

**University of Hawaii at Hilo**  
**PIPES: Pacific Internship Programs for Exploring Science**

**Stages of Intern Development and Advising Strategies**

Stage 1: Arranging and Anticipating an Internship

***Intern:***

Excitement

High motivation

Idealistic and often unrealistic expectations

Self-doubt: Can I really do this? I know how to be a student, but how do I fit into this work setting?

***Advising Strategies***

Negotiate a project proposal/learning agreement with student

Help student:

- ID strengths and goals
- Anticipate, find, and analyze potential problems
- Brainstorm strategies for problem solving
- Understand opportunities, constraints and requirements of office
- Understand as much of the big picture as they can and feel like they are part of the team
- Goal should be to empower student to take an active role in learning

Stage 2: Orientation and Establishing Identity

***Intern:***

Preoccupied with taking in new information and establishing identity in work place.

Either overwhelmed by so much new information or underwhelmed by the simple or routine tasks they are requested to do as a newcomer.

Feel very dependent on supervisor for guidance.

***Advising Strategies***

Conduct orientation for intern – introduce to work setting, people, resources.

Help intern realize that this is a stage of adjustment for everyone – a “getting-to-know” period

Regularly scheduled meetings between supervisor and intern are helpful at this time

Revisit learning agreement – so they

- Remind themselves of requirements, opportunities, and resources discussed earlier.
- Also testing that initial vision to make sure it is still correct and appropriate

### Stage Three: Reconciling Expectations with Reality

#### ***Intern***

Established a work routine, no longer feels like a stranger.

Reality of work place sets in.

Differences between school and work become apparent – there are no incompletes, there are serious consequences for being late or missing work.

Sometimes a sense of disappointment or negative attitude, especially if things are not going as expected with project(s).

#### ***Advising Strategies***

Help intern reevaluate expectations; identify new realistic goals for learning.

Help intern reflect on skills and successful strategies already used or learned through feedback about specific activities.

### Stage Four: Productivity and Independence

#### ***Intern***

Increased learning and productivity on site.

Focus energy on accomplishing tasks and learning goals.

Feel integrated into work group, receptive to evaluation.

Self confident and self aware.

Usually able to negotiate changes effectively.

#### ***Advising Strategies***

Midterm performance evaluations using standard format for office to assist in remainder of internship.

### Stage Five: Closure

#### ***Intern***

Aware internship is almost done.

Variety of responses depending on site and intern:

- sense that neither their coming or going was noticed
- hang on past end date, not sure how or when to leave site comfortably
- some begin to lose focus or enthusiasm

#### ***Advising Strategies***

Discuss final paper or portfolio – relate to continued activities of office.

Discuss career options and continued opportunities.

Conduct an exit interview.

Offer recommendation letters.