

HOW TO HANDLE INTERNS ON YOUR NEW JOB

However, this does not affect expectations from the team of new interns and usually the person in charge is held accountable. It is also common policy in many companies that the person directly interacting with the interns play the hard guy, while superiors play the soft guy role. The situation, can become decidedly ugly or unmanageable, and can affect the personal life and mental well-being of the person in charge of guiding interns. On the bright side, being able to handle a team of interns effectively and create measurable output is viewed as high accomplishment and opens up opportunities in multiple directions. So, the art of handling interns is something to take seriously and it is helpful to be aware of the principles. **Be prepared for a culture shock** Usually, any fresh group of interns consists of people from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and most of them are keen to prove themselves and compete against each other. The situation can bring about unnecessary peer conflicts among interns that might extend to involve the person in charge, if caught unawares. One needs to be prepared to handle culture shocks and abstain from taking sides unconsciously, with those who exhibit acceptable cultures, or against those whose culture oppose one's own values. **Keep your balance** With interns, you cannot expect any prior knowledge of things and you have to assume that you need to tell them everything. It is extremely common in such a situation to cross the boundaries of providing guidance and start micromanaging the interns. Micromanagement always leads to loss of productivity and creativity and breeds resentment. The fact that an intern needs to be made aware of simple things does not mean one should run a regime of continuous checking upon each simple task. Balance is extremely important here and it is surprisingly easy to cross one's limits and become an object of hate. The result would be loss of personal relations as well as failure of project productivity, for which, ultimately, the person in charge of the interns would be held accountable. **Keep your distance** Familiarity breeds contempt, and many people in charge of interns fail to remember this adage in a bid to build personal relationships and yield productivity by being chummy. It rarely works. True, in management, an order should be placed as a request, but the request should not go to the extent of begging. It is a quite common syndrome in middle-aged employees to see a reflection of their own children in fresh interns. Trying to play the doting parent doesn't work either at home or at the workplace, when it comes to building skills, habits, and character. **Keep them busy** Young minds are naturally more inquisitive and more energetic. Another time-tested old adage, - an idle brain is a devil's workshop, - fits in here perfectly. So, plan ahead, prepare tasks for the team beforehand and allocate proper tasks to each intern according to their suitability. Do not overwork them, but also see to it that nobody has time to while away, and that there is always pending work on each intern's desk. A great amount of potential problems can be nipped in the bud provided each intern is purposefully and constructively engaged without any gap. Working with interns also provides tremendous opportunities to accomplish in project management and other opportunities to learn of the latest trends and skills of the younger generation. Handled properly, the job of overseeing interns on a project can catapult your career to the position of a reliable employee, and if handled improperly, the same job can mess up your career.

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