



Work-Study

Employer's Handbook

Making it Happen Takes Team Work!!

Updated

February 2022

Supervisors of Student Employees,

As we begin a new school year, we have created a handbook that will assist the supervisor in training, supervising, evaluating, and mentoring student employees. It is the supervisor's responsibility to provide a meaningful training opportunity for the student who is eligible for federal or state work---study. Many of our students are young and this may be their first job and yet others are more experienced because they have had other employment.

We ask that you be patient with your employees and have realistic expectations for your employees. Remember that appreciation of their efforts is a strong motivational tool. If you have any questions concerning this handbook or other issues that pertain to your student employee(s), please do not hesitate to contact any of us.

Please be sure to check with Financial Aid and Human Resources for more information about being a supervisor to student employees and what you are needing to complete before becoming a supervisor.

Supervisor Responsibilities

Your work-study is an employee-in-training and their employment with you is really a paid internship. We ask that you sit down with your employee the first week and review with them the following:

Paperwork: Make sure all paperwork is taken care of with the Payroll Department before the student starts work. Sit down with the student and figure out how many hours the student can work each week without running out of financial aid compensation for work-study.

Orientation of Work-Study: Tour the buildings, explain their functions, the people in those buildings, and make introductions to other staff members that they may need to interact with on a regular basis. (If they are to be office personnel, make sure they know how to work the copiers in the buildings, fax machines if there is one, take them to the mail room and explain the difference in the mailing procedures).

Confidentiality: If your works study is privy to student records, personnel issues, or any other records, confidentiality must be stressed. It is the supervisor's responsibility to discuss this serious issue with their student assistants.

Greeting Students, Visitors, TSC Employees: Please instruct them to smile and immediately ask if they can help the individual, especially if they are the only one in the office or if they are sitting in a more visible location. If they can help the individual, that is great. If they need assistance, ask them to quickly direct their questions to someone in the office who is more knowledgeable, or if they have to refer them to another office, tell them to CALL the individual first. We do not want them to be directing the individual to an empty office or have to wait for a long period of time. If there is another individual in the office and they have to direct the individual to another building, have them walk the individual to that other office. If they are the only one in the office, they need to give specific directions. If they are assistants to the maintenance department, they also need to be polite and helpful to visitors.

Walt Disney trained his maintenance crew with quite a lot of detail, he realized that they might be the first people that visitors encountered and he wanted to make sure that they were informed, polite, and helpful at all times. Our work-study are like Mr. Disney's crew, they are sometimes the first line that the public will have to deal with. We need to make sure they are also informed, polite, and helpful at all times.

Answering the phones: If your work-study is required to answer the telephone in the office, please instruct them on how to do so: “Trinidad State College, this is _____. Can I help you?” If you would like them to identify the office, make sure you add that in the greeting. The key is to make sure that they answer the phone with a smile on their face. It is a proven fact that we answer the phone with a friendly tone when we answer the phone with a smile on our face.

Hours worked: Work-study should only earn pay for the actual hours worked. This is a training experience and it is understood that there is not always work that is available. However, it is a negative message to the work-study to give compensation when they are not being productive. Please notify the work-study that they are not to spend an excessive amount on their cell phones or other personal devices while completing work-study hours. If you do not have work available for them, could somebody else in the office or adjacent offices use their assistance? Does the area need to be picked up? With all of the budget cuts, maintenance personnel could certainly use assistance when it comes to the windows in our offices or buildings.

Appropriate Clothes: All work-study employees are asked to make sure that their clothing is appropriate for their job assignment. We understand that the appropriate dress for students is jeans, t-shirt, and either boots or tennis shoes. We ask that students working in offices dress appropriately. Student employees will be representing the College and while we don’t expect them to go out and purchase new clothes, we also don’t expect them to dress inappropriately. Speak to your student employees about any special clothes or equipment needed for your department.

Individual departments may have their own particular dress code, please enforce your own dress code for your student employees.

Employee Motivation & Recognition: As with any other employee, appreciation is a strong motivational tool. Work-study employees may need more mentoring than we expect. Recognition of their efforts in praise that lets the work-study know you value them as part of your team, variation of duties with more responsibilities, small tokens (fast food certificates, Wal-Mart card, etc...) or other motivational tactics will help insure that your work-study feels valued and will be a loyal employee. Please don’t forget them for Staff Appreciation Day.

Tips to Handle an Unmotivated Employee

Interceding With An Unmotivated Employee (Adapted from "Supervising Student Employees in Academic Libraries" by David Baldwin):

- **Determine Cause:**

1. Doesn't Like the Work? (i.e. Job isn't what they thought it would be. H H different job in or out of dept.?) .
2. Bored? (enrich job; add other duties).
3. Feeling Unappreciated?
4. Other?

Valuing and Empowering Your Employee (Adapted From "Supervising and Managing People" McGraw-Hill, 1996)::

- Involvement in decisions—individually and via the team
- Granting authority, when possible/appropriate to “fix” things/situations (i.e. in customer service situations)—you’re trusting and valuing their judgment...
- Tie performance to compensation
- Assign bigger projects/responsibilities
- Self-scheduling

Building Team Spirit (Adapted From "Supervising and Managing People" McGraw-Hill, 1996):

- Keep Positive; those being negative must change or be terminated
- Create supportive environment
- Challenge the team to help their organization
- Unique team ID
- Encourage initiative
- Hold team members accountable

Acknowledge Student Staff Appreciation Weeks.

Ideas on how to celebrate Student Appreciation Weeks for Work-Study:

Low Cost:

- * Make up a gift basket, and have everyone in the office contribute a little something (this is great for their birthdays or Christmas, as well.)
- * Treat Day - full-time staff bring in treats/lunch for student workers.
- * Take pictures - post employee pictures and list what wonderful things they do for your department. If it is okay with the student, send home to parents and with a letter telling them what an asset they are to your team.
- * Coupon Booklets - this is always a hit with students! Insert coupons for a free can of soda, movie night at the boss' house (everyone needs to redeem for this one), one dozen home baked goodies, etc. Be creative in designing your own coupons.
- * Buy low cost, blank certificates and make up silly awards for students: best telephone voice, best web-surfer, etc.
- * Friendship Plants - take cuttings from a plant in the office and give to each student as a live "connection" to the office.
- * Bright Ideas - spray paint a light bulb gold, screw into a jar of play-dough and make a label around the jar naming who is receiving the "Bright Idea" award.
- * Good Egg Award - buy plastic Easter Eggs, fill with goodies and give out with "Good Egg" certificates. List what the student did to deserve this award.

Free:

- *Pat on the Back. Draw an outline of your hand on a piece of paper. Photocopy enough copies for all students in your office. On each hand write a note that tells the student why they deserve a "Pat on the Back".
- *Use this week as an opportunity to start an award recognition program. Look around the office or at home for a white elephant item. Name the Item for the award (Employee of the Month/Week, Great Idea Award, Gotcha Award --- catch someone in the act of doing something good) and then make the first presentation of it during Student Employment Appreciation Weeks.
- *Decorate an office bulletin board or the office door for the week in recognition of your students.
- *Chalk the sidewalk in front of your office saying "thanks" to your student workers.

Check out these cool web sites for freebies:

123 Greetings: <http://www.123greetings.com>

American Greeting Cards: <http://www.americangreetings.com>

Blue Mountain Greeting Cards: <http://www.bluemountain.com>

Hallmark Greetings: <http://www.hallmark.com>

Prints free Cards: <http://www.printfree.com>

***Whatever you do, let those students know they are appreciated!!**

SUPERVISOR STRATEGIES (HELPING STUDENT WORKERS SUCCEED)

1. **Be an Example:** Model strong work habits through efficient dedicated work practices. Let your own approach to daily work be an example from which students can learn.
2. **Be Flexible:** Understand that student workers are students first and workers second. Though it is important to have high standards on the job, it is also important to be flexible to accommodate academic obligations.
3. **Communicate Expectations:** Communicate the job standards, requirements and expectations to your student workers. One can't assume that these are self-evident to the students, even though they may seem obvious to you.
4. **Give Feedback Frequently:** Provide consistent and appropriate feedback to your student workers. Student workers, like all employees, benefit from feedback in job performance, providing it is communicated with a positive spirit.
5. **Be Fair:** Supervisors who are too lenient are not doing students any favors. Student jobs are "real jobs." Treat student workers as you yourself would like to be treated in a given situation.
6. **Train, Train, Train:** Take time to train your students in important work skills, attitude, and habits - such as perseverance, time management, phone skills, quality service practices, handling difficult situations. This is the "common sense" from which success is made.
7. **Be a Team Player:** As a team leader, develop and nurture the unique contributions of each team member. Take a global perspective.
8. **Give Recognition:** When you see a student "going the extra mile" or "persevering through difficult situations," acknowledge this in front of other staff and peers. People need to feel appreciated.
9. **Share the Vision:** Have regular staff meetings with your student workers and inform them how their work fits into a larger purpose of the department and institution. Remember, purposeful work is meaningful work.
10. **Be an Educator:** To the degree that we each contribute to the lives of others, we are all educators. How can you contribute to the education of your student workers?