



## **NEDA Education Foundation Internship Guidelines**

### *Introduction*

The NEDA Education Foundation Internship Guidelines have been designed to provide a framework for our member firms to pursue university internship programs as a means of developing perspective employees and recruiting individuals for permanent employment to the field of electronic distribution. The guidelines outline the key elements to consider in developing an internship program as well as the benefits of internship programs.

### *Objective of Internship Programs*

Internship programs enable university students an opportunity to gain on-the-job experience in electronic distribution. Participating companies benefit through increased exposure to potential to future employee candidates while gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the university preparation that students receive prior to graduation from industrial distribution programs at NEDA targeted universities.

### *Background Information on Internship Programs*

- Currently there are over 625 students enrolled in Industrial Distribution degree programs at the 22 targeted NEDA universities.
- Of these 22 universities, 9 require internships/co-op Assignments as a requirement of graduation, 8 strongly recommend internship/co-op assignments.
- 35-50% of the students participating in internship/co-op assignments accept permanent employment positions with the sponsoring company upon graduation.
- Student willingness to relocate geographically increases after participating in these temporary assignments.
- University personnel has indicated that utilizing an industry organization like NEDA as a clearinghouse for member internship opportunities is preferred over working with the companies individually.
- The most effective internship/co-op assignments are either project related or rotational assignments.
- The typical salary range for these temporary assignments is \$9-14/hourly with an allowance for temporary relocation. The more attractive internships/co-op assignments include coordination with local apartment management firms for short-term lease provisions. Financial compensation may be offered in terms of an hourly wage or a lump sum contract.
- Some firms have maintained on-going relationships with the student interns by offering one-semester to one-year scholarships following the internship assignment.
- Internship/co-op assignments are typically one-semester in duration. Many of these assignments are offered during the summer semester between the students' junior and senior undergraduate year.

- Feedback from university personnel indicates that the electronic distribution industry has been the least visible on university campuses during the recruitment process – including career fairs, internship/co-op assignments, and on-site recruiting interviews and job postings.

### Benefits of Internship/Co-op Program

Participating companies benefit from:

- 1) the ability to hire industrial distribution university students,
- 2) the opportunity to utilize students on a trial basis without making a long-term commitment,
- 3) developing on-going relationships with the top Industrial Distribution universities throughout the country,
- 4) reducing the time and cost associated with new employment recruitment,
- 5) receiving assistance on special projects and research without committing full-time permanent employee resources.

Student interns benefit from:

- 1) the opportunity to learn more about the dynamic field of electronic distribution,
- 2) gaining real-world, practical work experience,
- 3) networking with industry professionals that may assist with their permanent employment endeavors,
- 4) developing professional skills, including interpersonal skills, teamwork, and time management,
- 5) earning college credit while meeting university graduation requirements.

### Sponsoring Firm Responsibilities

- Develop intern/co-op job description outlining primary responsibilities of the intern/co-op student.
- Assign permanent employee to provide clear direction and timely feedback to the student intern. This individual will be considered the work site supervisor for the student and is responsible for providing guidance, direction, and constructive criticism.
- Interview intern candidates applying for the position.
- Develop formal training plan that familiarizes the student with the mission, function, and operation of the work site, as well as outline the objectives of the intern period.
- Provide a safe workplace and advise student interns of any unforeseen dangers associated with the workplace.
- Maintain communication with the university for periodic feedback as required by the specific university as well as in the event of any special problem.
- If possible, reimburse the student for any work-related travel or expenses incurred other than to and from work.
- Ensure that adequate time is available during normal work hours for the student and work site supervisor to conduct performance appraisals, mentoring sessions, instruction and feedback.

- Assure that adequate time during normal work hours to conduct meetings with the University Intern/Co-op Coordinator for purposes of consultation and progress appraisal.
- Provide compliance with regulations regarding nondiscrimination on the basis of sex, handicap, race, color, religion, age, marital status, or national or ethnic origin.

### Student Responsibilities

- Provide university and employer with all required completed applications and documentation within published schedule.
- Obtain approval from University Internship Coordinator prior to contacting any business or industry to pursue an internship/co-op employment position.
- Participate in intern/co-op interview. It is incumbent on the applicant to prepare appropriately prior to the formal interview.
- Obtain a letter of employment from the employer that includes the starting date, ending date, salary/compensation schedule, and contact information for the work site supervisor. This letter should be posted with the University Internship Coordinator prior to beginning internship/co-op assignment.
- Work actively with the employer to develop a training plan of activities and goals for the internship period. Outline the content and details of work assignment that will augment class work educational experiences.
- Work the full assigned time (typical rate of 40 hours of work per credit hour for universities providing internship credits).
- Develop and maintain daily log of all duties or activities performed. This log or journal should include thoughts, impressions, contacts, synopsis of conferences with supervisor, and examples of paperwork. The university may require this log to be submitted in order to receive university credit.
- Prepare interim and final evaluations of the internship assignment as required by the respective university.
- Provide employer with the forms required by the university for attainment of credit hours.

### Criteria for Student Participation in Internship/Co-op Program

The criteria may vary for specific universities. The following criteria are intended to be a guideline and will be superceded by any university criteria that requires more stringent guidelines.

- Student should be enrolled in a university Industrial Distribution or Electronic Distribution degree program.
- Student should have completed a minimum of 90 hours of degree program curriculum with an overall GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 grade point scale.
- Student must have completed the university required pre-requisite courses prior to beginning the internship/co-op assignment.
- Student must complete all university and employer applications and paperwork prior to beginning the internship/co-op assignment. Failure to meet the university and employer prescribed schedules for submission could result in delay of internship/co-op assignment.
- Student agrees to submit all internship/co-op evaluation forms and assignments as a condition of the internship/co-op position.

- Student agrees to actively work with the University Internship Coordinator and employer to ensure conformance to the university requirements for credit for the internship/co-op assignment.
- Student must be authorized to work in the country of the internship/co-op assignment.

#### Recommendations for Intern/Co-op Assignments

- Position should be challenging and meaningful for both the student and the sponsoring firm.
- Assigned activities should be able to be accomplished during the intern period.
- Ideal assignments enable the student to participate in a representative variety of the company's operations. Rotations and project related assignments tend to be favored in order to accomplish this.
- Assignments should facilitate interaction with as many full-time employees as possible to provide continual, productive feedback.
- Examples of specific projects that have proven to be mutually beneficial for students and sponsoring companies include (but are not limited to):
  - profitability studies
  - market research and/or analysis
  - prospecting sales
  - customer or supplier surveys
  - software analysis and implementation
  - advertising and/or promotion assistance
  - asset management

#### Implementing an Internship/Co-op Program

- Formulate the position based on NEDA recommendations
- Submit completed NEDA Internship/Co-op Position template to NEDA Education Foundation at 1111 Alderman Dr. Suite 400, Alpharetta, GA 30005.
- NEDA posts the position and establishes links with targeted universities
- Interview prospective intern/co-op employees
- Prepare projects and tasks for the student
- Complete university required paperwork and submit within prescribed deadlines

#### Activities when Student Reports to Work

- Cooperatively develop the intern/co-op student work plan
- Assign work-site supervisor
- Conduct intern/co-op orientation
- Provide on-going feedback to the student
- Complete university required evaluations
- Upon completion of assignment, complete evaluation, conduct student review, and submit evaluation to the university and the NEDA Education Foundation

#### Resources and Tools Provided by NEDA Education Foundation

- Internship Guidelines (this document)
- Internship Position Template
- Employer Evaluation of Student Intern
- Intern Evaluation Criteria
- Link to Industrial/Electronic Distribution students at targeted universities