



# EDUCATORS' GUIDE FOR INTERNSHIP PLANNING

**AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER/PROGRAM**

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TTY: VA Relay Center: 711 or 800.828.1120. EO Officer [info@vcwpiedmont.com](mailto:info@vcwpiedmont.com) 434-290-0026  
943 Glenwood Station Lane • Ste. 102, 103 • Charlottesville • VA • 22901



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This guide was developed in support of educators like you as you guide young scholars into future career pathways. The workforce landscape is changing, and our students must have the necessary tools to be successful no matter their career path.

Research has proven internships are effective in helping individuals gain experience and insight into perspective careers. This guide lives at the intersection of a committed partnership between a **GO Virginia** grant, **Virginia Career Works - Piedmont Region**, employers, educators, and students.

We encourage you to adapt and adjust this guide to fit the needs of you and your students. Additionally, we invite you and your students to take advantage of our other tools available on our [website](#) to support their career goals as they begin to enter the workforce.



## PIEDMONT REGION



# WHAT ARE INTERNSHIPS?

The **National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)** defines internships as:

*“a form of **experiential learning** that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with **practical application** and **skills development** in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable **applied experience** and make connections in professional fields they are considering for **career paths**; and give employers the opportunity to **guide and evaluate talent**.”*

During this learning experience, the **intern's development and career interests** are supported through intentional goal setting.

# EXPLAINING BENEFITS OF INTERNSHIP TO STUDENT

Employers	Students
Create a pipeline of trained talent for future recruitment.	Learn about different career paths of interest.
Build a network with schools and career centers for future employee references.	Invaluable networking opportunities that support future employment.
Nurture the local workforce and community to develop next generation of skilled workers in field.	Gain valuable experience and exposure to specific fields.
Assess and develop talent for long-term retention.	Develop skills necessary for success in careers.
Benefit from fresh perspectives and new ideas.	Earn income/credit while pursuing career goals.

# VCW - PIEDMONT'S EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

**VCW - Piedmont** has identified core elements that support student success in experiential learning. The “Five E’s” framework aligns with our region’s workforce needs and draws from both the Kolb Learning Cycle and 4-H’s Experiential Learning Model. At this intersection lies the foundation for helping students in Virginia’s Piedmont Region explore and develop meaningful career paths.



# LIFE SKILLS MODEL

## Targeting Life Skills Model

The Targeting Life Skills Model developed by Patricia Hendricks (1998) of the Iowa 4-H supports positive growth and development of youth. VCW-Piedmont supports utilizing this model to influence holistic career pathway building. The soft skills are valuable to success in an internship. Employers look for these skill sets when assessing candidates.



# UNDERSTAND THE INTERNSHIP PROCESS

## Know what to expect

Having a thoughtful hiring process will help interns not only gain skills for future job processes, but also learn what to expect when starting their career journey.



## Pre-Assessment

- Career Interests Survey
- Resume and/or Cover Letter
- Attending Career Fairs
- In-Person or Virtual Interview
- Work Sample (if applicable)



## Experience (During)

- Orientation
- Work on Projects
- Apply Knowledge to Work
- Ongoing Feedback and Check-ins



## Post-Assessment

- Evaluation with Employer/Supervisor
- Reflection with School
- Career Journey Next Steps

# CONNECT SCHOLAR TO SKILLS

## Connect tasks and competencies to workforce application

Students engage with a variety of tasks and competencies in the classroom. Helping students understand how these items will be applicable in the workforce is essential. Some examples of classroom competencies are crafting a professional email or reading measurements on a ruler or learning how to monitor blood pressure. Before students engage in an internship, it is important to identify the necessary basic skills they may need to be successful.



# PREPARE

## INTERNS

### Prepare Your Students for Internship Process

Obtaining an internship is a process similar to obtaining a job. Students should be prepared to complete an application, prepare for interviews, provide identification, submit transcripts, and/or obtain references from teachers or mentors.

Tasks interns may be asked to prepare:	Things interns should receive upon hire:
Fill out an application.	Technology
Write a resume and/or a cover letter.	ID/Badges
Submit transcripts or waivers.	Parking
Get a physical examination (if applicable).	Tour of workspace
Research the industry.	Materials and equipment needed
Build a professional online presence.	HR paperwork
Clarify goals & expectations	Safety & emergency protocols
Ask for references from a teacher or mentor	Other company-related processes

# SUPPORT INTERNS

## Check In and Check Out

As we've learned in youth development, students want to feel supported and safe. Supporting students during their internship experiences will blossom confidence in both personal and professional growth.

**Ask students about projects they've worked on?**

**Allow students to share their successes and challenges**



**Review goals and progress set prior to the internship**

**Provide feedback to maximize internship experience**

**Inquire if students have needs to support their success**

**Invite students to share their experiences with prospective interns**

# REFLECT ON INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

## Reflect on the Experience

Help your students journal on their experience. Identifying the successes and challenges of the internship will support students' career exploration journey. This exercise puts into perspective their experience and can ignite future opportunities.

## Potential Questions to consider in reflection:

- Did you meet your goals you set prior to the internship? Why or why not?
- What were some successful moments during your internship?
- Were you challenged during your internship?
- Did this opportunity give you enough insight to this potential career option?
- What would you do differently next time?
- What are the next steps you will take in pursuing career interests?
  - Take more classes in career interest field
  - Enroll in a training program
  - Apply for another internship or entry level position
  - Explore other opportunities

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## **Virginia Career Works - Piedmont Career Pathways Guide**

- [www.vcwpiedmont.com/employers/career-pathways-guide/](http://www.vcwpiedmont.com/employers/career-pathways-guide/)

## **Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (VTOP) Employers Resource**

- [www.virginiatop.org/employers](http://www.virginiatop.org/employers)

## **National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Position Statement: US Internships**

- [www.naceweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships/](http://www.naceweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships/)

## **US Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under the Fair Labor Standards Act**

- [www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/71-flsa-internships](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/71-flsa-internships)

## **Virginia Department of Education Career and Technical Education High-Quality Work-Based Learning Guide, Revised April 2022**

- <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/k-12-standards-instruction/career-and-technical-education-cte/hqwbl>

## **4-H Impact: Targeting Life Skills Model**

- <https://extension.purdue.edu/4-H/about/impact-targeting-life-skills.html>



# APPENDICES

## SAMPLE MATERIALS

# APPENDIX I

## CAREER INTEREST SURVEY

### Career Clusters Interest Survey

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Circle the items in each box that best describe you. You may make as many or as few circles in each box as you choose. Add up the number of circles in each box. Look to see which three boxes have the highest numbers. Find the corresponding Career Clusters on the pages immediately following this survey to see which Career Clusters you may want to explore.

<b>BOX 1</b>	<b>Activities that describe what I like to do:</b>	<b>Personal qualities that describe me:</b>	<b>School subjects that I like:</b>	<b>Total number circled in Box 1</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn how things grow and stay alive.</li> <li>2. Make the best use of the earth's natural resources.</li> <li>3. Hunt and/or fish.</li> <li>4. Protect the environment.</li> <li>5. Be outdoors in all kinds of weather.</li> <li>6. Plan, budget, and keep records.</li> <li>7. Operate machines and keep them in good repair.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Self-reliant</li> <li>2. Nature lover</li> <li>3. Physically active</li> <li>4. Planner</li> <li>5. Creative problem solver</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Math</li> <li>2. Life Sciences</li> <li>3. Earth Sciences</li> <li>4. Chemistry</li> <li>5. Agriculture</li> </ol>	<input style="width: 40px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>

<b>BOX 2</b>	<b>Activities that describe what I like to do:</b>	<b>Personal qualities that describe me:</b>	<b>School subjects that I like:</b>	<b>Total number circled in Box 2</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read and follow blueprints and/or instructions.</li> <li>2. Picture in my mind what a finished product looks like.</li> <li>3. Work with my hands.</li> <li>4. Perform work that requires precise results.</li> <li>5. Solve technical problems.</li> <li>6. Visit and learn from beautiful, historic, or interesting buildings.</li> <li>7. Follow logical, step-by-step procedures.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Curious</li> <li>2. Good at following directions</li> <li>3. Pay attention to detail</li> <li>4. Good at visualizing possibilities</li> <li>5. Patient and persistent</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Math</li> <li>2. Drafting</li> <li>3. Physical Sciences</li> <li>4. Construction Trades</li> <li>5. Electrical Trades/Heat, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration/Technology Education</li> </ol>	<input style="width: 40px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>

<b>BOX 3</b>	<b>Activities that describe what I like to do:</b>	<b>Personal qualities that describe me:</b>	<b>School subjects that I like:</b>	<b>Total number circled in Box 3</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use my imagination to communicate new information to others.</li> <li>2. Perform in front of others.</li> <li>3. Read and write.</li> <li>4. Play a musical instrument.</li> <li>5. Perform creative, artistic activities.</li> <li>6. Use video and recording technology.</li> <li>7. Design brochures and posters.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creative and imaginative</li> <li>2. Good communicator/good vocabulary</li> <li>3. Curious about new technology</li> <li>4. Relate well to feelings and thoughts of others</li> <li>5. Determined/tenacious</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Art/Graphic design</li> <li>2. Music</li> <li>3. Speech and Drama</li> <li>4. Journalism/Literature</li> <li>5. Audiovisual Technologies</li> </ol>	<input style="width: 40px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>

Source: Adapted from the Guidance Division Survey, Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (2005)

**Note:** This survey does not make any claims of statistical reliability and has not been normed. It is intended for use as a guidance tool to generate discussion regarding careers and is valid for that purpose.

# APPENDIX II

## SAMPLE APPLICATION

### Intern Candidate Application Template

APPLICATION INFORMATION		
LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	M.I.
DATE	STREET	APT#
CITY	STATE	ZIP
PHONE	EMAIL ADDRESS	
DATE AVAILABLE	SOCIAL SECURITY NO.	DESIRED SALARY
POSITION APPLIED FOR		
ARE YOU A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
IF NO, ARE YOU AUTHORIZED TO WORK IN THE U.S.? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
HAVE YOU EVER WORKED FOR THIS COMPANY? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO IF SO, WHEN? _____		
HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A FELONY? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO IF YES, EXPLAIN: _____		
EDUCATION		
HIGH SCHOOL	ADDRESS	
FROM	TO	GRADUATED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO DEGREE
COLLEGE	ADDRESS	
FROM	TO	GRADUATED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO DEGREE
OTHER	ADDRESS	
FROM	TO	GRADUATED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO DEGREE
REFERENCES		
PLEASE LIST THREE PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES.		
FULL NAME	RELATIONSHIP	
COMPANY	ADDRESS	
EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE	
FULL NAME	RELATIONSHIP	
COMPANY	ADDRESS	
EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE	
FULL NAME	RELATIONSHIP	
COMPANY	ADDRESS	
EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE	

# APPENDIX III

## RESUME TEMPLATE

### FIRST AND LAST NAME

City and State | Email | Telephone

**OBJECTIVE** | To get started right away, just click any placeholder text (such as this) and start typing to replace it with your own.

**SKILLS & ABILITIES** | Want to insert a picture from your files or add a shape, text box, or table? You got it! On the Insert tab of the ribbon, just click the option you need.

Find even more easy-to-use tools on the Insert tab, such as to add a hyperlink.

**EXPERIENCE** | **JOB TITLE COMPANY NAME**  
DATES FROM – TO

This is the place for a brief summary of your key responsibilities and most stellar accomplishments.

**EDUCATION** | **SCHOOL NAME, LOCATION**  
DEGREE

You might want to include your GPA here and a brief summary of relevant coursework, awards, and honors.

**VOLUNTEER** | You delivered that big presentation to rave reviews. Don't be shy about it now! This is the place to show how well you work and play with others.

**ACTIVITIES** | Are you president of your fraternity, head of the condo board, or a team lead for your favorite charity? You're a natural leader—tell it like it is!

# APPENDIX IV

## COVER LETTER TEMPLATE

**THOMAS BEASLEY** ENTRY-LEVEL RESUME

 (206) 555-1234  3665 McLaughlin Street, Seattle, WA 98039  your-name@email.com

[Today's Date]

[Hiring Manager's Name]

123 Company Address  
Company's City, State, Zip Code  
(xxx) xxx-xxxx

Dear [Mr./Ms./Mx.] [Hiring Manager's Last Name],

The first paragraph should contain a self-introduction. Write who you are, where your expertise lies, where you found the job posting (or who referred you), and why you want to apply.

The second paragraph should respond directly to the job description. Describe how your relevant experiences, skills, and abilities help you meet the company's needs. To make that easier, you can (and should) literally include words and phrases from the job description here.

- You can also include a bulleted list of your accomplishments
- Make sure you quantify (add numbers to) these bullet points
- A cover letter with numbers is 100% better than one without

To go the extra mile, research the company and try to find out what they are doing — and why— given the current state of their industry. Explain how you can fit into that framework, and help push the company forward and achieve any goals you suspect they have.

The final paragraph is the "call to action" portion of your cover letter. Inform the hiring manager that you'd love to get interviewed. Give them your contact information. Tell them you'll reach out again next week if you don't hear back. Thank them for their time.

Sincerely,

**Thomas Beasley**