**AFTER THE MERGER: D-BART INDUSTRIES**

**Scenario E**

**Graduate Team Handout**

HR Director Wendy Wright has good reason to be concerned. When Ted Davis met with Erik Bartlund last week in San Francisco, Erik introduced him to several student interns. As expected, Erik talked up the intern program to Ted. Everyone knew that Erik loved the internship program; it was his pet project back when Bartlund Industries was a small company. When Ted returned to Portland, he told Wendy that he was so impressed by what he saw in San Francisco, he wants an intern program implemented throughout D-Bart divisions.

“It was amazing the work those kids were doing,” he said to Wendy. “If we could put interns to work throughout D-Bart, we could save a lot of money just in this fiscal year alone.”

Wendy reminded Ted that unpaid interns would come to D-Bart untrained, and because it was a learning experience for them, interns generally don’t save organizations money. But Ted didn’t see it that way, and he ignored Wendy’s concerns. “Get on it right away, Wendy,” he said. “I want to see interns throughout D-Bart by early summer.”

Wendy read all the paperwork on the San Francisco internship program and found it sadly incomplete. All the forms dated back to the early years of Bartlund. She found a few documents from universities outlining student learning objectives, academic advisors’ names and sign-offs from D-Bart at the end of some internships. But that was it. There were no specific guidelines for responsibilities, no articulated expectations and no evaluation methods for either the students or the process. There clearly was a lot of work to be done before Ted Davis shuttled in a new batch of students. “He doesn’t know what he’s getting into,” Wendy muttered to herself. “He just sees this as free labor!”

Wendy has called in your team of HR consultants to help her develop a policy for employing student interns at D-Bart. Your suggestions are due this afternoon. Your plan should address the following:

1. Recommendations for the development of an internship policy that can be used throughout D-Bart divisions.
2. The responsibilities of all participants, including universities, students and the organization.
3. Recommendations on how to implement the new policy.

**AFTER THE MERGER: D-BART INDUSTRIES DEBRIEF
Scenario E
Graduate Teams**

**PLEASE NOTE: This page and the pages that follow must not be given to the graduate teams. This information is for judging purposes only.**

Well-designed internships provide real-world experiential learning for students before graduation. Internships give students opportunities to practice skills learned in the classroom while experiencing the daily working environment in their chosen profession. Many universities award academic credit for the work students do as interns, and some include completion of an internship as a graduation requirement.

Students participating in well-designed internships benefit by gaining practical skills and reference-worthy work experience. Internships can sometimes lead to employment for students after graduation. Organizations benefit from the process by being able to “try out” future employees before making hiring decisions. But even when there is no new hire resulting from internships, an organization’s reputation in the community is enhanced by its demonstrated support of education.

There can be negatives to internships. The objective of an internship is student learning and *not* unpaid labor for the organization. In most cases, the time spent training and mentoring interns far outweighs the money saved by the unpaid labor interns provide. In his enthusiasm for “free” labor, Ted Davis is ignoring the reality of student internships.

1. **Recommendations for the development of an internship policy that can be used throughout D-Bart divisions**.

D-Bart must take the time to carefully establish internship policies that will serve the organization for the long term. D-Bart should invite representatives from the various divisions to help craft D-Bart’s internship policy and to determine the areas in the organization where internships would be beneficial. It is also important to ensure that the policy aligns with the organization’s mission and values. Consider the following when designing the policy:

* **Timing**: Determine the appropriate timing for internships. Will they be held in the summer months only or longer to provide a more well-rounded experience for students? What is the optimum time for D-Bart?
* **Budget**: Sponsoring internships will cost D-Bart money. It is not a cost-saving strategy, as Ted Davis may think. Those supporting implementation of internships throughout D-Bart should include cost projections in the planning process.
* **Projected employment and hiring forecasts**: Consider D-Bart’s hiring levels when establishing an intern policy. Is it expected that internships will lead to future employees?
* **Universities and students**: Determine the universities with which D-Bart will partner and establish criteria for selecting student interns.
1. **The responsibilities of all participants, including the universities, students and the organization.**

*Universities*

* Establish internship policies that outline exactly how the internship fits into students’ academic plans.
* Identify criteria for student eligibility and requirements for academic credit (if any) that can be earned through internship participation.
* Appoint academic advisors to work with students and the sponsoring organizations.
* Establish measurable learning objectives.
* Meet with representatives of the sponsoring organizations.
* Agree on a plan of activities and tasks for which students will be responsible, including their expected responsibility levels.
* Monitor the process.

*Students*

* Work with the university and the organization to agree on measurable learning goals.
* Maintain activity logs or journals noting progress made on learning goals.
* Report back on your experience to the university. Reporting may be done through written assignments, oral presentations or both as required by the university.
* Keep an open mind. Internships are “real work.” Don’t assume internships are future job offers.
* Provide feedback and evaluation of the process as requested by the university and the sponsoring organization.

*Organizations*

* Designate an employee to oversee the internship program.
* Work with students and universities to establish reasonable learning goals.
* Provide written agreements identifying the responsibilities and expectations of all parties involved—the organization, the university and the intern.
* Identify employees who will mentor and supervise interns and ensure that all involved are trained and understand their responsibilities.
* Provide orientation for interns.
* Define the work interns will do to meet their learning objectives.
* Provide challenging work that enables interns to use and improve the knowledge, skills and abilities learned in their education.
* Establish evaluation or performance appraisal checkpoints for interns and ensure interns are given specific feedback about their work.
* Determine how interns will be compensated. When internships are unpaid, organizations sometimes compensate interns with stipends, paid lunches, employee discounts, etc.
* Ensure compliance with the FLSA and applicable local wage and hour regulations.
* Evaluate the process and make adjustments as necessary.

**3. Recommendations on how to implement the new policy.**

Supervisors must be trained at all D-Bart divisions where student interns will be placed. D-Bart must recognize the extra work that is placed on employees who mentor and train interns, and mentors’ workload should be adjusted accordingly. Training must emphasize the extra work that is required for a successful internship; mentors must not assume interns are their personal “helpers.” If supervisors and employees who will act as mentors are included in the planning process, they are much more likely to support the program even though it may require additional work.

**References**

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