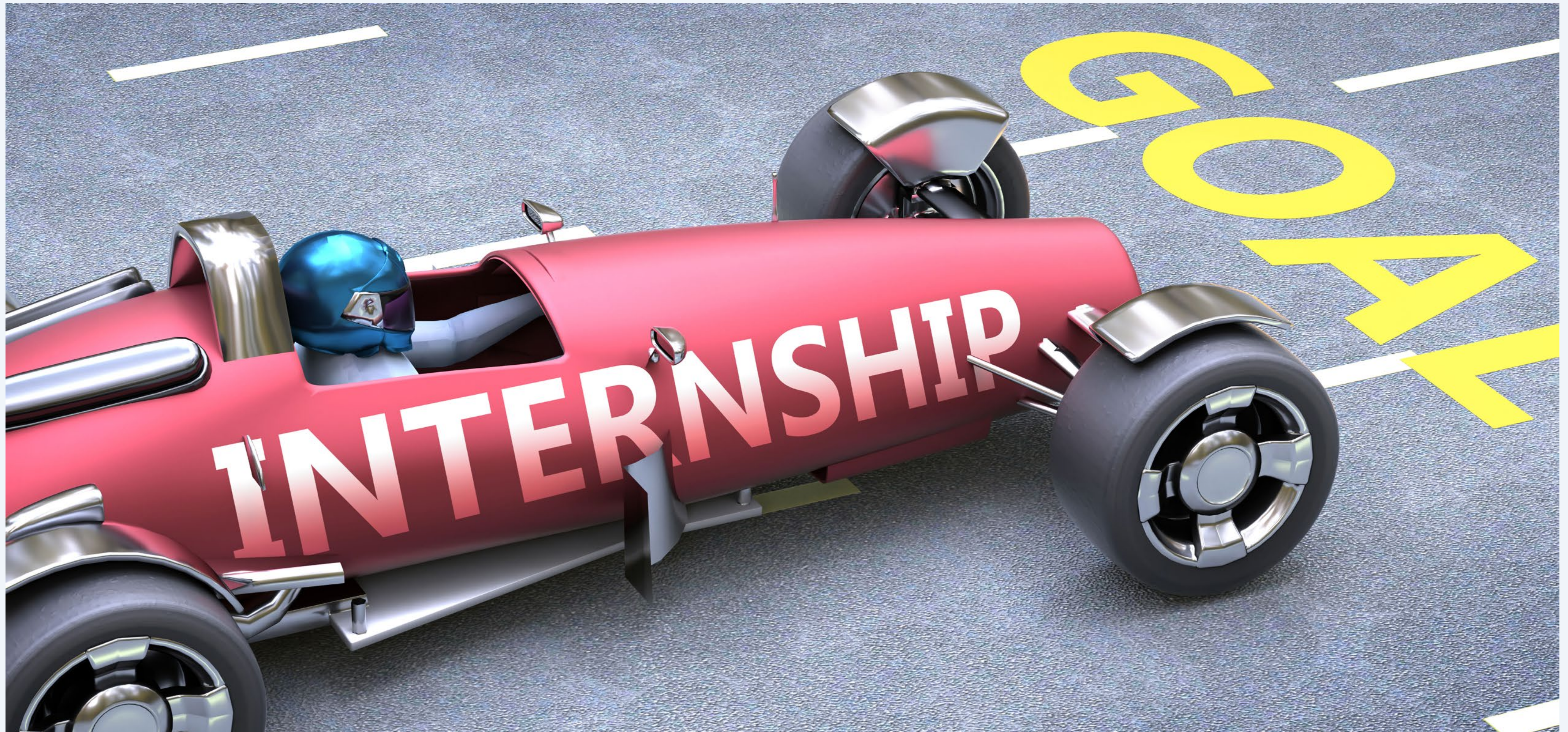


Student's Guide

for a Successful RIS Internship



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STUDENT'S GUIDE

for a Successful RIS Internship

21003 - RIS-Internship. RIS Internship programme:
broadening University-Business Cooperation

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Student's Guide

1. Introduction

In designing and developing their degree programmes, universities always strive to provide the most practical training possible. After the theoretical foundations have been taught, the yardstick for the usefulness of the education is clearly practical applicability. The goal is for students to leave their alma mater with knowledge they can apply.

To this end, universities are building an extensive network of contacts with companies willing to host students for internships. It is a great advantage for students to be able to apply what they have learned theoretically in the company. It is also common for students to write their final thesis in the same company where they did their internship.

The purpose of this guide is to provide mentors with an overview of the following topics:

1. What is an internship
2. Features of internship
3. Mentor's support
4. Policy of the EIT RawMaterials regarding the internship
5. Guide through the internship
6. T-shape
7. Features of the Student
8. Roles and responsibilities of the Student
9. Learning outcomes
10. Experimental learning
11. How to benefit the most from the programme?
12. How can the student choose the right company?
13. Intercultural issues
14. Steps to design the program
15. Internship request letter
16. Preparation for the interview
17. Performance Evaluation
18. Intercultural issues
19. Time management
20. 10 Concerns of Students – effective internship

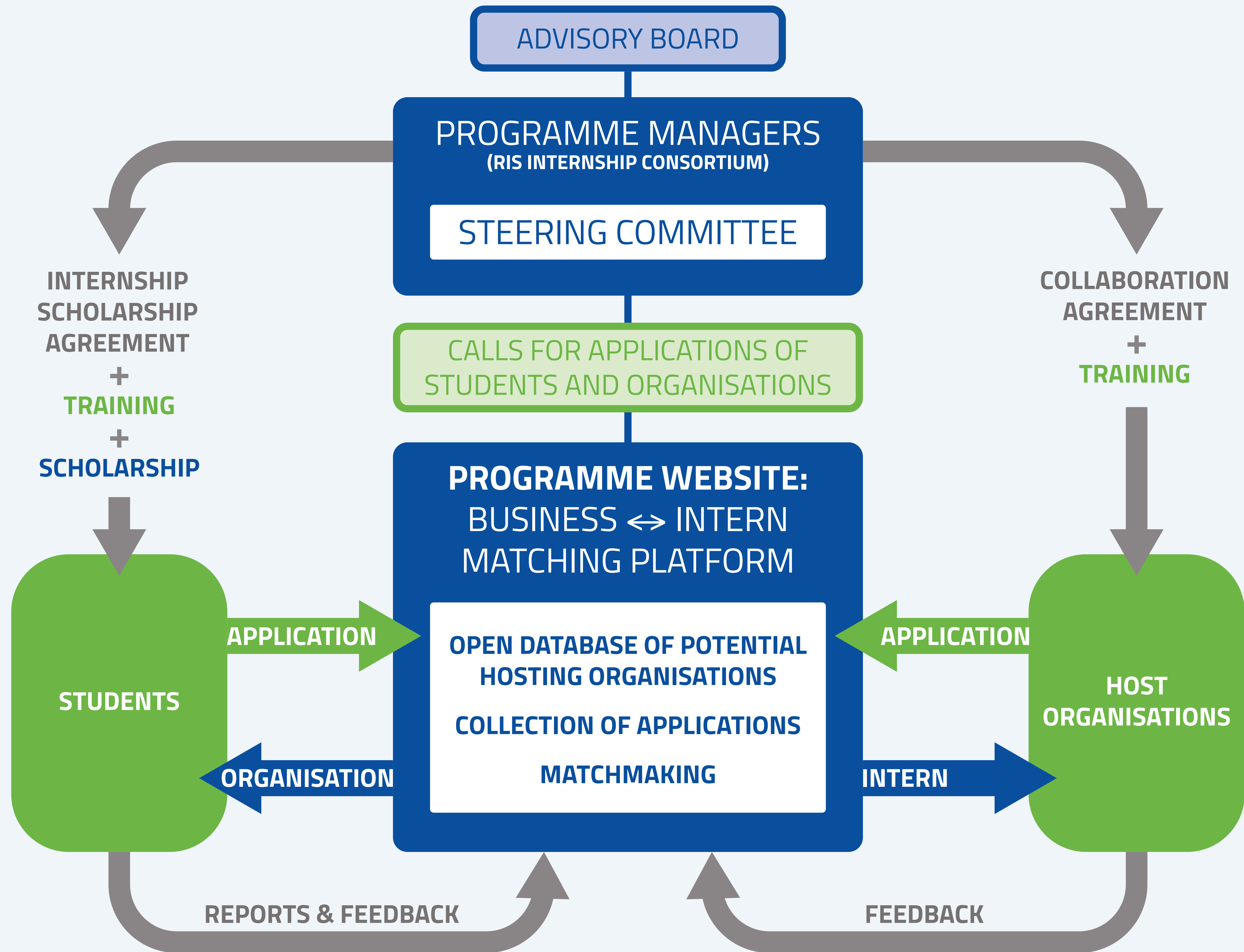
This guide provides instructions for interacting with mentor companies and successfully realising the internship. The functions, duties, and responsibilities of the student are described in detail. Moreover, the application process and the evaluation and feedback method are also discussed. At the end, the 10 concerns of student are defined as to how you can create effective intership.

The aim of this guide is to provide pre-internship training to interns prior to complete an efficient and successful internship. They usually have no or little experience with industrial practices, occupational health and safety, and environmental requirements. The guide will help to interns to prepare and to effectively participate in the internship by:

- preparing for achieving targeted intended learning outcomes,
- preparing for the acquisition of soft and social skills and competences during the internship,
- demonstrating expected standards of behaviour at the internship site,
- applying health and safety requirements in the workplace at the internship site,
- describing and follow the environmental and ethical standards,

- applying proposed solutions to resolve conflicts,
- dealing with cross-cultural differences during an internship abroad,
- applying appropriate time management during internship and preparation period,
- analysing reliable options for appropriate decision making.

This guide is written to help the organization and execution of student internships within the frame of the RIS Internship project. The main objective of the project is to provide a flexible and streamlined network of internship positions for students studying at raw materials-related master programmes in the ESEE region. At least so important goal of the project is to establish the contact between the motivated students and the non-academic partner (industry, research organisation or other institution) for future professional cooperation. The main tool to reach these goals is an intern matching platform run and managed by the RIS Internship project.



1. Figure the organizational structure of the RIS internship project Source: <https://www.ris-internship.eu/>



Consortium partners are:

- University of Zagreb – Faculty of Mining, Geology and Petroleum Engineering (UNIZG-RGNF),
- National Technical University of Athens – NTUA,
- Politechnika Wroclawska (Wroclaw University of Science and Technology, WUST),
- Tallinn University of Technology,
- Technical University of Kosice,
- Technische Universität Bergakademie Freiberg (TUBAF),
- Université de Liège,
- University of Miskolc,
- Zavod za gradbeništvo Slovenije, ZAG (Slovenian National Building and Civil Engineering Institute).

2. What is an internship

According to NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers), an internship is defined 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."* (naceweb.org, 2011)

An internship can influence and change the future of the intern. The intern receives the theoretical foundations in the university and this knowledge is further developed through the practice. At the non-academic partner (first of all company or research institute), the student receives a first reflection on the existing knowledge, skills and abilities. It is easy to confuse the different definitions, so it is important to define them appropriately.

Knowledge can be defined as a structure of information that already exists and can be built upon and applied in solving tasks. *Skills* are something else, that can be acquired through practice and training. It is necessary to identify, develop and use the appropriate skills for each

project. Skills are measured in dealing with information, tasks, or people. They can be divided into verbal, manual or mental skills to achieve a goal. Skills can be expressed in terms of abilities. Usually, *abilities* are the tasks that are done while working. The main difference between skills and abilities is that ability is the capacity to perform a task, while a skill is the actual performance.

During the internship, students acquire new knowledge, skills and abilities and can make a great progress and take a big step towards their future career. In a multinational environment, there may also be cultural differences. For example, in daily communication, in the use of words. In the raw materials industry, especially in the mining value chain, it is highly important to understand, communicate and interact with people from other cultures and social groups. Therefore, social skills are indispensable for future players of this industry and the internship makes an excellent learning environment to develop these.

An internship may be part of the student's studies, it may be a voluntary experience, or it may be a part-time job. The intern is expected to become an active member of the workforce and be given tasks, limited responsi-

bilities, and rewards. If the student is paid like another employee, we can talk about a part-time job. The main difference between the part-time job and the internship is that the latter one is an essential part of the professional training with the corresponding learning objectives and supervision. It is the learning objectives and supervision/mentorship that elevate a volunteer activity to the level of an internship.

It is common for students to write their thesis in the same company where they spend their practice time. In this case, the process is as follows. The mentor at the university can provide the framework for the thesis, and the practical mentor can be a great support to find and describe the practical aspect.

Experimental learning is particularly important in engineering education. Experiential learning is the principle of effective education, in which universities and supervising companies jointly provide students with practical and functional learning opportunities. Experiential learning includes all types of practice-based learning opportunities. Experiential learning opportunities come in a variety of course-based and non-course-based forms and can include student research, practice in abroad, and conclu-

ding experiences such as internships. We can say during experiential learning students are involved in a process of learning by doing. This field has evolved and changed greatly in last years (Seaman et al., 2020), e.g., in practical training of sustainable engineering, concurrent engineering, mineral exploration and development, etc.

There is a gap in the market for gaining hands-on field (industry) experience (valamis.com, 2022). Through these experiences and reflection on them, students are better able to connect theories and knowledge learned in the university to real-world circumstances. When theory meets practice, it's a great strategy for future engineering education. Students should be encouraged to cultivate technical knowledge, necessary skills and abilities and creative engineering solutions.

A student-centered and process-oriented method of instruction will promote and support opportunities for students to engage in creative thinking, innovative projects through the responsible use of today's cutting-edge technologies. Experiential learning involves the community by emphasizing collaboration, active learning, and leadership in an out-of-school setting where students actively take responsibility.

With experiential learning opportunities students will gain (Kent State University, 2018):



Students definitely learn faster when they are highly engaged and involved. This makes learning a personal process. As Sir Richard Branson says,

“You don't learn to walk by following rules. You learn by doing, and by falling over.”

3. Features of internship

From the student's perspective, internships capture an intangible part of higher education that is often missing from lecture halls and textbooks: the importance of hands-on experience. Nothing compares to the experience of being immersed in a fast-paced professional environment, although this can be provided to some degree through coursework, and case studies.

Internships play an important role in the university curriculum and are also part of a formal education programme. It can be considered as an educational activity that aim is to provide a practical approach for students. During the internship, the interns' knowledge, skills and abilities improve so that they can achieve the required qualification at the end of their studies. In order to provide a quality internship, it is important to meet the expectations of the industry, in other words, what the interns should definitely know when after graduation they start to work.

Internships linked to the academic programme may last from a few to several months, usually between or along with the semesters. An intern works in a company for a specified period of time, is involved in extensive

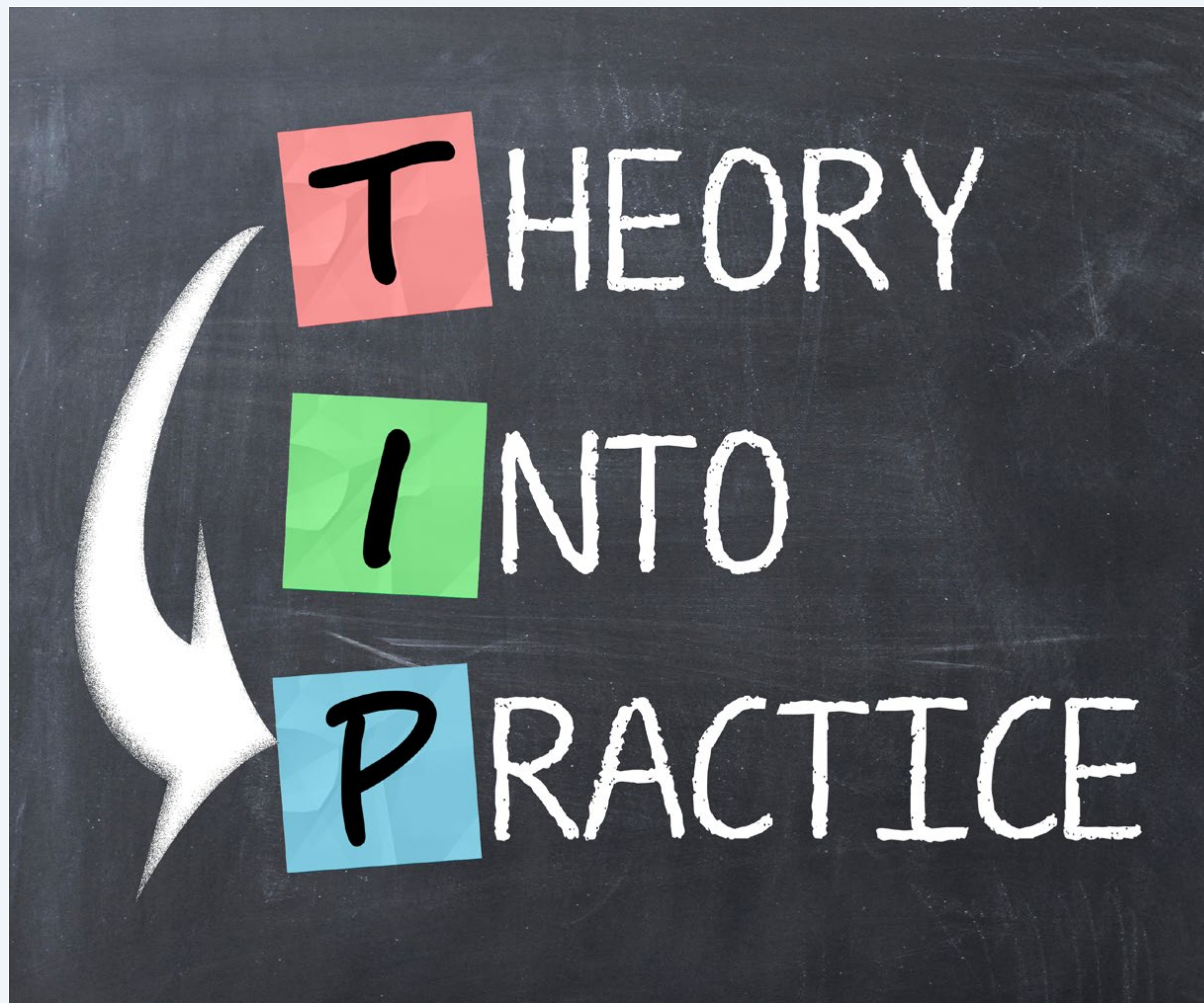


projects, and becomes an integral part of the company. A longer-term internship allows the mentor to also train the potential employee. If the intern and the mentor can work well together, the internship might end with a full-time job.

The Post University Blog (2022) summarises the benefits of an internship as follows:

Apply theoretical knowledge in the real world

Although you may have learned a lot in the classroom, applying your knowledge in a professional context makes that knowledge that much more valuable. Although this



is technically possible at any point in your career, you will find that the application opportunities are much more valuable when they arise immediately after you learn new academic topics.

Expand on your transferable skills

Through an internship program, you can quickly build a variety of transferable or soft skills such as verbal communication, problem solving, and even empathy. Transferable means that you can use these skills in other companies as well and you also have the opportunity to

use them in your university courses. As an intern, you'll have many opportunities to put skills into practice in a completely new environment. You will immediately become aware of the subtle differences between academic and professional communication, as well as the skills you still need to master.

Develop professional connections

Internships provide some of the most effective networking opportunities because they expose you to professionals at all levels and from different departments or disciplines. The contacts you make during your internship can come in handy when you are looking for references or leads to the best job opportunities.

Make new friends

Although this may not be mentioned often, it is a great benefit of internship opportunities. Your professional network can create friendships that extend beyond the office and last. This is usually the case with internship programs, as you get to meet people you might never have met otherwise.

If you work closely with other interns, you may find that the group experience creates a strong sense of commu-

nity and support. Many former interns still meet their old colleagues at happy hours or other networking events.

Boost your resume

The university internship has gone from a great bonus to an essential resume component in the most competitive industries. Your well-crafted CV could end up at the bottom of the pile without this important entry. However, a good internship can help CV stand out from other applicants.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers' annual Job Outlook Survey is the best testament to the value of an internship on a resume (NACE). According to the 2022 survey results, internship experience is the most important criterion in the difficult selection of applicants. This is true for internships completed outside the hiring company as well as those completed within the company.

Direct job offers are more likely

Although not all internships end in employment, this is a very real option. The harder you work and the better you perform, the better your chances are of moving from intern to employee.

Better job stability

Although internships are temporary by nature, the jobs they lead to are often well-paying and offer promising career opportunities. Interns who were previously hired internally are highly likely to stay: NACE reports a 71.4 percent retention rate after one year. But the retention rate for external employees who completed an internship before being hired permanently is also very high, at almost 60 percent.

Higher salary potential

Internships not only give applicants a distinct advantage, but can also help graduates get paid more once they start working. Many graduates with internship experience find that they can negotiate a better starting salary because of their previous work experience, but this varies greatly by field.

Refine career goals

You may come to the conclusion during your internship that a particular field or career path you once found enticing is no longer your passion. If you recognize this early on, you can change your direction before you get stuck on a particular career path. Later, it can be much more difficult to make those changes. There has never

been a better time to change your strategy and aim for a career or industry that you are truly passionate about.

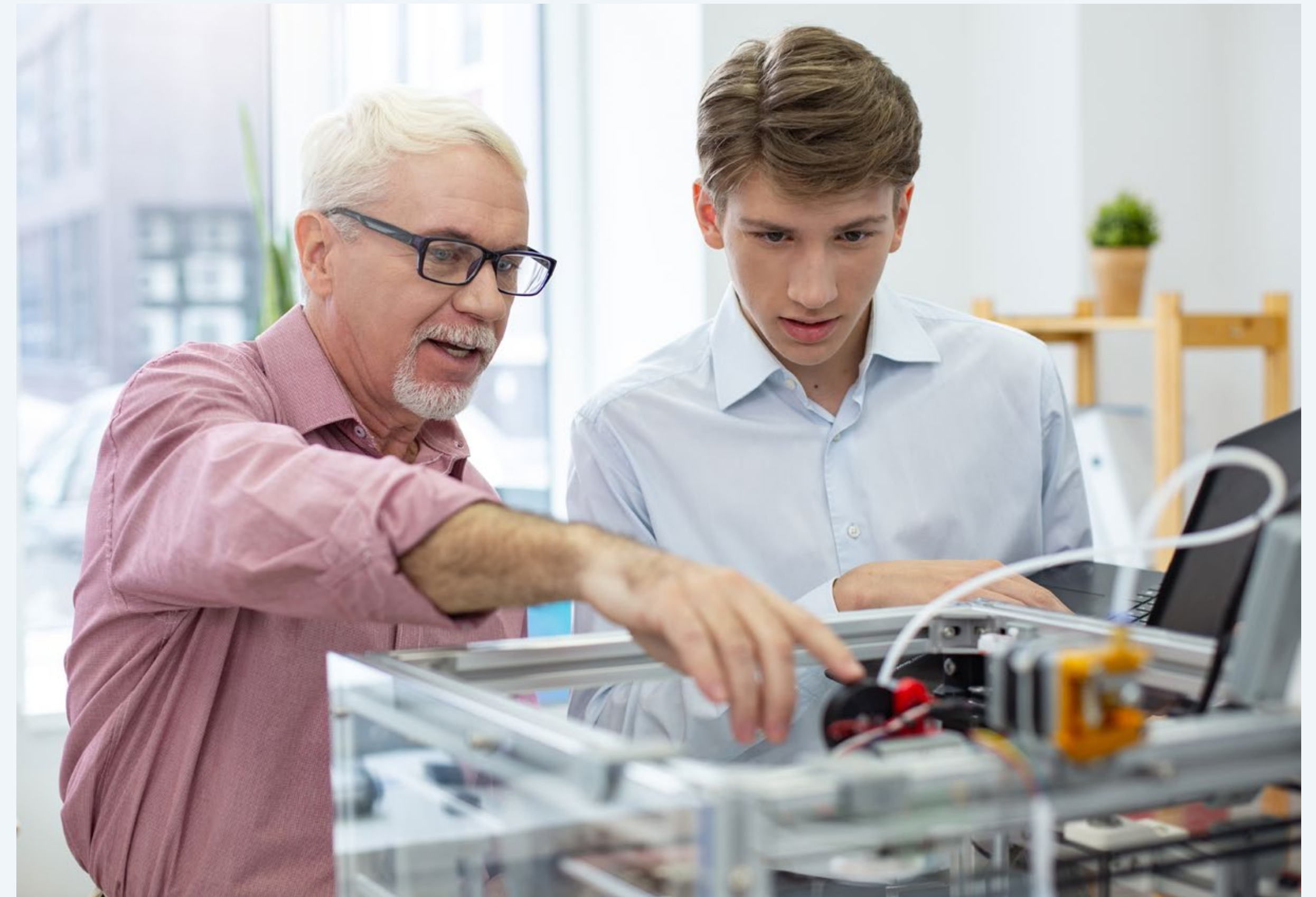
Build confidence

It is normal to be a little nervous about graduating and starting your career. This requires a leap of faith, just like any other big change. However, if you have had the opportunity to take small steps through an internship program, you may find the transition a little easier.

Internships allow you to get to know a variety of people, environments and circumstances. Along the way, you'll learn that you have all the skills you need to make a difference after graduation. This boosted confidence will make your transition from student to full professional much easier.

4. Mentor's support

For many students, internships are their introduction to the working world. It presents both a difficulty and an opportunity. However, interns can be overwhelmed by the experience. Mentors have been shown to help interns grow both academically and professionally. The extra support can help them adapt more quickly to the culture of the workplace. It also allows them to make



contacts and further their education that they might not have had otherwise. Through the practice of mentoring, a professional provides support and expertise to a less experienced student. A mentor acts as a teacher, advisor, and facilitator. Over time, mentoring creates a professional connection that is beneficial to both parties.

The goal of mentoring is to develop a promising career, not to improve an underperforming career. Mentoring is an opportunity to give back to the organization and the sector by imparting knowledge to emerging leaders and innovators.

While having a good supervisor is crucial, having a mentor may make the internship experience outstanding. A supervisory relationship and a mentoring connection are comparable. However, through reflection, the mentor helps the student make the connection between what they are doing in the workplace and what they have learned in university. A wonderful way to do this is to have the intern do a self-assessment regularly through the internship. By accompanying the intern to networking events or professional development opportunities and motivating them to go beyond their comfort zone, a mentor can also help the intern make professional contacts.

Your internship mentor should help you overcome any challenges that may prevent you from having the most positive experience possible. Your mentor is available to answer any questions you may have. You may have questions that you do not want to ask your boss or colleagues. Your mentor will be the one to provide you with information or steer you in the right direction. You can solve problems at work with the help of your mentor. Mentor can clarify misunderstandings with your boss or colleagues or help you understand the extent of your responsibilities and how to meaningfully go above and beyond what is required of you. The mentor will try to

meet your expectations for the job while ensuring that the work assigned to you is challenging and makes the most of your unique skills. As an intern, you may have to do some tedious or simple tasks, but that should not be your only responsibility.

5. Policy of the EIT RawMaterials regarding the internship

Policy of the EIT RawMaterials regarding the internship

Since the RIS Interhship project is a project under the EIT RawMaterials, it is important to mention its main objectives and policies why the EIT RawMaterials puts emphasis on such kind of cooperation.

The EIT RawMaterials is the largest R&D&I community in the world with its 122 members from the fields of education, research and industrial partners...

EIT RawMaterials integrates disciplines, diversity and complementarity across the entire raw materials value chain and along the three sides of the knowledge triangle. The EIT RawMaterials partnership includes over 120 Core and Associate partners who are leaders in their fields.

The knowledge triangle, i.e. the collaboration between the industrial partners, research institutions and universities is a key concept of the EIT in general. Student internship as it is understood by the RIS Internship project is a direct education and cooperation link between the university and the industrial partner, or between the research institution and the university.

Therefore, main targets of this current training material for internship mentors are building skills:

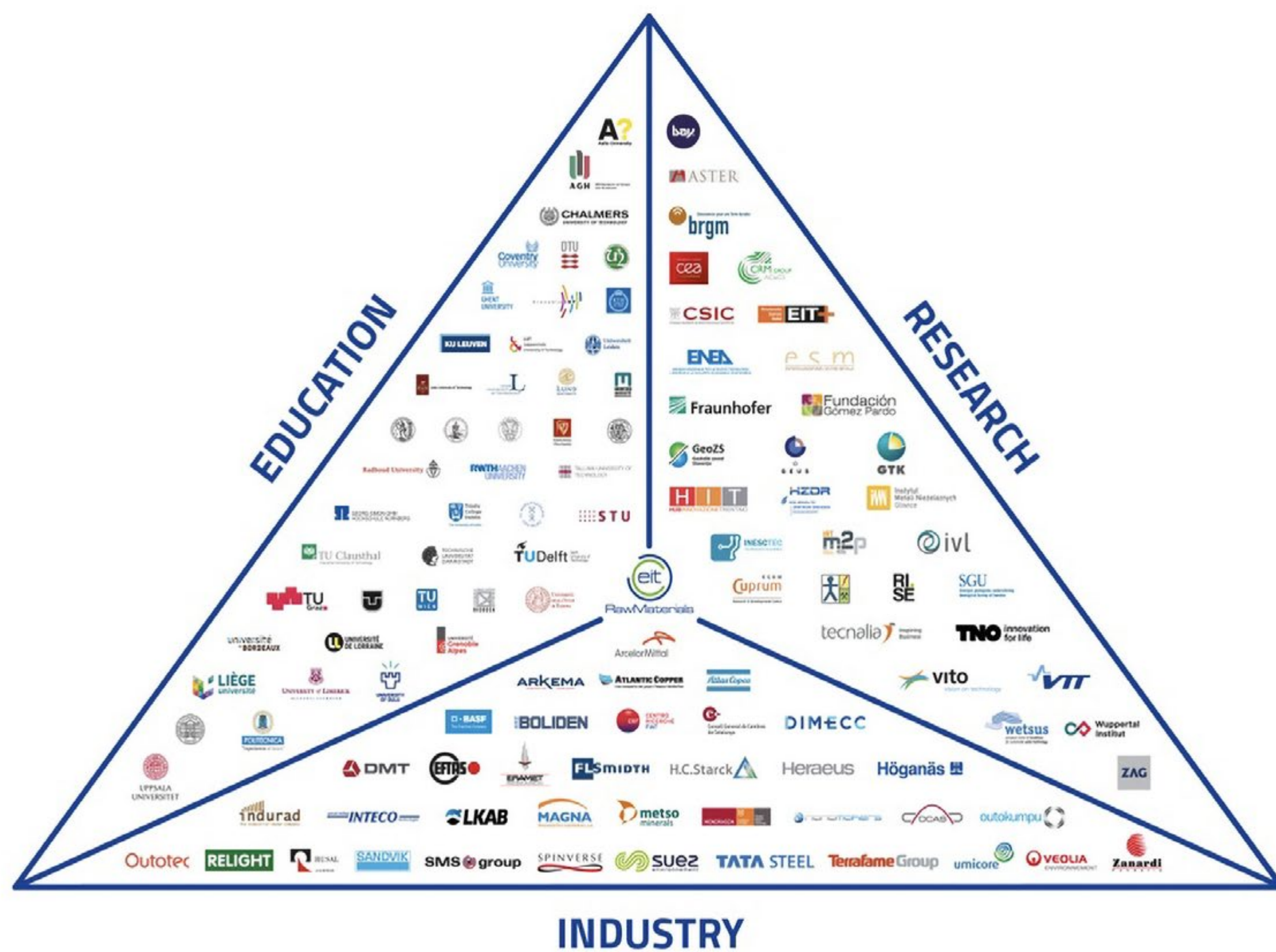



Figure 2. The Knowledge triangle for the EIT RawMaterials.

- 
to set up a working assignment for the intern in a structured way
- 
to direct the intern towards reaching learning outcomes defined
- 
to efficiently supervise the intern and his/her progress
- 
to recognise appropriate personal skills and socio-civic competences to be used and developed with the student
- 
to evaluate student's performance
- 
to successfully manage potential conflict
- 
to catalyse the adjustment of the intern to the working culture/environment prevailing in the organisation

6. Guide through the internship

In summary, the process of internship can be described as follows.



2. Figure Guide through the internship

The internship assignment should include specific goals and objectives. It is important to understand and achieve these during the internship. The basis of the collaboration and cooperation is good communication, clear goals

and objectives. Always ask when you do not understand the goals.

Your mentor will define the needs and capabilities and set the goals and guidelines for each task, and he/she will also select the task that you can accomplish. The best thing you can do is stick to the plans that have already been made.

Your mentor will help to divide large projects into sub-tasks in order to ease for you to follow the progress. During the weekly consultation it is worthwhile to discuss it, always mention your difficulties in the work and possible solutions you can make.

Your mentor will help to identify appropriate personal skills and sociocultural competencies to be utilised and developed. Personal skills are about expanding one's abilities and limits. They help in the effective accomplishment of tasks and the achievement of goals. Sociocultural competence includes all behaviors that enable people to contribute effectively and constructively to social and professional life, especially in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflicts when they arise (<https://blogs.upm.es/> 2019).



Your performance will be continuously monitored to make great progress. Rather than viewing performance appraisals as criticism, it is better to learn from them.

In the workplace, arguments and disagreements between people are commonplace. As long as this is done politely and with respect, it can even be considered good to allow disagreements from time to time. You will learn how to resolve potential conflicts.

The best way to fit into the office culture is to observe how others in your company behave and try to emulate them. The mentor will help you adapt to the prevailing work environment.

7. The concept of 'T-shaped professional'

The key idea of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is the "T-shaped professional". The T-shaped professional has deep and profound technical knowledge as well as cross-functional skills such as teamwork, communication and critical thinking. The main goal of the T-shaped professional concept is to help students improve their innovative and entrepreneurial skills.

The T-shaped professional has a strong entrepreneurial mindset, thorough knowledge of interns' field, and a solid understanding of the difficulties encountered throughout the commodity value chain. This mindset, open to social and civic issues as well as other disciplines, is necessary given the complexity of the commodities sector.

During the internship, a student's professional competence can be efficiently built in a T-shape.

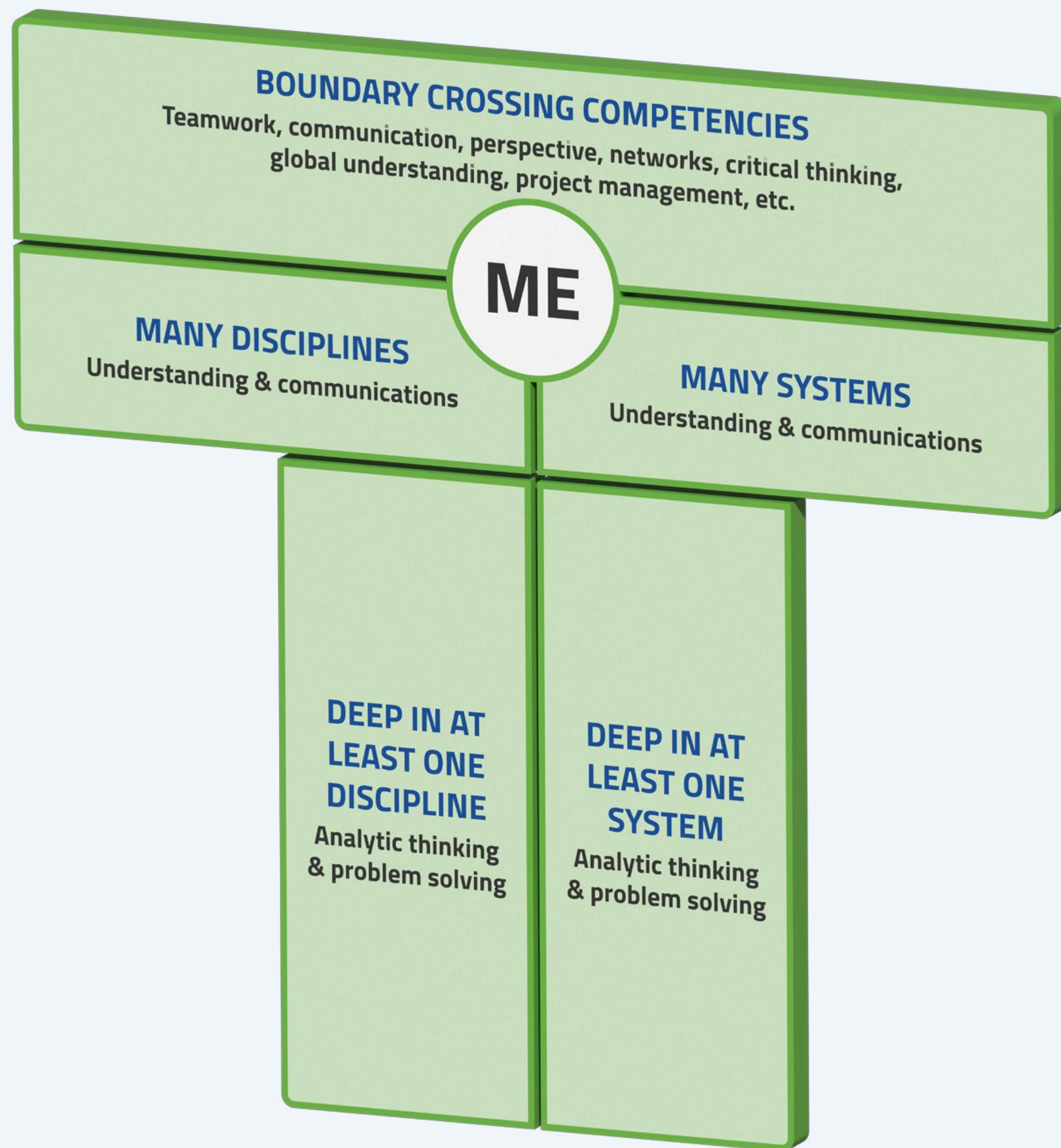


Figure 3. T-shaped professional

Source: <https://careeredge.bentley.edu/> (2015)

To describe the skills of trainees, the metaphor of “T-shaped skills” or “T-shaped people” is often used in job placement. The horizontal bar on the T symbolizes the ability to work interdisciplinarily with professionals

and apply knowledge in areas other than one’s own, while the vertical bar on the T represents the depth of relevant skills and expertise in a single area.

8. Features of the student

Employers are often looking for interns who can bring special expertise to the company. If you have these skills and competences, you will be more attractive to potential employers and can increase your chances of landing an internship. If you perform well as an intern, your chances of getting a permanent position will improve.

The question arises as to what an intern does. That depends on the particular industry and the type of internship you have accepted. At least initially, an intern’s role is mainly supportive. If you commit, your main responsibilities will be to help, learn, and develop. Once you get up to speed, you will be expected to contribute.

Here is a general description of the work an intern is expected to do:

Learning about
the company's
policies and rules



Adapt to the
corporate environment
and culture



Participate
in daily activities



Communicate
and work together with
your mentor



Describe the problems
and possible solutions



Work both independently
and in a team



Maybe you spend the first few weeks of your internship trying to understand how the company works. Maybe you work as a shadow of an employee to learn more about the position. After you spend a day or a few days learning the ins and outs of the company. You will begin to help the team and contribute more.

Regardless of the type of internship you choose, you will be expected to learn as much as you can while you work. You will acquire the technical skills you need to successfully perform your internship duties and ultimately your professional duties. For example, management skills to understand data analysis. You will also learn interpersonal skills, such as how to connect with others and build mutually beneficial relationships. For example, this includes a high level of emotional intelligence, drive, interpersonal skills, listening and communication.

Job shadowing has become commonplace lately. As the name implies, this technique is about “shadowing” someone in their daily tasks, observing what they do, and gaining knowledge about the position through indirect experience. This is especially common in hands-on industries such as engineering and healthcare. When you join the organization, you will be assigned a mentor. You may need to shadow the mentor for the first few weeks. As you work, he or she will keep you informed about the work. Occasionally, you will be asked to help with small jobs. You will be encouraged to ask around. Job shadowing is a great way to get a better picture of what it’s like to work at your company.

Expect to take on more and more responsibility as time goes on. In your first workload, you will first be judged on your reliability and skills. The more you prove yourself in the eyes of your mentor and colleagues, the more and more important tasks you will be given. The better your performance, the more tasks you will be given. This is a great opportunity to show your employer what you can do. It can also increase your chances of getting a full-time job later on.

Building relationships and good communication with your mentor and colleagues is the goal of networking. To advance professionally, you need the support of people in these places. Conflicts and misunderstandings can occur when communicating. Therefore, you must also learn how to handle conflicts politely and respectfully. In addition, maintaining positive relationships with consumers is always beneficial to business.

Even though you may be part of a large team. You also need to collaborate and work independently. Independence and initiative show that you can work reliably without direct supervision, which is a prerequisite for future promotions and more responsibility. You should also expect to work with many professionals and other interns, so the ability to work well as part of a team is an important requirement. The success of a workplace is greatly influenced by an employee's ability to collaborate and build relationships with colleagues.

9. Roles and responsibilities of the student

At the beginning of the internship, the student and mentor negotiate the internship work and deliverables, which should be detailed in the work assignment. Every

employee in the workplace has a responsibility to ensure health and safety. Additional obligations for students include:



The best what you can do are the followings:

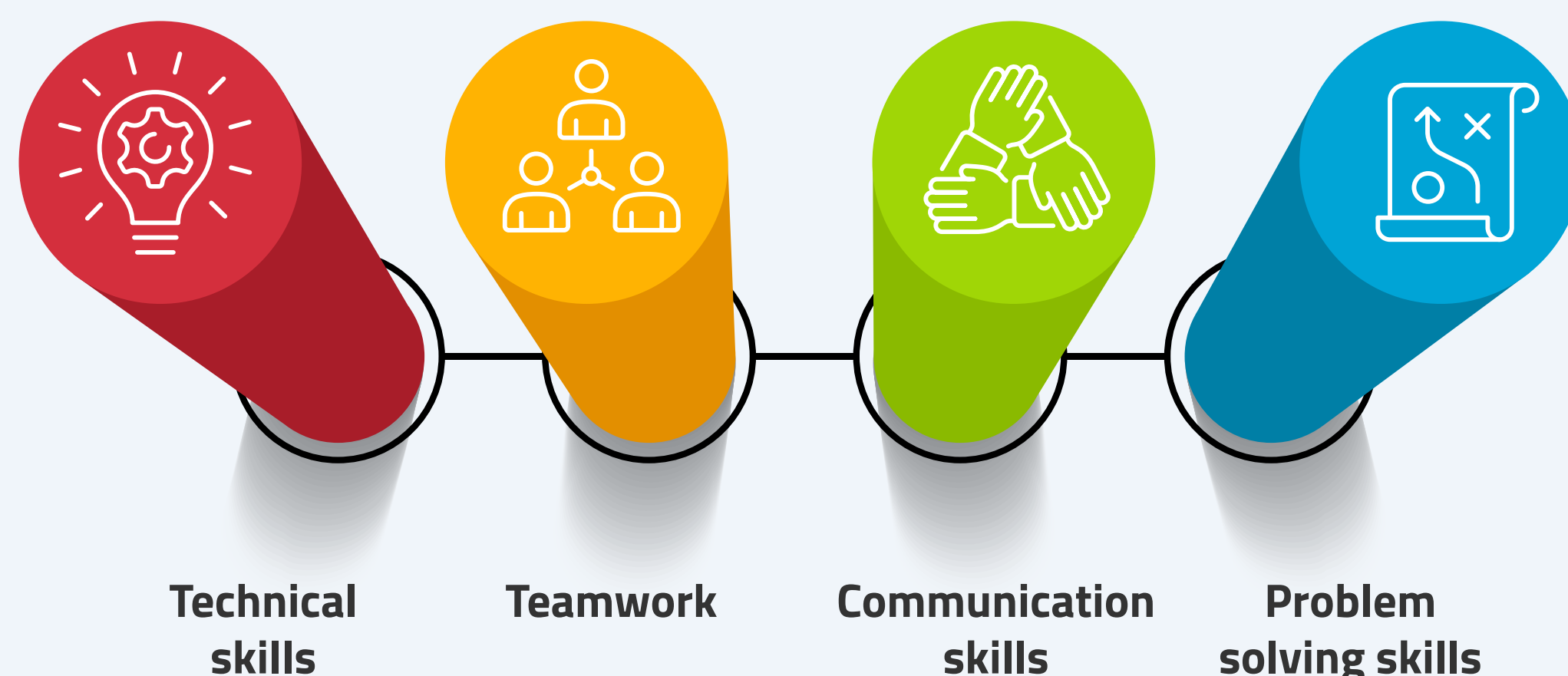
- observing and following the company policies and rules, especially the safety rules,
- greeting and respecting other employees properly,
- cooperating and communicating with colleagues,
- using the company's dress code and dressing appropriately,
- asking for explanations and instructions,
- be trustworthy and honest,
- avoiding disputes,
- avoiding judging,
- share the relevant information and details,
- showing your commitment to the job,
- having confidence in your knowledge, skills and abilities,
- taking actions and be proactive.

Finally, each department must provide an overview of the tasks that the intern will be required to complete during the internship period. It is considered an essential part of the intern's responsibilities.

10. Learning Outcomes

The mentor will help to identify the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes describe what you should know, understand, and be able to do after completing a learning process (Vlasceanu, Grunberg & Parlea, 2007). What you will accomplish upon successful completion of your internship is listed in the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). Your activities are examined and assessed during the internship, and you will receive the results of the learning outcomes achieved. Content and resources are selected to promote your engagement and completion of learning tasks to support achievement of the ILOs.

The four pillars of learning outcomes are:



In problem solving, you are exposed to real-world scenarios where they must evaluate different approaches. You can put their theoretical understanding into practise. Your technical skills will develop and you will be able to perform some tasks independently. You will be able to work with professionals throughout the internship and develop significantly in the areas of communication and teamwork.

Learning objectives are precise, concise statements of specific knowledge or skills that the intern hopes to acquire through the experience. A well-written learning objective also includes an explanation of how the learning objective will be achieved and what criteria will be used to determine if the acquired knowledge or skills have been mastered.

The following example shows how your work assignment will be defined with your mentor.



The learning outcomes will help you make the internship a meaningful experience. The precise knowledge, skills, and abilities that the learner will acquire through the internship are described as learning outcomes. Learning outcomes help learners grasp the meaning of the material and understand what they will achieve through their participation in the learning activity. They are quantifiable accomplishments that the learner can track after completing the learning activity.

11. Experimental learning

In experiential learning, which is an active learning process, students learn “by doing” and reflect on the experience. Hands-on laboratory experiments, internships, field research, study abroad, student research, and studio performances are just a few examples of experiential learning activities. By fostering interdisciplinary learning, civic engagement, career development, cultural awareness, leadership, and other professional and intellectual skills, well-planned, supervised, and graded experiential learning programs can inspire academic inquiry (Boston University, 2022).

According to Boston University (2022) experiential learning contains the following elements:

- 1** Reflection, critical analysis and synthesis
- 2** Opportunities for students to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results
- 3** Opportunities for students to engage intellectually, creatively, emotionally, socially, or physically
- 4** A designed learning experience that includes the possibility to learn from natural consequences, mistakes, and successes

The goal of experiential learning is for students to become effective problem solvers and self-developers. They acquire new knowledge, skills, and abilities neces-

sary for daily success in all areas of life. By working in groups, they learn to collaborate, adapt, communicate, and think together. Both their critical and creative thinking skills develop. By working together, they become aware of their own strengths and weaknesses. When students realize they are not under strong control, their commitment to the work may increase and their attitudes will be positive during the internship.

An internship is an organized learning experience for students that is intended to take place outside of the typical classroom. It should have an academic component and a relationship with a company related to the student's academic field. Consequently, the academic program at the student's university must establish learning objectives for participation and receive evaluation or assessment of the student's performance from the mentoring unit.

Through experiential learning, you can put your academic knowledge into practice, develop useful skills and experience, and better market yourself to potential employers.

12. How to benefit the most from the programme?

Most students view an internship as a way to launch their careers and supplement their coursework with hands-on experience. Compared to university graduates without internship experience, those who applied for full-time positions and completed an internship received 20% more job offers (NACE, 2019 Study).

Internships, however, have benefits far beyond those of post-graduation employment. An internship can occasionally show you that the industry or career path you were considering is not the best choice for you. The network of friends and colleagues you make during an internship can last a lifetime. Your well-being and confidence in the workplace can increase after an internship.

Make an effort to understand the company as a whole. How is it structured? What is the culture of the company like? Which employees are considered the best? What distinguishes an outstanding employee? Think about your future: would you prefer a different management style or organizational structure than the company where you are interning?

These organizational topics you can observe during the internship beyond the professional ones.

To get the most out of your internship, keep the following in mind:



An internship is a fantastic way to advance your career and position yourself for success in the workplace. It's important to keep your learning outcomes in mind if you want to get the most out of your internship. Never forget that you are there to improve yourself, for which you owe gratitude. Your mentor and colleagues will engage with you in addition to their work. Therefore, proceed step by step and ask if something is not clear.

13. How can the students choose the right company?

Finding the ideal internship can be a challenge. Rarely will you find an offer that is tailored exactly to your needs, so you will have to choose between several offers that may seem quite comparable at first glance.

While it may be tempting to choose an internship at random, keep in mind that it could potentially change



the course of your future career. Try to choose an internship that you like and that will look good on your resume for upcoming job applications. When deciding which jobs to apply for and which to accept in case you receive numerous offers, we have compiled some of the most important questions you should ask yourself.

If you are just starting your internship search, you may be unsure of the best areas to focus on. The real value of an internship is determined by the effort you put in. To find an internship that is worthwhile, you should first ask yourself the following questions:

- 1** Which sector, position, tasks and responsibilities best suit your degree?
- 2** What kind of learning outcomes can I achieve during the internship?
- 3** Do you have the required knowledge, skills and abilities?
- 4** What kind of knowledge, skills and abilities can you learn?
- 5** Where is the company located?
What is the working atmosphere like?

It is not easy to decide. But every decision is a good decision and you will definitely learn from it. You must make your own decision. If you feel that you have made a bad

decision, you can change companies and find another one. But do not give up so quickly. It is natural that you will have difficulties as this is a completely new world for you. You must step out of your comfort zone and try to do your best. There is no perfect internship, there are only good internships. However, you can choose the internship that most closely matches your career goals and then use your initiative to distinguish yourself to potential employers.



14. Steps to design the program

Careful planning is part of a good strategy. On the one hand, the internship is extremely important to the student because it is likely to be the first professional experience beyond the university, which may have a significant impact on the future carrier. Therefore, the internship should be meaningful. On the other hand, the student will become an active employee of the company, so efficiency is critical. That is why interns represent a great potential for companies. You can foster the growth of an inexperienced person who could one day become an important member of your team by training and working with interns.

In order to recruit talent that can benefit your company, it is important to set up an appropriate program and reward your interns. The following steps are necessary to develop a good professional internship. First, we need to decide what the learning objectives and outcomes are, or more specifically, what the most important skills are students can acquire during their internship. Second, we need to develop a strategy to achieve those goals. Third, we start by finding and hiring qualified interns. Then the internship begins (4. step), and we supervise and instruct the intern (5. step) before evaluating the performance (6. step).



4. Figure Steps to design the internship

Learning objectives can be, for example:

Study some concrete processes in the company.

Work with a team on a project.

Transfer theoretical knowledge into practice.

Interpret personal strengths.



Then we need to define step by step how the intern can achieve these goals. It is a good practise to divide the tasks into subtasks that should be completed within a certain period of time (e.g. weekly).

Perhaps the most difficult process is finding the best intern to work with.

Then the internship begins and we get a chance to introduce a student to a whole new world. It depends on us how much the intern falls in love with the profession. Of course, it is a long process and we have to be patient.

It's important to give the intern feedback often so they can learn from it.

The majority of common internship placements provide the following:

- targeted learning objectives
- guided supervision by a qualified person with relevant work experience
- ongoing observation, evaluation and suggestions for improvement
- academic progress, development of hard and soft skills, and personal growth
- a compromise between the needs of the company and the learning objectives
- Work both independently and in a team

15. Internship request letter

Internships are the transition from university to professional life for many students. By using their skills in a guided, real-world situation, students have the opportunity to explore possible careers. Everyone should take advantage of the great opportunity that an internship

provides. To apply for an internship, you will need an internship request letter. It explains your qualifications for the internship and how you will help the company. It is addressed to the company's HR department or human resources manager. The new standard now is email. Most recruiters and applicants prefer this type of request for an interview.

The letter should contain the answers to the following questions:

- How did you hear about the company and what made you decide to intern there?
- What can you do to help the company? Briefly describe the projects, and issues you could work on.
- What are your qualifications? What qualifications – knowledge, skills and abilities – do you need to be successful there?
- What do you hope to gain from this work? Make a few brief thoughts; you will develop more detailed learning objectives later.
- Determine the date you can start the job, ideal end date, and approximate number of hours per week you can work.

A request letter is a technique to demonstrate passion and highlight unique qualifications that might not otherwise be mentioned in a formal resume, which helps the applicant stand out to employers. The request letter for an internship is the first opportunity for the applicant to make a good first impression with the company. It is the applicant's opportunity to convince the employer to get to know him or her.

In the following part you can see an example of a traditional request letter and an e-mail.

Template for letter



5. Figure Template for letter

Source: <https://leverageedu.com/blog/internship-request-letter/>

Template for e-mail

Subject Line: Request for the Internship- Marketing Intern

Respected Mr Sharma

It was with keen interest that I read about your posting regarding the role of Marketing Intern in your organisation- Affinity Marketing Solutions.

Being a second-year marketing student, I have successfully completed one previous internship in marketing. Through the coursework of the internship, I had learnt many essential skills like print and online advertising, marketing management, data analysis and social media management along with other essential strategies that may assist me in marketing.

As a Marketing Intern, my previous organisation was Perfect Brand Solutions where I served for 3 months July- September. The organisation provided me with an opportunity where could elevate its social media presence on platforms like Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. My tenure at the organisation also enabled me with a flair for Adobe Creative Cloud and Microsoft Office Suite.

Being in the awe of the impact that Affinity Marketing Solutions has, I am eager to become a part of it and challenge my capabilities. I would love to grow through the experience catered at your organisation. You may please find my resume attached and can contact me for scheduling a personal interview to discuss this in further detail. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Aakriti Gupta
aakriti.gupta@gmail.com
9999XXXXXX
(LinkedIn Profile Link)

6. Figure Template for e-mail

Source: <https://leverageedu.com/blog/internship-request-letter/>

16. Preparation for the interview

You have earned an interview for an internship. It means a crucial step on the path to an internship. Before your interview, you may be nervous or excited, but these feelings are often the result of not knowing what to expect.

Before you start a conversation, it is customary to shake hands and greet each other when you meet the interlocutor for the first time. The interviewer might ask about your familiarity with the company, your enthusiasm for the industry, and your qualifications. If you are very interested in getting the internship, you may feel pressured to do well in the interview. This is typical, and the interviewer probably expects you to feel this way. You do not have to be an industry expert because employers offer internships for entry-level workers. Focus on being organized, professional, and willing to learn.

Loretto (2019) summarizes the best tips for internship interviews as follows.








- 1.** Be prepared. You can prepare for the interview by picking out the right outfit in advance, doing some research on the company, and making a list of questions to think over. Practice answering these sample questions to prepare for the interview and gain confidence.
- 2.** Make a good first impression. It is only natural that we form judgments about new acquaintances. Moreover, we become emotionally attached to our initial perceptions of other people and find it difficult to change them - even when proven otherwise. You only get one chance to make a good first impression, as the saying goes.
- 3.** Highlight your skills and accomplishments, such as your resume, volunteer and extracurricular activities. Describe your transferable skills and previous internships or work experience.
- 4.** Give the interviewer examples of your skills. To assess your skills and contribution to the position and the company, your interviewer may ask you about your expertise. Therefore, it is important that you get a clear picture and answer honestly about your knowledge, skills and abilities.
- 5.** Understand the question before answer. An incorrect answer to a question can lead to failure






- 6.** Follow the interviewer's lead and give them information about yourself first and foremost, but know that your interviewer also expects you to ask questions. When you do, you show your enthusiasm and genuine interest in the position.
- 7.** Emphasize the positive. During the interview, you may be asked to provide a list of your strengths and weaknesses. Remember to emphasize the positive when answering such questions.
- 8.** Bring example of your work will help you show your expertise better than if you simply respond to the interview questions.
- 9.** End the interview with confidence. Your performance at the interview depends heavily on your self-confidence. It is naturally easier for people around you to trust you if you are confident. Also, it is very important that you do not appear insecure, because the main goal of an interview is to determine whether the company can rely on you to do a good job.
- 10.** Follow up the interview with a thank you note.

17. Performance Evaluation

In the following we present you a possible example for an evaluation and feedback from your work. Each part can be optionally modified and tailored according to that company profile, in which you spent your internship.

Identify three learning outcomes that you would like to achieve during the internship.

	 Strongly Disagree	 Disagree	 Neutral	 Agree	 Strongly Agree
All defined objectives were covered in the internship.					
The gained new practical knowledge is relevant and current.					
The internship contributed to expanding my knowledge and skills.					
The activities were effective.					
What we have learned is easy to implement.					

	 Strongly Disagree	 Disagree	 Neutral	 Agree	 Strongly Agree
I learn how I should behave.					
I learn what is learning outcomes.					
I learn how can I make the most of my internship.					
I learn how to choose the appropriate company.					
I learn how to write a proposal letter.					
I learn how to prepare for the internship interview.					
I learn how my performance will be evaluated.					
I learn about the cultural differences.					
I learn time management.					

What did you like about your internship?

Please name one idea that you will use in job as a result of this internship.

18. Intercultural issues

During the internship, you can easily find themselves in an international environment. On the one hand, export or import activities are typical for even the smallest companies. On the other hand, if you intern with a multinational company or go abroad. In an international environment, they can not only practice communication in a foreign language, but also learn about the culture of other nations.

Interning in a multicultural environment gives you the opportunity to learn something that you would not learn by reading textbooks or attending lectures. It is a fantastic opportunity to learn from those who may think very differently. As you can undoubtedly guess, workplace practices vary from country to country or company to company. Today, virtually every job posting, regardless of industry, highlights cross-cultural skills and sensitivity as essential qualifications. Due to the global economy, many companies are either already operating abroad or are looking to expand there. Proficiency in foreign languages is one of the most important skills that employers around the world are looking for.

Instead of focusing on individual differences, welcome cooperative activities and task sharing, and be open to the new culture. The most effective means of being understood in a multicultural environment. You should learn and accommodate to cultural differences, to different accents and nonverbal cues. Kindness and sensitivity are greatly appreciated in this situation.

The following steps can help you accommodate in an international environment:

- 1** Learn the different cultural behaviour within the company.
- 2** Participate in the open-minded and cooperative environment within the company.
- 3** Consider that maybe you must improve your foreign language skills. If you did not understand everything, do not hesitate to ask your mentor.
- 4** Try to participate in international meetings.
- 5** If you identify a cultural conflict, ask a help from your mentor to overcome it.

19. Time Management

You will not succeed in your internship with the company if you simply come and go on time. The impression you make on your team and management will be greatly affected by how you manage your time overall. If you are able to complete your tasks on time, you will leave a good impression with your management. You can start by making a to-do list the day before and planning how you will approach the next day before you go to bed.

Time management skills for students are increasingly important. Time management is about planning and controlling the amount of time you spend on specific tasks. By staying focused and not wasting time on distractions (like social media), students who have good time management skills can accomplish more in less time. When students cross tasks off their to-do list, effective time management also helps them feel less stressed. It can also give them a sense of accomplishment when they reach their goals.

On the Australian Christian College blog (ACC), Auld (2020) summarizes time management tips for students as follows:

- 1.** goal setting. You can only use your time effectively if you know what to do with it and how to use it to achieve your goals. Setting short- and long-term goals can help students. It is possible to prioritise tasks by determining what needs to be done in a certain amount of time.
- 2.** Reduce distraction. Place away unused devices, e.g. cell phones. Notifications can interfere with your ability to stay focused on work.
- 3.** Reward achievement. Find out how to motivate yourself with the right rewards. Your mentor will also use gratitude and praise to inspire you.
- 4.** Set time limits. In a sense, we need to treat our day like a schedule and give each task a specific amount of time.
- 5.** Have a clock nearby to keep time and deadlines.

No one performs at their best under excessive stress. You need healthy ways to cope with the pressures of studying and working while remaining productive.

20. The ten Concerns of Students – effective internship

It's hard to summarize, but probably the 10 concerns are the following:

- 1.** Finding the company that appeals to your degree the most. Choose a company whose objective and profile match your personal professional ideals and where you feel you will fit into the culture.
- 2.** Adapting to the company specifics. The ability to try new things, work with different processes, and accept changes easily in the workplace are all examples of being adaptable. Adaptability is one of the most sought skills.
- 3.** Be open and motivated to experience new skills. You can go beyond what is required of you, build helpful networks, gather as much knowledge as you can about business, about how things are done, and about other things. This way of thinking will inspire you.
- 4.** Be curious and proactive. An intern should be inquisitive and bring fresh energy to the work culture. Never just follow your mentor's instructions and carry them out competently enough to earn a diploma or an honorarium.

5. Providing meaningful work. Work that counts leads to meaningful internships. One of the qualities students want from a good internship is hands-on tasks that are important to their professional development.
6. Making your best and become indispensable. Taking on additional tasks and responsibilities and possessing information that benefits your team and company are part of being an indispensable employee. The real key to being indispensable is providing value that no one else can.
7. Reaching the appropriate learning goals/outcomes. The learning objectives that you should achieve during the internship will be outlined in the work assignment.
8. Making and following plans to achieve goals. For most people, setting goals is easy. What is difficult is planning and sticking to it to achieve those goals. An action plan that breaks projects into smaller tasks can be helpful.
9. Following up on mid-results. Your activities are examined and assessed during the internship, and you will receive the results of the learning outcomes achieved. It is an important part of the internship, while you can learn a lot from it.

10. Always looking for opportunities to improve. Successful people constantly strive to become a better version of themselves. They read regularly and are experts in their field. They do not invest their time in things that do not get them anywhere.

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