personal calls on breaks or at lunch.

Meetings

Ask if you can observe company meetings. Meetings are where many of the decisions affecting your workplace are made, so it is good to attend if possible. Here are some guidelines to follow:

- Bring a notebook and pen
- Arrive 5 minutes early
- Introduce yourself to the meeting leaders and ask if you can observe (even if you already have permission from your mentor)
- Ask your mentor where you should sit
- Sit up straight
- Keep eye contact with whoever is speaking.
- Listen carefully and try to ask at least one question pertaining to something the speaker said

Deadlines

Rules in following deadlines:

- Respect deadlines
- Change a deadline with your mentor *before* you miss it
- Allow plenty of time—more than you think you will need—to complete a project. Most time estimates don't include factors such as other people, mistakes, equipment failure, testing, bug fixes, multiple drafts, etc.

Your school assignment deadlines are not your mentor's deadlines. Give your mentor a few days lead time if you need to meet with him/her. Plan more time than you think you will need for your project to be complete and tested.

Attendance

Your internship is just like being at school. If you leave campus for your internship, but do not go without receiving approval for a day off from both school and your internship, you are truant. This may lead to a suspension. If your mentor is not at work, and nobody else is taking his or her place, come back to school and stay until the end of the day.

- Be on site a minimum of 3 hours a day, twice a week
- Have no unexcused absences
- Follow HTH-LA's rules for attendance, signing out, etc.
- Follow your organization's work policies

Getting the Day Off

Both HTH-LA and your mentor must approve days off. Neither one can make the decision alone. This is because HTH-LA has liability coverage of students until 4:00 p.m. and your mentor relies on you to be there and follow the company rules for days off. Therefore, follow these steps if you want a day off.

- Plan ahead.
- Talk to your mentor and get specific approval for any days off.
- Email Gloria Malkin and your teacher that you will not be at your internship at least 48 hrs before the day you requested off.

Sick Days

If you are sick, let people know as soon as possible. Call and leave a message with your mentor and the HTH-LA front desk. If you don't have your mentor's number, call the company's main number and leave a message. Try to check in with your mentor during the day to make sure he/she got the message.

Mistakes

Everyone makes mistakes. How you handle the mistake is what is most important. First and foremost, immediately tell your mentor and take full responsibility. This is the most difficult part of making a mistake, to own up to it. Learn from your mistakes and try not to repeat them.

Legal: Insurance and Intellectual Property

You are covered through school liability insurance while you are at your internship. Anything you create belongs to the organization you are interning for. Businesses protect their interests by establishing an intellectual property policy. The privilege of working at your intern workplace is dependent upon your agreeing to abide by the IP policy.

Off Site Lunches and Breaks

Do not leave your organization's building alone, or without permission and notification to your mentor or another adult. Let them know where you are going and when you will be back (you might even offer to get them something while you are out).

Expectation Management

What does “Expectation Management” mean and why is it important to you? Expectation management is a major key to success in the working world. It means to literally manage one’s own expectations, and to manage other people’s expectations of you. For example: You are doing a project as an intern, so people are expecting certain things from you at certain times. Manage this by writing up a project description. Unfortunately, many people set expectations for others that are very hard to meet. So, expectation management is really a way of helping you be more successful at work. The best part of expectation management is that you are in control of your own success.

The Project

Overview

Every intern develops a project that satisfies the following criteria:

- Is useful to the mentor and their organization
- Results in a polished and approved deliverable
- Takes about half of the intern’s time
- Lasts for a minimum of one month, preferably longer
- Is something the intern is interested in
- Is academically rich
- Results in visuals of its various drafts that are reviewed by the intern and mentor. This can be screen shots of documents with editing marks or shots of different versions of a design or video. It can be pictures of sketches, or before and after shots, etc.
- Is presented to mentors, or if possible, mentor’s bosses, in its finished form

A word of advice to interns: keep projects simple and small. Often times, projects can take more time than we anticipate. It is easy to underestimate the amount of time it takes to test, proof, polish, and edit a project or presentation, particularly when working only two afternoons a week. Be realistic about time constraints.

Interns

Keep it simple and work with your mentor to design a project that is fun for you and helps the organization. This will be something you are held responsible for and trusted to work on. Your challenge will be to motivate yourself, usually with no friends, teachers, or parents to hassle you. This is both good, and as you may find, difficult. Above all, talk with your mentor and keep asking questions as they arise.

School Assignments

Assignment Overview and Sequence

Here are general examples of the five main assignments you will be responsible for as an intern. Your teacher will assign and grade these, as well as give you details and specific deadlines.

The timing of these assignments is a very important and powerful tool for making internships a rich and meaningful experience. The following is the standard sequence of assignments. The first weeks are the most important for setting up the relationship and project.

- First two weeks: Project description and interview
- Throughout the term: ten (10) journal entries
- Final week: Presentation and resume entry

Journal Entries

Criteria

- Weekly journal entries. Emailed to Gloria Malkin, and your advisor.
- 100-word minimum. Describe what you did during the week in the context of what you are learning, seeing, realizing, and doing.

Sample Journal Entry

“This week I got yet another draft back from my mentor, and as usual it was totally covered in red marks for me to update. Will this ever end? Tune in next week. At least I am learning how long it takes to get a polished document done. On Thursday I sat in on two presentations by competing companies pitching to my mentor. After the first company left the room my mentor commented that they were all smoke and mirrors with an apparently secret profit model. I also thought they acted a bit like *****charlatans***** and was glad to have my instincts confirmed. The second company was more convincing, but their lead presenter kept *****beclouding***** the power point screen so we couldn’t see what he was trying to show us. Thus, a lesson learned for presentations.”

Mentor Interview

It is important to assign the mentor interview within the first two weeks of an internship. This facilitates interns and mentors getting to know one another.

Mentor Interview Criteria

- In person interview with your mentor during the first weeks of the internship.
- Word-processed with questions and answers, printed or via email.
- 200-word minimum
- Suggested questions
 - What is your full name (confirm spelling)?
 - What is your job title? Describe briefly what you do.
 - What kind of work does a typical day entail for you?
 - What skills and specific tools (like computers) do you use the most?
 - What does the future hold for your job or career track?
 - How does one prepare for your job and what are the requirements?
 - What do you like most and least about your job?
 - What was high school like for you?
 - What kind of post-high school education/training or life experience do you have?
 - What kind of jobs did you have prior to this one?
 - What kind of education would you look for if you were hiring someone for your position?
 - What's the craziest thing that ever happened to you at work?
 - Do you have any resources (articles, other people) you could direct me towards that you think would help me understand the environment of my internship better?
 - Do you have any questions for me about HTH-LA, the internship program, or anything else?

Project Description and Timeline

The project description should be assigned within the first two weeks of an internship. When assigned early in the internship the project description has been found to act as a tool that helps ensure that both the mentor and the intern have a rich and meaningful goal to work towards.

Project Description Criteria

Each student must turn in a project description and timeline. If multiple interns are working on the same project, they will still have different roles and responsibilities and need to explain these in the project description. Students on the same project can share the same timeline, goals and justifications.

Sections:

- **Background:** A short summary of what the organization you are interning for does.
- **Opportunity:** Explain how this project came about, why you are doing it, and how it will help you and your mentor.

- **Goal**: Describe the overall goal of this project in terms of what the deliverable will be or accomplish.
- **Description of Deliverable**: Describe in detail the desired outcome of this project. This is a chance to practice “expectation management”. Include any specifications, target audiences, requirements, etc.
- **Timeline**: Meet with your mentor and schedule three meetings over your internship to review and discuss the progress of your project. Make three distinct meeting times including location. These meetings should take place away from desks in a quiet room or setting.
- **Schedule**:
 - Set a date to discuss a rough draft of your project for initial review and guidance. Remember to take a photo for your later presentation.
 - Set a date to discuss a more finished deliverable. Take a photo.
 - Set a date to discuss your final draft at least a week before the end of your internship to give you time to work on the presentation. Remember to take a photo for presenting.

Project Presentation

The presentation should come at the end of an internship and usually becomes the student’s Presentation of Learning (POL). Interns are encouraged to present to their organization as well, hopefully with their mentor’s boss in attendance or other personnel that can bring additional substance to the event.

Interns

At the end of the Semester, you will present your internship experience to the community. Your teacher will work with you on the details. You will present verbally, as a POL, at an open house, staff meeting, or other such event.

Information to include:

- What you learned
- What your main function was at your internship
- What your company and department do
- Who your mentor was
- Project description
- Pictures of your project’s process and final deliverable

Updated Resume

Add your internship experience to your resume. Proof read your material and post it to your Digital Portfolio (DP). You may also wish to put your presentation material on your DP if it is digital, and then use your DP as your presentation.

Performance Review Criteria

Overview

The rubric below was designed for mentors in reviewing the performance of interns. The mentor review will be used by teachers as a factor in the intern's grade.

Rubric by Crystal D. Nielsen, May 2003, an intern in Advanced San Diego State Universities Educational Technology Masters Program. Adapted from a collaborative work skills rubric retrieved from Rubistar.com, recommendations from the 1991 Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) report, and the High Tech High Habits of Mind. Tested and modified with data received from interviews with mentors, teachers, students and administrators at HTH-LA.

Interns

Read this at the beginning of your internship so you know how you will be assessed.

Category	Exceptional	Meets Expectations	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Project Design and Completion	Actively discusses, defines, and designs project with mentor, showing mentor several drafts for review, and successfully completes project.	Discusses, defines, and designs project with mentor, showing mentor one draft for review, and successfully completes project.	After prompting, discusses, defines, and designs project with mentor, showing one draft for review, but final project lacks a desired element.	After initial discussion of project with mentor, fails to show mentor drafts for review and project does not meet expectations.
Mentor-Intern Communication	Talks with mentor about ideas and problems. Asks questions and actively listens.	Usually talks with mentor about ideas or problems. Often asks questions and actively listens.	Sometimes talks with mentor about ideas or problems. Reluctant to ask questions or listen.	Rarely talks with mentor about ideas or problems. Prone to mistakes due to not understanding.
Attention to School Rules	Works 8 or more hours each week. Always notifies mentor (and HTH-LA) about absences or lateness.	Works at least 8 hours each week. Always notifies mentor (and HTH-LA) about absences or lateness.	Usually works at least 8 hours each week. Fails to notify mentor (and HTH-LA) about one absence or lateness.	Usually works at least 8 hours each week. Fails to notify mentor (and HTH-LA) about two or more absences or lateness.
Professionalism	Always dresses appropriately, avoids distractive behavior, and avoids excessive personal use of client equipment.	Usually dresses appropriately, avoids distractive behavior, and avoids excessive personal use of client equipment.	Tends to dress inappropriately, distract others, and/or excessively use client equipment for personal reasons.	Often dresses inappropriately, distracts others, and/or excessively uses client equipment for personal reasons.
Time Management	Routinely uses time well. Limited procrastination.	Usually uses time well, but may have procrastinated on one or two things.	Tends to procrastinate, but usually meets deadlines.	Rarely meets deadlines; inadequate time management skills.
Quality of Work	Provides work of the highest quality that meets or exceeds mentor expectations. Work is error- and typo-free.	Provides high-quality work that generally meets mentor expectations. Work is error- and typo-free.	Provides good-quality work that generally meets mentor expectations and may have some errors or typos.	Provides poor-quality work that fails to meet mentor expectations and was not checked for errors or typos.
Ethics/Integrity	Always can be trusted to choose an ethical course of action. Admits any mistakes as soon as possible.	Most of the time can be trusted to choose an ethical course of action. Admits mistakes fairly quickly.	Much of the time can be trusted to choose an ethical course of action. Somewhat slow to admit mistakes.	Cannot be trusted to choose an ethical course of action. Does not admit mistakes, or blames others.

Critical Thinking Skills	Uses critical thinking skills to routinely provide useful ideas.	Usually uses critical thinking skills to provide useful ideas.	Sometimes uses critical thinking skills to provide useful ideas.	Rarely uses critical thinking skills or provides useful ideas.
Preparedness	Brings needed materials to the internship and is always ready to work.	Almost always brings needed materials to the internship and is ready to work.	Almost always brings needed materials but sometimes needs to settle down and get to work.	Often forgets needed materials or is rarely ready to get to work.
Selection of Tools/Technology	Always chooses the right tools, equipment, or procedures that will effectively help complete the task.	Usually chooses tools, equipment, or procedures that will effectively help complete the task.	Sometimes chooses tools, equipment, or procedures that will effectively help complete the task.	Must be regularly reminded which tools, equipment, or procedures will effectively help complete the task.
Problem-solving	Actively looks for and suggests solutions to problems.	Refines solutions suggested by others.	Does not suggest or refine solutions, but is willing to try others' ideas.	Does not try to solve problems or help others solve problems.
Attitude	Always supportive of project and organization, especially during tough times.	Usually supportive of project and organization, especially during tough times.	Somewhat supportive of project and organization, especially during tough times.	Generally unsupportive of project and organization, especially during tough times.
Focus on the Task	Consistently stays focused on the task and what needs to be done. Very self-directed.	Most of the time focuses on the task and what needs to be done. Mentor can count on this person.	Some of the time focuses on the task and what needs to be done. Mentor must sometimes remind this person to be on -task.	Rarely focuses on the task and what needs to be done. Lets others do the work.
Working with Others	Consistently listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others. Works well with everyone.	Usually listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others. Works well with most others.	Often listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others. Tries to work well with most.	Rarely listens to, shares with, or supports the efforts of others. Does not attempt to work well with others.