

OFFICE LIFE

# 5 tips for how to be a great mentor to your summer intern

Erica Lamberg June 13, 2019

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Having a summer intern is a wonderful opportunity to show the ropes to an aspiring student who is looking to learn from you. Not only are they gaining hands-on experience, earning school credit, and hopefully a stipend for their work, interns are excited to help you. Below are some expert suggestions on how to be a super-star mentor to your summer intern.

## Find out the goals of your intern

The core of any successful mentor/mentee relationship is rooted in learning opportunities and the intern's goals aligning with business needs. "Therefore it's vital for people managing summer interns to first find out what the intern is looking to get out of their experience with the company," says Kris Hughes, who leads social media initiatives at software company [ProjectManager.com](#). "Many internships are doomed to failure before they ever start because there isn't alignment between what the intern seeks from the experience the business need of the mentor who will be mentoring them."

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### Share clear expectations

Start off the relationship with your summer intern on the right foot by giving them a quick orientation of the program, what is required of them, and what they can expect going forward, says Chris Chancey, career expert, professional recruiter, and the owner of [Amplio Recruiting](#). "This initial structure is incredibly helpful for someone who has minimal or no experience with the workplace."

### Encourage them to share their ideas

It is not enough to let your intern sit in meetings; during those meetings, whether it is with a client or with team members, call on them and ask their thoughts on the subject of discussion. "Ask them to contribute ideas to solve certain problems and be ready to assist them to convey their message better whenever necessary," Chancey says.

### Entrust them with a special project

Find a project that can be re-booted with the help of an eager intern. "Every company has some research project or analysis that keeps getting back-burnered," states [Aileen Gallagher](#), associate professor, Magazine, News and Digital Journalism at Syracuse University's S. I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. "Giving an intern ownership of something long-term and specific will give them an incredible learning opportunity and you a tangible outcome. "

### Strive to be someone your intern can learn from

Be both a leader and a role model to your interns. "Take some time out to answer questions and teach the skills that are in demand in the market place," says Martin Luenendonk, co-founder & CEO of [Cleverism](#), an online job portal He advises to teach the things you wish your mentor would have taught you at that stage of your life and provide opportunities for both formal and informal growth.

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“Help them understand the skills that most of us might take for granted like giving a presentation, resume writing, delegation work, etc.” continues Luenendonk. “Make sure you provide them a great learning experience that is crucial for their careers.”

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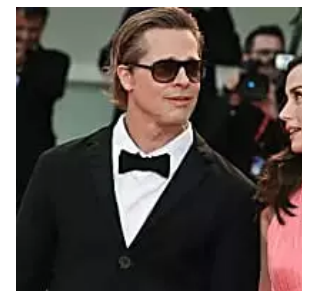
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