

**ASE Student Career Development**

**Mentor/Intern Training**

**MENTOR SESSION**

Objectives

At the end of this training you will:

* Understand the importance of the mentor in the ASE student career development process.
* Understand your role as a mentor - how you will work with an intern to help them transition from the role of a student to an automotive service professional.
* Understand the role and expectations of the intern in the workplace.
* Understand and know yourself better so that your workplace behaviors and actions are planned, deliberate, and contribute to positive encounters with others in the workplace.
* Be better prepared for you to meet and work with your intern.

This training consists of three kinds of activities.

* Listening to your trainer explain ideas and concepts
* Video and interactive experiences, which illustrate interpersonal skills
* Discussing ideas and sharing with other participants and your instructor

**Welcome**

The ASE Student Career Development program consists of Business and Education partnerships between both automotive dealers and aftermarket service employers and high school automotive technology schools.  
   
Our goals are:

* To develop career-ready, entry-level automotive technicians and service personnel.
* To give high school automotive technology students the opportunity and guidance to explore rewarding automotive careers.
* To provide the tools and support to develop and practice the skills needed to succeed in the industry.

High school students are invited to pursue ASE Student qualification. In addition to taking the academic courses toward their high school degrees, they take challenging classroom/laboratory courses in basic automotive technology, collision repair & refinishing, or diesel technology.  
   
The goal of the ASE Student Career Development model is a 320-hour internship opportunity, which can take place during the summer between the junior and senior year.  
   
During this internship, students work alongside a trained and qualified mentor - usually an ASE-certified Master Technician - to help prepare them for entry-level career positions or advanced studies in automotive technology.

**The Intern**

The internship is first and foremost an extension of the educational experience. At the same time, it is an introduction in the real world of work. During the internship, the Student will be:

* Working on customers’ cars
* Earning a wage
* Beginning the process of acquiring a professional-grade hand-tool set
* Working with a mentor, who supervises the quality of their work

The intern should be exposed to a variety of automotive technology experiences, limited only by their training, ability and results. In addition to applying the technical knowledge acquired in the classroom, they learn the importance of teamwork as they:

* Specify and acquire parts
* Seek advice, information and repair assistance from others
* Interact with supervisors and peers, both within your department and others in the workplace organization
* Acquire customer relations experience

The intern is responsible for:

* Accepting direction as education not as criticism
* Being realistic concerning their abilities
* Being serious minded at work
* Being productive – staying focused on the work at hand and efficient with your time

**The Mentor**

One of the key elements of the ASE Student Career Development model is the selection and training of ASE Certified automotive professionals as mentors. A mentor is someone who works directly with ASE Students in the workplace as they gain real-world experience working on customer vehicles.

The mentor guides the student as they learn the profession by:

* Setting a good example. Showing and explaining how to prepare for technician work.
* Explain how to engage a repair job from the first contact with the customer. Proper documentation for payment purposes. Correct warranty compliance from the first test drive and vehicle return to the customer.
* Explain and demonstrate how to order parts and manage cores when required.
* Explain how to get authorization for unexpected repairs or observed problems when vehicle safety is a factor.
* Understand and adapt attitudes and behaviors which will encourage questions from the intern.
* Help the intern manage mistakes that he/she may make in ways that teach preventative actions in the future and in ways which leave the intern freely encouraged and educated rather than scolded.
* Maintain heightened awareness of the intern’s strengths and particular work skills. Then provide feedback regarding these professional strengths.
* Engage in conversations which teach and reinforce the attitudes of career professionalism.

**Welcome aboard!**

Who Are Your Mentors?

Almost without exception, if you’ve been in the workforce for any length of time you have encountered one or more mentors who have guided or shaped your career. The following list may help you remember the various encounters you’ve had with your mentors.

**What Mentors Do**

1. Set a good example with their own behavior.
2. Live by and teach a philosophy of life.
3. Understand and aspire to the mission at hand.
4. Have complete confidence in their own identity.
5. Teach others what they know.
6. Delight in the success of others.
7. Take the initiative to establish relationships.
8. Look for the strengths in others and give spontaneous feedback.
9. Value others and enjoy their company.
10. Ask questions to help others articulate future goals.
11. Relate to others with the assumption that they are capable.
12. Encourage others to aspire and then pursue the aspiration.
13. Encourage others toward more knowledge.
14. Teach others more than is required.
15. Send continuous signals of acceptance.
16. Become an ally during times of trouble.
17. Suggest and teach behavioral changes without scolding.
18. Point out behaviors which may compromise or sabotage personal goals.
19. Manage disappointment without losing faith in the person or the mission.
20. See strengths in others even before they see them in themselves.
21. Often think of others in terms of possibilities.
22. Point out opportunities, even those remotely related.
23. Encourage others to take charge and guide their own lives.
24. Communicate clearly and with intensity.
25. Help people discover themselves.

When one looks at the list of what mentors do, it can be overwhelming. In reality, mentoring is the spontaneous handling of special moments which routinely evolve in the process of daily living.

Mentors help us discover and develop our personal strengths.

Think of the mentors in your life and discuss your experiences with other participants.

**Role of the Mentor**

The responsibilities of the mentor during the internship are broken into six categories:

1. First and foremost, you are a **role model**. Your work habits, your attention to safety in the workplace, your attitude toward work assignments, and your behavior in general will be observed and absorbed by the intern.
2. You are a **consultant** – the first and primary resource for information and guidance. This role will also be an excellent indicator that you have obtained mentor status. Understand that an authentically-asked question is never foolish, regardless of how obvious the answer may be.
3. You are a **coach**. Verbalize your observations and make suggestions regarding both the intern’s behavior in the workplace and how to approach particular work assignments. Where possible and appropriate, introduce new ideas, possibilities and opportunities that may be outside the intern’s awareness.
4. You are an **ally** in times of trouble, such as behavioral errors or mistakes. Use these opportunities as teachable moments.
5. You are an **evaluator**, providing feedback in the form of praise, criticism or suggestions, as appropriate.
6. You are a **guide**, as the intern builds a professional identity or reputation.

**Understanding People**

*The best way to get along with others is to understand how people work.*

If we made a list of all the different cars that have been manufactured in the last five years, we would have a very long list with a lot of variety. Yet, with all of this variety, much about automobiles is fundamentally the same. They all have an engine, a transmission, usually with some kind of torque converter, a suspension, windshield wipers, etc. You get the idea – different cars, yet a lot of the same “stuff.”

People also come in a wide variety. But, like automobiles, within this variety there is a lot of the same stuff. The best way to get along with others and to find happiness in your own life is to understand how people work. After all, you are a person first and a technician second.

For the purposes of this training, we will describe people as having four important components:

1. The **thinking** component.
2. The **things I’ve already learned** component.
3. The “**this is really important to me**” component.
4. The **emotional** component.

*Thinking is talking to yourself.*

The ability to talk to ourselves and create visual images in our head is one way we use our intelligence. We can invent new things, make plans of action, and solve problems.

**PROBLEM SOLVING REQUIRES ACCCURATE THINKING**

If a customer complains, “My brakes are all messed up,” about all we can reasonably infer is that something is wrong. Instead, if that same customer were to say, “You know, I get this awful grinding sound and my brake pedal actually feels like it’s pulsing up and down when I stop,.” we now have much more “problem-solving” information.

When it comes to dealing with other people what is actually inaccurate thinking can **seem sensible** when in reality it is **not**.

“He’s such a jerk.” There is no real information here. But it may seem like there is. What happens is this: such nonsensical phrases provide “**cues**” to the pre-conscious part of our thinking.

*A lot of our thinking depends on the* ***things we have already learned.***

Almost all of our thinking depends on information we have already learned. You could not imagine your kitchen sink if you had not already seen it. The “things I’ve already learned” component is very powerful in our daily living. One of the unusual qualities of this component is that much of the time we don’t even know it’s in operation. Let’s use driving a car as an example. Most of our actions, once we have learned to drive, seem automatic to us. We don’t think, “I have to move my arms in a circle with the steering wheel to turn right.” Instead, we just do it. Yet, we know that if our arms and legs were not directed by our brains, there would be no meaningful motion. We are able to drive because we have learned to drive.

Automatic actions happen because of pre-conscious thinking. We do these things without thinking, based on what we have learned from an earlier time and our repetition of that action.

Pre-consciousness is sort of like memory, but more complicated. An important understanding of our pre-conscious lessons-learned is that we do not know what all of them are; we a cue to call up what we have stored in our pre-conscious mind.

Another important component of the things we have already learned is that they lead to **expectations**. If, for example, you go to any one of the popular fast food restaurants, you would be surprised to see linen tablecloths and a wait staff. It’s simply not what you expect**.**

Expectations have a great deal to do with satisfaction. If you are able to exceed what a customer expects from a service repair experience, they walk away “pleased.” On the other hand, if you fail to meet their expectations, you end up with a disappointed or dissatisfied customer.

**Expectations are mostly invisible**. If, as part of this training, you were instructed to remove your shoes and trade them with someone in the class, you would immediately realize this is not something you expected. You would probably feel uneasy and refuse to do it. On the other hand, if instructor announced that every participant would get a 100 dollar bill for lunch allowance, you would be happy and surprised. This was not expected.

**We expect things from ourselves.** We, as human beings, have a very interesting quality due to our intellect: we can be participants and observers at the same time. If you are shooting basketball free throws, you can throw the ball and evaluate yourself, at the same time. That was a great shot.” or “That was a pretty bad shot.”

**We expect things from others**, also. When the traffic signal turns green what do you expect the driver in front of you to do? What about the driver approaching the red signal on the cross street to the intersection? Traffic laws have set established common expectationsfor various traffic situations. Thus “everyone knows” what to do to avoid a collision and to keep traffic moving effectively.

*Our thinking is influenced by the* ***things that are important to us*** *– our value system*

As we move through life, we tend to be attracted to and accumulate things and ideas that which are important to us. Do you have certain prized possessions? Of course you do. However, notice that what are considered “prized possessions” differ from person to person.

For those items that we consider prized possessions, certain things are true. We will spend money on them, we will put forth effort for them, we may endure discomfort and/or work hard to create, maintain, and use them, and we will be consistent over time in the process of enjoying them

Ideas, rules of personal conduct, and concepts can also be prized possessions. We hold dear certain ideas of “how things should be.” For example, how would you feel if you caught a friend snooping through your personal things and then taking some? This is behavior you would not expect from a friend. For most of us, the definition of a “friend” would be a person who is honest, loyal, and trustworthy. Our definition of friendship is a prized possession, and is part of our value system.

When people make plans to pursue a desire or a goal, our value system, and our experience (the “things I have already learned” component) get put together. The outcome of this thinking is the emotion of desire and a plan to pursue that desire.

The professional automotive technician has a **desire** to pursue or carry out a repair. Of course, the knowledge of how to do the repair and the skill of **performing** the repair are also essential elements. Notice, however, that without the **desire** to do the repair correctly, knowledge and skill becomes meaningless.

The level at which you **value** your role as an automotive service professional will be the most important factor in determining the **quality** of your work and your level of **satisfaction** in your career.

*Our* ***emotions*** *come from what we think an event means, not from the event itself.*

Our emotions are stimulated by our thinking, our experience, and our value system. Imagine someone is serving a piece of pie and suddenly coughs all over it just before placing it before you. Your reaction would no doubt be loss of appetite, an “I don’t want that anymore!” kind of reaction.

Let’s look more carefully at what happens. Someone coughing on your food is a “cue.”

You see it, you hear it. The pre-conscious brain, the “things I’ve already learned” component, immediately tells you a story about germs. You don’t “hear” this story in your head, but your emotion component does and you lose your appetite.

Emotion itself is a physical event in our bodies. When we are nervous, our heart rate speeds up, we perspire, and we tend to fidget more. When we are really happy, we move more easily, we laugh, we often talk louder and more rapidly, etc.

The ability to **express** our emotions is separate from our ability to **experience** our emotions. We can **say** what we think and we can

**show** our emotions.

How we express our emotions, especially in the work place, is very important. In fact, when people get in trouble in the work place, it is almost always because of how they express their emotions rather than incompetent work skills.

*People in the service business are always targets for customer frustration.*

One of the most important roles mentors have is to help us understand the source of our emotions and how to express them in useful and appropriate ways.

**Things I Can Do to Help Me Manage My**

**Emotions**

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This will be a good time to watch the video “Managing Your Emotions.” During this video, you will hear an explanation of the concepts you have just read about. You will also have an opportunity to see mentoring in action. Notice how the mentor teaches the younger technician how to manage himself in a more professional way and how the mentor uses the same technique to deal with his own emotions.

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**EVENTS**

**HAPPEN**

We take them in

**See Hear Touch Taste Smell**

We interpret – give meaning – to the event based on:

What we want

What we have already learned

What we expected

What we value

We talk to ourselves

– THINKING –

about the “Event”

Conscious Pre-Conscious

Talk (Thinking) Talk (Thinking)

EMOTIONAL RESPONSE

We “PLAN” – to express our Emotion and what Action to Take

We “REACT” – by expressing Emotion and Taking Action

**ACTION TAKEN**

**EVENT THINKING OUTCOME**

**Accurate Communication**

*The ability to ask questions clearly will help you obtain the information you need.*

In the course of your work as an automotive service professional, others will be seeking information from you. Your technical expertise, clear thinking, and good judgment will often need to be explained to the customer, the service adviser, or other technicians. At times you may be seeking information or advice from others. The ability to ask questions clearly will help you to obtain the information you need.

Remember that thinking is talking to yourself. You “hear” your own voice in your head. Clear thinking requires the use of words that are truly descriptive of what is being described. For example, “That rear caliper is all messed up,” does not give the listener any usable information beyond “it doesn’t work.” This would be better:

“The dust boots failed on the rear caliper so it no longer floats properly. This means reduced effectiveness upon braking and improper release when not braking. The improper release has caused excessive pad and rotor wear, no doubt a loss in fuel efficiency, and probably excessive heat. I should look at the bearings and seals as well. They can be damaged by excessive heat.”

Of course, clear thinking and the accurate communication of that thinking require many more words. The key to accurate communication is to have the message very clear in your head before you speak.

**Sending Clear Verbal Messages**

In order to send a clear verbal message, you need to be clear in your own mind first about the purpose of the message.

Most communication between people has one of the following purposes:

**Reasons for communication**

- To ask a question

- To state reality

- To explain a theory

- To ask for something

- To explain emotion (how you feel)

- To resolve a problem

The following dialog will help you see the differences in these types of communication:

*Situation: Intern needs to pick up dry cleaning before 5 p.m. and just remembered while at work.*

**Intern:** What time is it? (Question)

**Mentor:** It is 3:32. (Stating reality)

**Mentor:** I think the clock may be off a few minutes, though. The power went out a couple of hours ago and the clock may have been set wrong. (Explain theory)

**Intern:** I just remembered that I need to pick up my dry cleaning before 5 today. Would it be all right if I left early? (Question)

**Mentor:** You put me in an awkward situation here. The work load is backed up and the boss will be mad if he sees you left and knows I said it was okay. (Explain emotion)

**Mentor:** I have an idea though. Tom in parts often leaves on errands. We should ask him if he can help. (Problem resolution)

One of the best ways to ensure a clear message is to state the **purpose** of the message first. For example, if you have a question, start by telling the listener “I have a question and could use your help.” This will help prepare the listener for the purpose of your message.

**How to Listen Accurately**

*Focus your attention on the speaker.*

Listening to another person speaking is more complicated than it may seem. The problem is that our brain may start talking to us before the other person has finished speaking. For example, if a customer says to a technician, “Now there is a big oil spot on my passenger seat …,” the technician may say in his or her head, or even out loud, “Well, I didn’t make the spot. Don’t blame me!” The inside thinking could prevent the technician from hearing the rest of the message, which was, “I think my grandson did it. Do you know how to get it off?”

We call this “data blocking.” We think we already know what the person is going to say, so we do not pay attention to the actual message.

This is not the only reason we may “data block.” We may block data because we already have a theory of our own that we believe is simply more credible than the other person’s. Or, we may simple not believe the other person is credible.

Good listening requires that we stop talking in our head about what **we** think and focus our attention on the speaker. It is hard to think in terms of “not reacting to what is being said,” so instead, think of what you will do. “I will listen to understand the speaker’s thinking and theory about whatever it is they are talking about. Listening to **their theory** does not mean I agree or disagree with what they are saying.”

The next step is to prove to the speaker that you heard his or her theory by saying it back. For example:

**Customer:** I never use my parking brake because I want it to work if I really need it.

**Tech:** Oh, so you’re thinking that by not using it you are “saving it” for when you really need it.

**Customer:** Yeah. That’s what I mean.

Now the technician can explain what happens to the cables and other mechanical parts if they are not “exercised” on a regular basis.

A listener can also help a speaker send a clear message by asking questions relevant to the topic at hand. For example:

**Customer:** This car is really messed up. You can tell at every stoplight.

**Tech:** Does it seem to run rough when stopped? Is it hard to accelerate because there is no power?

**Customer:** Yeah. The first one. Rough. Shakes the car. After I put my foot on the gas when the light’s green, it’s okay.

**Other Things that Can Influence Our Communication – Personal Styles**

*Our personal communication style can have a big impact on the messages we send and receive.*

So far in our work towards understanding people, we have focused on ways in which people function in basically the same way. Yet, like cars which are basically alike, there are still some very real differences between models. This same reality applies to people. We are all alike in many ways, yet we are all unique as well. People come in different styles and as we interact with one another, the personal style of each person can be a major factor in how the interaction unfolds.

We can learn more about our own personal style by completing the *Personal Style Discussion Stimulator*. The *Stimulator* is comprised of a group of questions about our personal preferences. How you respond to the questions will give you a suggestion as to what your style probably is.

**This Stimulator is not a test.** It is only a way to help illustrate your personal style. The mostly true/mostly false answer to each question is never right or wrong. It is simply a description of your preference.

**There are no good or bad styles.** All styles promote certain strengths and talents that are useful in the workplace.

Your intern will also complete the *Personal Style Discussion Stimulator*. You’ll learn about all of the styles and you and your intern can discuss how your personal styles may compare and contrast with one another.

Knowing something about our personal style helps us explain our own behavior as well as better understand the behavior of others. Our personal style is developed early in life and tends to remain much the same for our entire lives. Our style can be observed in almost everything we do.

**The Determined Person**

*The Determined person is always “on task.” Even if they are watching TV, it is because that’s a show they want to see. Determined people think in terms of action plans. They have clearly defined goals and want to know only what will help or hinder them in accomplishing their daily plan. Decisions are calculated, but quickly made.*

**The Social Person**

*The Social person consults and trusts their feelings first. This sense of comfort or discomfort gives direction. They are very aware of how interactions are going with other people. The Social person thinks in terms of how others will react and what the roles of others will be in the course of their own daily life.*

**The Detailed Person**

*The Detailed person needs lots of information. They make careful decisions regarding behavior and will want to maintain “standards.” Things not “in order” can be a source of discomfort. The Detailed person thinks in terms of what steps need to be taken and what they need to know to take them.*

**The Predictable Person**

*The Predictable person feels comfortable with structure and tradition. They establish a routine which is “sensible” and then stick to it. Major changes in life are often greeted with anxiety or frustration. Predictable people think in terms of keeping things on track while avoiding upheaval or conflict.*

Let’s take a look at ways our personal style can affect our communication:

**1. The Determined Person**

The effect on the messages you **send:**

* You may sound like a “know-it-all.
* Your tone may be condescending.
* You may take over the conversation.
* You may sound “demanding” when you think you are just “being clear.
* You may talk too fast and move from one idea to another too quickly.

The effect on the messages you **receive:**

* You may interrupt others before they’ve expressed all of their ideas.
* You may start thinking about what you’re going to say instead of listening.
* You may discount what you are being told because you have a “better” theory in mind.
* You may not pay attention to the emotional signals being sent with the information.

What you can do to fit in better:

* Listen more carefully
* Ask what others think.
* Be more gentle in your speech
* Slow down and enjoy the ride.

**2. The Social Person**

The effect on the messages you **send:**

* You may talk too much about things not relevant to the task at hand.
* You need to make certain you know the difference between when you’re feeling something and when you’re thinking something.
* You may take over the conversation.
* You may need to narrow your scope and stay more focused on using information words instead of feeling words.
* You need to have a clear reason in mind about why you are sending a message.

The effect on the messages you **receive:**

* You may hear the feeling part very well, but miss some information.
* You may let your own feelings get in the way of receiving information.
* You may have a hard time waiting your turn to say what you feel and think.
* You may be distracted by some other event within your awareness.

What you can do to fit in better:

* Observe the immediate situation more carefully before you jump in.
* Share the stage – there’s lots of room.
* You don’t need to hide your emotions, but you may want to contain them.
* Remember that there is a job to do.

**3. The Detailed Person**

The effect on the messages you **send:**

* You may spend too much time describing how you came to understand something instead of just saying what needs to be understood.
* You may give detailed descriptions of situations when fewer details may be more efficient.
* You may have a more difficult time describing the bigger picture.
* You may avoid telling how you feel but talk a lot about what you think.

The effect on the messages you **receive:**

* You may ask questions which stray or detract from the main point.
* You may “get stuck” thinking about part of what is being said and not hear the rest of the details.
* You may have a hard time listening to general information; you want to know “what this means.”
* You may have a hard time hearing what you need to hear in order to make a decision.

What you can do to fit in better:

* Pay more attention to those around you, especially how they are feeling or what they are thinking.
* Watch out for your own perfectionism – not everything needs to be perfect.
* Take input gracefully.
* Remind yourself that sometimes there are no definite answers to a situation.

**4. The Predictable Person**

The effect on the messages you **send:**

* You may assume others already understand something they don’t.
* You may have a difficult time exploring concepts that are new to you.
* You may avoid explaining what you need and what you want to happen.
* You may have a difficult time explaining priorities.

The effect on the messages you **receive:**

* You may have a hard time paying attention to something you don’t agree with.
* You may stop listening and just “give in” to keep the peace.
* You may have a difficult time sorting and prioritizing new ideas.
* You may experience feeling of anxiety if you think someone is asking you to change.

What you can do to fit in better:

* Know that change is always a bit unsettling to you, and take a few deep breaths.
* Offer possible solutions instead of talking against proposed ideas.
* Sort out the details of a situation – you feelings may make it difficult to prioritize things.
* Tell others what you really feel and think, even though it may be tempting to tell them what you assume they want to hear.

There are other factors that can influence the ability of people of any style to communicate accurately as well, such as:

* Fatigue
* Time pressures
* Sickness
* Personal issues

**Tips for Getting Along with Other Styles**

If you work with the **Determined person**, they will:

* Want to “get things done”
* Prefer to “stick to business” - there will be little time for social interaction
* Want to know who is in charge of what
* Expect quick and clearly defined decisions.

If you work with the **Social person**, they will:

* Want to know who is involved
* Talk about how everyone feels about the situation at hand
* Like the “around the family table,” “let’s talk about it” style of interaction
* Want to be directly involved with all decisions that are in their sphere of operation

If you work with the **Detailed person**, they will:

* Need lots of information about any project
* Want specifications or other details that will allow them to assess the “correctness” of things
* Be a perfectionist, maybe to a fault, causing others to become frustrated
* Be critical and judgmental of others because they don’t measure up to “standards

If you work with the **Predictable person**, they will:

* Want things to run at their normal pace with everyone getting along
* Want to get the job done the way it has always been done
* Tend to be agreeable rather than express true opinions
* Want to preserve the already-established organization

**Understanding Expectations**

Our expectations of a situation greatly influence how we react to a situation. Stated another way, our expectations help set-up our emotional response. An example will help us illustrate how this works.

Sam is taking both math and history in the same semester.

Sam has always been an excellent math student, but struggles in his history class. Both classes have final exams in the same week. Sam decides not to study for his math exam as he has gotten A’s on all the previous tests and believes he knows the concepts very well. On the other hand, Sam has gotten mostly D’s on his history tests, so he devotes all of his energy to studying for this exam.

When Sam gets his test grade in history, he discovers that he got a “B” on the exam. He is very excited – this is the best grade he has ever gotten in history. The next day, Sam gets his math grade back and discovers that he got a “B” in math as well. Sam is very disappointed to have received a “B” in math

Notice that in both cases, the grade Sam received was exactly the same, yet he was happy with one and disappointed with the other. The grade itself does not explain the difference in Sam’s reactions. Rather, Sam’s **expectations** made the difference in his emotional reaction – he did not expect to do well in history, and therefore was excited to get a “B.” But he expected to do very well in math, so he was disappointed with the “B.”

You have expectations about the internship, some you may already be aware of and some you may not be. Understanding your expectations can help you prepare for the situations you will encounter.

As you think about having an intern, what do you believe you need from them and how would you like them to behave? Briefly stated, what do you expect from your intern? We will be discussing this in a few minutes. Use the space below to write a few of your expectations.

**What I Expect from My Intern**

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**What Will My Intern Expect from Me?**

It is also useful to pose the question, “What will my intern expect of me?” Again, make a few entries in the space provided below. We will make a flip chart list in a few minutes.

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**More About Mentoring – Tips, Tools and Resources**

In this section, we discuss in greater detail some of the expectations your intern will likely have of you and provide some guidance and tips to enhance the mentoring experience.

**Patience**

Patience is not a virtue that some have and others don’t; it is a product of two fundamental components: accurate expectations and an understanding of the situation at hand.

For example, if you are attending a major sporting event, you **expect** crowds – lines at the gate and concessions, among others. Accurate anticipation of the circumstances helps us be patient when, in other situations, where expectations are different, we would not.

To illustrate the **understanding** part of patience, consider you are in line at a Post Office and the customer at the service window is taking “forever” with his transaction. Then you notice that the customer is totally blind. Does this affect how patient you are with the situation? Probably yes.

Here are some specific expectations for the interns to consider:

The internship is first and foremost and extension of the educational experience. **Expect that the** **intern is in a learning process**. Answer questions directly, with details that teach. Encourage the intern to ask questions, and avoid sarcastic responses.

**Expect mistakes**; they will occur. Use the opportunity to provide encouragement but also to reinforce the issues of responsibility and accountability. Focus first on correcting the mistake and then avoiding future such mistakes.

**Expect to explain some things more than once**. Some skills are developed through repetition and practice.

**Expect the intern’s work pace to be slower** than that of an experienced professional. Part of the learning process is developing proficiency and learning how and when to employ time-saving moves. This is largely about developing experience.

**Expect lower productivity**. A large part of the internship is learning how to work and developing proficiency, both of which lead to productivity growth.

To help with the understanding component of patience:

The intern is a student. They may have had a part-time job sometime in the past but the internship is likely their first venture in a professional environment.

The transition from the classroom to the workplace is not always seamless. It requires learning – and teaching – many of the concepts that your experience allows you to take for granted.

Interns are young and youth brings with it certain realities;

1. Young people tend to be more impulsive than adults.
2. Young people typically have a strong desire to please, which can lead to:
   1. A reluctance to ask questions
   2. Making assumptions
   3. An inability to accurately assess their own capabilities
3. Young people need to feel that they “fit in” more than adults.
4. Young people need lots of assurance.
5. Young people often struggle against authority.
6. Young people tend to move back and forth between acting like adults and acting like a child.

**Understanding Motivation**

Is it possible to motivate someone else? The short answer is no. And not everyone is motivated to accomplish the same goals.

How is someone motivated? A look at the stages of motivation may provide a better understanding of what you can do as a mentor to help interns become motivated and successful.

1. Desire. In order to be motivated, a person must first desire to attain a goal. They must have an interest in the outcome. The goal must “fit” into their value system.
2. Plan. Once a person has determined that they desire to accomplish a particular goal, they must develop a plan to achieve it. What are the steps they will need to work through?
3. Feasibility. How reasonable are the chances to achieve the goal at hand? Is it achievable? Does the effort to achieve it justify the benefit from achieving it? Do I have the skill to do it? This is often where motivation breaks down.
4. Action. Or execution. This is also an area where some of the system can fail.
5. Feedback. A tangible result, or praise from someone respected reinforces accomplishment.

As a mentor, you will have the opportunity to influence the motivation of the intern in almost all of the areas above, with the notable exception of desire.

**Mentoring Do’s and Don’ts**

**Confine mentoring activities to the workplace and the profession of automotive service/technology.**

You may become comfortable and enthusiastic in your mentor role. Be careful not to extend it into other areas.

**You are not “the parent,” a counselor or social worker.**

Students may be in a conflicted situation with their families. If an intern brings up family matters, especially if they are seeing advice or intervention, refer the student back to their school teacher or work-based learning coordinator. Encourage them to seek appropriate help but explain that this kind of help is outside your area of expertise or responsibility.

**Never loan an intern money or ask an intern for money.**

**Mentors are not “buddies.”**

It is not appropriate to “hang out” with your intern. Also do not encourage, explicitly or implicitly, an intern to violate laws or disregard school or company policy.

**The intern expects their mentor to do things correctly and the right way.**

Overuse of profanity, enabling underage drinking or violating standards of social or professional practices will undermine your authority and status.

**A Checklist for Mentors**

**Have a personal plan of action for daily behavior.**

Decide what you are going to do, how you are going to do it, and when you are going to do it.

**Keep others informed.**

Let your associates know what is going on in the internship. Include the intern’s instructor or work-based learning coordinator from the school.

**Be accepting and kind of others.**

Avoid making critical remarks about others and engaging in jokes, stories or spreading rumors that belittle or disrespect others.

**Have a clear sense of priorities but be able and adaptable to change plans.**

**Other Workplace Situations**

**Managing Emotions**

Whether coming out an unexpected situation or a frustrating event, emotions present from time-to-time in the workplace. This is true for mentors and interns, alike.

When faced with these situations, professionals go through an internal process to diffuse the emotions, rather than irrationally losing their temper.

* They interrupt what they are doing to think about the situation
* They label and acknowledge their feelings about the situation.
  + Useful labels: I’m hurt; I’m scared; I’m frustrated, etc.
  + Not useful labels: This sucks; He’s a jerk; They’re stupid; I always get dumped on; etc.

**Ways to work off the chemistry of emotion:**

* Take a walk or get involved with some kind of non-work-related physical activity for a few minutes.
* Talk with someone who can help you settle down.
* Take perspective; use clear words.
  + Focus on what to do now, rather than what should have been done.
  + Identify additional information that is useful to get and how to get it.
* Make a deliberate plan to address the situation.

**When others are Confrontive**

**Listen first**

Let them completely express their feeling and ideas. You need to know their feelings and thinking in order to make a sensible response

**Acknowledge their feeling and thinking.**

Explain back to them what you understand their feelings to be and the content of their thinking. Ask questions to help you understand their thinking more accurately, if needed.

**Take time to deal with the situation**

It may be useful to tell the other person you need time to think about their situation before you respond. However, set a “date” to revisit the situation. This could be a matter of a few minutes to a few days. Don’t avoid the situation, however.

**Represent yourself accurately**

Describe your feelings and accept responsibility directly, when appropriate. Explain the situation accurately, focusing on your intent. This will help minimize the perception of making excuses.

**Explain your thinking about the situation and say what you CAN DO**

**Agree to disagree, if that’s what it takes to resolve the situation.**

Be aware of your standing in the disagreement; it is okay to disagree with your employer on a course of action, for instance, but you may need to comply, despite your differences.

**Always evaluate what is at stake**

Weigh what is at stake, compared to the well-being of the relationship. It can be easy to lose perspective over a rather trivial matter. Sometimes it’s okay to go along in order to get along.

A mentor doesn’t need to have all the answers. The tools and tips outlined here should better prepare you for your role in the internship and be a consistent example to your assigned intern and peers in the workplace.

To summarize this unit:

* Focus on issues, rather than personalities, when solving problems.
* Define clear strategies for making decisions.
* Control your emotions and express them appropriately.
* Influence other to manage their emotions.
* Adapt to changing circumstances.
* Observe and accurately describe your own behavior.

Being respected as a mentor depends far more on **how you are** than **what you know**.

Experience shows that successful mentors generally have a system for managing themselves; that is, they are able to maintain a sense of their well-being. This enables them to focus on encouraging others to develop a similar sense, as well as problem-solving.

**The First Day**

You can expect that the first day of the internship is going to be busy – for you and your assigned intern. To help get things get off on the right foot, here is a suggestion for your daily plan for the first day:

* Welcome your assigned intern.
* Provide a tour of the facility (don’t forget to point out the restroom).
* Introduce your assigned intern to other employees, especially those who will be working closely with them.
* Provide an orientation of the assigned work area(s).
* Review safety and emergency policies and procedures.
* Explain rules and policies of the company (breaks, lunch, starting time, quitting time, etc.).
* Show the student when, where and how to record work time (time card, time clock, etc.).
* Present an overview of workplace norms/rules of the road, such as
* Visiting other employees
* Eating, drinking at the work station
* Cell phone usage
* Parking
* Workflow – assignments, repair order documentation, parts ordering, key storage, billing/invoicing, etc.
* Who and when to call if late, absent, et

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