

# Employer Toolkit



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A practical tool for implementing work-based learning,  
structured mentorship and ensuring productivity

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Product of



Career  
Marketplace

[tri-c.edu/careerservices](https://tri-c.edu/careerservices)

# Career Marketplace



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The Career Marketplace proactively works to connect you with Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C®) students and recent graduates. This Employer Toolkit includes flexible resources that can be used together or individually to create meaningful, structured experiences for both employers and emerging talent.

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# BEST PRACTICES FOR STUDENT EMPLOYMENT



1. **Clarify role and expectations.**
2. **Compensate fairly.** Employers should not assume that a college will provide academic credit in place of wages. Compensation is the employer's responsibility, and **paid internships are strongly recommended**. While unpaid internships may be accepted in platforms like Handshake, they are discouraged and must comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

If an internship must be unpaid, employers should offset costs and add value through benefits such as transportation support, stipends, meals, professional development, mentorship, flexible scheduling, and a strong reference upon completion.

3. **Establish clear learning outcomes for the experience**, no matter the length.
4. **Schedule regular check-ins to review progress.**
5. **Offer constructive feedback.**
6. **Schedule time to close the experience intentionally.**

# CAREER READINESS

ACCareer readiness of college graduates is critical in higher education, the labor market, and the public arena.

In accordance with its mission to lead the community focused on the employment of the new college graduate, the **National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)** has developed a definition and identified competencies associated with career readiness.

The definition and competencies help close the gap between higher education and the world of work. They lay the foundation for preparing college students for successful entry into the workforce.

**Please consider including these in your learning outcomes for the work-based learning experience.**



## **DEFINITION:**

Career readiness is a foundation from which to demonstrate requisite core competencies that broadly prepare the college-educated for success in the workplace and lifelong career management.

## COMPETENCIES

**Career & Self Development:** Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.

**Communication:** Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.

**Critical Thinking:** Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.

**Equity and Inclusion:** Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different cultures and backgrounds. Engage in anti-oppressive practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism and inequity.

**Leadership:** Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

**Professionalism:** Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.

**Teamwork:** Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

**Technology:** Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

# SAMPLE POSITION DESCRIPTION

## POSITION DETAILS

**Position Title:**

**Department:**

**Supervisor Name and Role:**

## POSITION SUMMARY

Overview of position (Tip: Consider what will attract a candidate)

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Clearly defined areas of responsibility (e.g., projects, tasks)

## QUALIFICATIONS

Education, experience, GPA, and areas of relevant study

## REQUIRED SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of specific skills (e.g., technical, language) and other transferable skills (e.g., project management, flexibility and work ethic)

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

What will the student be able to accomplish as a result of this internship? (Tip: Use Career Readiness Competencies)

## SCHEDULE AND LOCATION

- Days, times, and hours per week
- Location (in person, hybrid, or remote)
- Transportation or license requirements (if applicable)

## COMPENSATION

Hourly Rate: \$15 to \$20 per hour (or at least minimum wage)

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Resume • Cover Letter • Writing Samples (if applicable)

## HOW TO APPLY

Website or email address

# SUPERVISOR TIMELINE AND GUIDELINES

## DAY 1: Orientation

Provide a comprehensive introduction to the workplace and expectations:

- **Office Culture:** Dress code, mobile device use, social media guidelines, department policies, work hours, parking, and events
  - **Organizational Overview:** Staff roles and reporting structure
  - **Workspace Tour:** Work area, restrooms, breakrooms, emergency exits, and safety resources
  - **Technology Setup:** Required tools, system access, and basic training
  - **Role Expectations:** Duties, responsibilities, goals, tasks, and performance standards
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## WEEK 1: Onboarding and Expectations

Set the foundation for a successful experience:

- Establish **weekly tasks** and clear deadlines
  - Arrange a **team/organization meet-and-greet**
  - Assign a **semester-long or long-term project** with defined milestones and deliverables
  - Collaborate with the employee to define **learning objectives** and incorporate them into the Work Planning Sheet
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## WEEKS 7–8: Midterm or Midyear Evaluation

Conduct a structured progress review:

- Evaluate performance based on **weekly tasks** and **long-term projects**
  - Provide feedback on:
    - Quality of work
    - Progress toward goals
    - Interpersonal and professional skill development
  - Reference established **learning outcomes**
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## WEEK 16: Final Evaluation

Assess overall performance and growth:

- Review outcomes of **weekly tasks** and the **completed project**
- Provide comprehensive feedback on:
  - Work quality and achievements
  - Skill development and professional growth
- Reflect on progress related to **learning outcomes**

# WORK PLANNING SHEET

**Employee Name:**

**Date:**

Weekly Tasks	Deadlines

Semester or Long-Term Project	Deadlines

**Employee Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Supervisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

# FOUR TIPS FOR PROVIDING EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

One of the most important things a manager can do is give meaningful, thoughtful feedback. It's not just a routine task — it's a key part of helping people grow. When feedback is clear and constructive, it becomes a powerful tool for improvement and shows employees that their development matters. As George Bernard Shaw once said, **“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”**



## 1. Focus on behavior, not the person

Describe what the person did rather than labeling who they are. Centering feedback on observable actions keeps the conversation constructive and grounded in something that can be changed. For example, say “I noticed you spoke for a few minutes” instead of “You’re a loudmouth.” Feedback about behavior is more specific, less personal, and easier to act on.

## 2. Focus on observations, not interpretations

Stick to what you can directly see or hear rather than drawing conclusions. Observations are objective and reduce the risk of misunderstanding. For instance, “I noticed you looked down while answering the question” is more accurate and helpful than “You seemed sad while answering.”

## 3. Focus on description, not judgment

State what happened without assigning value or labels like good, bad, right, or wrong. Judgments reflect personal opinions, while descriptions keep feedback neutral and clear. This makes it easier for the recipient to understand and consider your input without feeling criticized.

## 4. Focus on the recipient’s growth, not your own release

Before offering feedback, ask yourself whether it will genuinely help the other person. Effective feedback is given to support their development — not simply to express your own thoughts or relieve your urge to comment.

# MIDYEAR, SEMESTER, OR ANNUAL REVIEW

**Employee Instructions:** Complete the Weekly Tasks and Semester or Long-Term Project fields based on the Work Planning Sheet. Complete the Evaluation and Feedback form (Student Self-Evaluation section) by checking off the appropriate box for each career competency. Sign the form after reviewing it with your supervisor.

**Supervisor Instructions:** Complete the Results and Comments sections for the Weekly Tasks and Semester or Long-Term Project. Complete the Evaluation and Feedback form (Supervisor Evaluation section) by checking off the appropriate box for each career competency and adding any relevant comments. Sign the form after reviewing with your employee.

Weekly Tasks	Results	Comments

Semester or Long-Term Project	Results	Comments

**Employee Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Supervisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK CHART

Student Self-Evaluation	Student Self-Evaluation			Supervisor Evaluation	Supervisor Evaluation			Comments
	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Needs Improvement		Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Needs Improvement	
Career and Self-Development				Career and Self-Development				
Communication				Communication				
Critical Thinking				Critical Thinking				
Equity and Inclusion				Equity and Inclusion				
Leadership				Leadership				
Professionalism				Professionalism				
Teamwork				Teamwork				
Technology				Technology				

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# JOB SHADOWING GUIDE

## Benefits of a Job Shadowing Experience

A well-designed job shadowing program can be a powerful tool for both your organization and participating students. It offers the opportunity to:

- Strengthen your overall recruitment strategy by engaging talent early
  - Elevate your employer brand and increase visibility among students
  - Build meaningful connections and develop a future talent pipeline
  - Provide students with real-world exposure to your industry and career pathways
  - Inspire and inform students as they explore potential career options
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## Planning for a Successful Job Shadowing Experience

Thoughtful planning ensures a smooth, impactful experience for both your team and your student participants. Consider the following best practices:

- **Define clear goals** for what you want students to learn and experience
  - **Secure leadership support** and encourage employee participation
  - **Establish logistics**, including a schedule, a format, and duration
  - **Identify engaged employees** to host informational conversations or mentor students
  - **Create an internal plan** to guide execution and communication
  - **Collaborate with partners**, such as career coaches or faculty, to align expectations
  - **Share a detailed agenda** with students in advance to set clear expectations
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## What a Comprehensive Shadowing Experience Can Include

An impactful job shadowing experience blends structure with meaningful interaction. Consider incorporating:

- A **welcome session** with leadership to set the tone
- An **overview of your organization**, including mission, vision, values, and offerings
- A **guided workplace tour**
- **Lunch or informal conversations** with employees or alumni
- **Networking opportunities** across teams and departments
- **Informational interviews** with employees in various roles
- A **hands-on activity or sample work assignment** (optional)
- A session with **Human Resources** to explain hiring practices and career pathways
- A **closing Q&A and reflection session** to reinforce learning

## SAMPLE JOB SHADOWING AGENDA

<b>8 a.m.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Welcome meeting</li><li>- Check-in instructions</li></ul>
<b>8:30 a.m.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Overview of the company's products and/or services</li><li>- Overview of the company's mission, vision, and values</li><li>- Tour (if in person)</li></ul>
<b>12:30 p.m.</b>	Lunch with employees and/or Tri-C alumni
<b>1:30 p.m.</b>	Networking with employees or informational interview
<b>2:30 p.m.</b>	Work assignment
<b>3:15 p.m.</b>	Meeting with HR representatives to discuss the hiring process
<b>3:30 p.m.</b>	Wrap-up with Q&A
<b>4 p.m.</b>	Evaluation

# REMOTE AND PROJECT-BASED (MICRO) INTERNSHIPS

## What Are These Internships?

**Remote internships** allow students to work from anywhere while gaining real-world experience.

**Project-based (micro) internships** are short-term, paid assignments that:

- Typically require **five to 40 total hours**
- Are completed over **one week to one month**
- Often include work like research, content creation, data entry, or social media support
- Are commonly **remote and flexible**

Both formats provide **practical, career-focused learning** while helping employers engage emerging talent in a low-risk way.

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## Benefits for Employers

- Access a **diverse, motivated talent pool**
  - Complete projects **efficiently and affordably**
  - Evaluate students' **communication, problem-solving, and reliability**
  - Build a **pipeline for future hires**
  - Create opportunities **on demand** with minimal long-term commitment
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## How To Set Up for Success

- **Outline clear goals, deliverables, timeline, and required tools**
  - **Ensure access to necessary technology and collaboration platforms** (e.g., shared files, video meetings)
  - **Establish deadlines and communication norms upfront**
  - **Designate a supervisor** to guide the student and answer questions
  - **Schedule check-ins and provide timely, constructive feedback**
  - **Offer a brief orientation** to your organization and team
  - **Pay students comparably to similar work** (commonly about \$15 to \$25/hour for project-based work)
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## Key Considerations

- Build in **regular feedback opportunities**
  - Plan for **data access and privacy needs**
  - Partner with **Career Marketplace staff** for guidance and support
  - Think about how the experience helps students **learn and grow**, not just complete tasks
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Remote and project-based internships offer a **flexible, low-risk way** to engage community college students, helping you meet business needs while developing the next generation of talent.

## 15 TIPS FOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS (OR NEW EMPLOYEES)

1. **Identify a supervisor** — someone who is interested in the individual's growth and success
2. **Provide meaningful work assignments**
3. **Hold orientation** for interns or new employees
4. **Invite college staff and faculty** to visit interns on-site
5. **Offer scholarships**
6. **Provide flex-time and/or other benefits** that would make this experience attractive
7. **Offer a handbook and/or instructional videos**
8. **Provide housing and relocation assistance**
9. **Encourage team involvement**
10. **Bring in speakers from your company's executive ranks**
11. **Hold panels with employees who were hired as new grads**
12. **Offer ongoing training** and encourage out-of-office learning
13. **Showcase interns' or new employees' work** through presentations and expos
14. **Conduct focus groups and surveys** to generate feedback with interns and co-workers for continuous work improvement
15. **Conduct exit interviews**

Courtesy of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)