

Description: This week, we've got an encouraging conversation with Courtney Lamers, Senior Manager of Member Engagement at MRA, as she shares her expertise on interns and gives you 5 core tools to lead your internship program!

Key Takeaways:

1. Don't let your interns be bored! Give them meaningful work. Interns want to learn and grow.
2. Help your interns explore your business. Have them sit in on meetings, meet other leaders, have lunch with the CEO, etc.
3. Give them opportunities to network! Take them to networking events, get them to interact with other interns, etc.

Resources:

[MRA's Intern Leadership Program](#)

[Interns as a Valuable Resource Guide](#)

[MRA Membership](#)

[About MRA](#)

Let's Connect:

[Guest Bio - Courtney Lamers](#)

[Guest LinkedIn Profile - Courtney Lamers](#)

[Host Bio - Sophie Boler](#)

[Host LinkedIn Profile - Sophie Boler](#)

Transcript:

Transcripts are computer generated -- not 100% accurate word-for-word.

00:00:00:01 - 00:00:03:10

Hello everybody and welcome to 30 minute Thrive,

00:00:03:10 - 00:00:06:20

your go to podcast for anything and everything HR.

00:00:06:21 - 00:00:09:22

Powered by MRA, the Management Association.

00:00:09:23 - 00:00:14:06

Looking to stay on top of the ever changing world of HR, MRA has got you



00:00:14:06 - 00:00:14:18
covered.

00:00:14:18 - 00:00:17:15
We'll be the first, to tell you what's hot, and what's not.

00:00:17:16 - 00:00:21:03
I'm your host, Sophie Boler and we are so glad you're here.

00:00:21:04 - 00:00:22:21
Now it's time to thrive.

00:00:22:21 - 00:00:23:15
Welcome, everyone.

00:00:23:15 - 00:00:24:16
We're glad you're here today

00:00:24:16 - 00:00:28:11
and spending some time with us to learn more about intern programs.

00:00:28:19 - 00:00:32:09
I'm excited to introduce to you our guest, Courtney Lamers.

00:00:32:17 - 00:00:36:03
She's our senior manager of member engagement here at MRA.

00:00:36:03 - 00:00:39:16
A little fun fact about Courtney is she actually started out

00:00:39:16 - 00:00:45:00
as an intern here at MRA, as did I, and worked her way up to project manager

00:00:45:00 - 00:00:49:14
and to where she is now, as senior manager of member engagement.

00:00:49:14 - 00:00:52:04
And she did that all in just over five years.

00:00:52:16 - 00:00:57:16
So I want to start out with a little fun question here today, and do a little blast

00:00:57:16 - 00:01:01:17

from the past, and that is, what is your favorite memory as an intern?

00:01:02:06 - 00:01:04:10
Oh, that's such a good question.

00:01:04:10 - 00:01:06:00
Thanks for having me here too, today.

00:01:06:00 - 00:01:07:09
I'm excited to be back.

00:01:07:09 - 00:01:10:12
I know it's a fun topic and especially a hot topic right now.

00:01:11:07 - 00:01:15:06
Okay, Favorite memory as an intern, I am super fortunate

00:01:15:06 - 00:01:19:06
because I've had a couple of different internship experiences, so I've

00:01:19:19 - 00:01:23:03
I have quite a few memories, but I think one of my favorites, was

00:01:23:03 - 00:01:27:23
when I worked for a company and they had 80 interns on their entire program.

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So I had the chance to work

00:01:29:14 - 00:01:33:12
with a couple of them on a project, and we worked on it.

00:01:33:12 - 00:01:35:01
We went and volunteered for the day,

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and then we put a business case together for our company to volunteer

00:01:39:00 - 00:01:43:06
to reimburse that company and donate some of that money to the nonprofit.

00:01:43:12 - 00:01:48:00
So we presented in front of the entire company, which it was a huge company





00:01:48:16 - 00:01:52:03
that we actually ran into the CEO when we were practicing, and he was like,

00:01:52:03 - 00:01:53:15
What time are you guys on?

00:01:53:15 - 00:01:57:09
And he ended up coming and watching our presentation, and we

00:01:57:09 - 00:02:02:04
ended up winning the whole entire--share tank is what they called it. And

00:02:03:10 - 00:02:05:00
so it was just a very real experience.

00:02:05:00 - 00:02:05:16
And I'm still friends

00:02:05:16 - 00:02:08:21
with both of the interns today, so I think the connections you make

00:02:08:21 - 00:02:11:10
and just the opportunities you have to grow is so important.

00:02:11:10 - 00:02:15:05
But I would say that was probably one of that really stands out to me.

00:02:15:05 - 00:02:17:22
Like I still remember it to this day, but how about you?

00:02:17:22 - 00:02:20:06
I mean, you have had some internship experiences to.

00:02:20:18 - 00:02:22:14
Thowing it back at me.

00:02:22:14 - 00:02:25:11
Yeah, this is a two-way here.--making you participate.

00:02:26:02 - 00:02:29:16
Well, like you said, I feel like I have a lot of memories as an intern.

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Not that it was that long ago, but I did experience

00:02:33:18 - 00:02:38:03
my first true business trip as an intern, and that was super fun.

00:02:38:03 - 00:02:40:10
We got to. I actually went with you.

00:02:40:10 - 00:02:45:00
It was a good time and we got to meet some of our member companies

00:02:45:00 - 00:02:49:23
and some of the interns participating in MRA's intern program, which was super fun.

00:02:50:10 - 00:02:54:23
And then another one was just planning a tailgate event

00:02:54:23 - 00:02:58:12
that we hosted here in Wisconsin office

00:02:59:08 - 00:03:01:22
at MRA It was kind of an open house

00:03:01:22 - 00:03:05:13
where members came and looked at our new facility

00:03:05:13 - 00:03:10:17
and that was just a fun event to plan and see it all kind of lay out.

00:03:11:02 - 00:03:14:00
So we're both a part of your internship itself,

00:03:14:00 - 00:03:17:06
or do you think those are extra things that you got to work on

00:03:17:06 - 00:03:21:05
just to make it a fun experience or like what made it so special, I guess?

00:03:21:07 - 00:03:22:20
Well, I would say it's a little bit of both.

00:03:22:20 - 00:03:24:12
They were part of my intern duties,





00:03:24:12 - 00:03:28:08

but it was also a little extra kind of fun stuff too.

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But I think it helped to just kind of get away from my normal

00:03:33:00 - 00:03:37:01

like I was a marketing intern, you know, like event planning goes

00:03:37:01 - 00:03:41:13

along with that, but business trips don't necessarily go along with that.

00:03:41:13 - 00:03:46:06

So I think it was fun to just get involved in as many things as I could

00:03:46:06 - 00:03:50:05

and as many projects with as many people as I could do and so on.

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So I think it's all about that experience.

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Totally.

00:03:53:08 - 00:03:57:20

Yeah, Well, it is a season to begin hiring interns

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and it's something that's really circling employers minds right now.

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And you actually created MRA's

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Intern Leadership Program that we were just talking about.

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So can you tell us a little bit more about that for the people

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who may not be familiar with it?

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Yeah, absolutely.

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So this program was created really to help interns have an exceptional experience.

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So from an employer standpoint, we use it to help attract and retain interns.

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So some of the companies would put this on their website as a Hey,

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apply for our organization.

00:04:29:05 - 00:04:31:11

We invest in your professional development.

00:04:31:11 - 00:04:34:19

We really want you to have a great experience and grow yourself as a leader.

00:04:35:12 - 00:04:37:22

So from an attraction standpoint, I think it really helped,

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and same with retention.

00:04:39:10 - 00:04:42:22

So they go through this program with almost 100 other interns,

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and they have the opportunity to network.

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So from an intern standpoint,

00:04:47:13 - 00:04:51:10

you really get that professional development experience, plus,

00:04:51:18 - 00:04:56:05

that whole network of 100 other interns, plus, all of the business leaders

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in our community.





00:04:57:06 - 00:04:58:19

So it's about a ten week program.

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We get together with the interns every week,

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really just giving them that real life experience,

00:05:04:22 - 00:05:08:14

and giving them a chance to get together and learn from each other as well.

00:05:09:00 - 00:05:12:12

So from a company standpoint, it's the attraction and retention,

00:05:12:17 - 00:05:15:20

and then providing that exceptional experience for the interns.

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And just kind of taking a step back out here.

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So companies are

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starting to look to hire interns right now.

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So where should they be looking and how should they start hiring interns?

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Yeah, I mean, definitely start early.

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I think time goes so quickly and it's so easy to be like, Oh my gosh,

00:05:35:03 - 00:05:36:01

summer is around the corner.

00:05:36:01 - 00:05:39:21

I really want an internship or an intern to help with some work.

00:05:40:04 - 00:05:44:09



But I think it's important to kind of have that plan of what does that look like?

00:05:45:12 - 00:05:47:09

I definitely think it's important

00:05:47:09 - 00:05:51:10

to get involved in schools, whether it's a university or tech school.

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Both have great opportunities to connect with students

00:05:55:01 - 00:05:58:09

and it's also good to reach out to those departments or student groups.

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I know obviously where at HR Professional organization.

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So we had our recruiting team just went to UW-Whitewater SHRM group the other day.

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So i think it's important to connect with those professors

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or student groups and just the schools and general

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handshake is also a popular tool for internships

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and then networking, I think asking your employees

00:06:19:19 - 00:06:23:00

if they have any referrals or, you know, asking your

00:06:23:05 - 00:06:26:00

your kid's friends if they're looking for an internship.

00:06:26:00 - 00:06:30:05

I think it really is about that network of the people that can

00:06:30:09 - 00:06:33:02

you know, you always get a good referral from somebody that you know.





00:06:33:12 - 00:06:35:11

And then lastly, I would just plug our MRA.

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I know our recruiting team Halter record interns last summer as well.

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So everything from the poll, seeing the sourcing and the screening,

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we can definitely help with that too. Totally.

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And you just mentioned being active and available on college campuses,

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but I'm also right and just seeing that employers

00:06:52:00 - 00:06:55:13

are working as early as high schoolers, too, which is crazy.

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But it's true.

00:06:56:08 - 00:06:58:16

It's like the earlier you can get in front of people,

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honestly, the better at this point.

00:07:00:10 - 00:07:02:18

Yeah, well, I think I mean, every employer has talked

00:07:02:18 - 00:07:05:18

about the war for talent and how hard it is to find talent.

00:07:06:00 - 00:07:09:10

So the earlier you get in front of them and share what your business does,

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what different opportunities there are, that's who those students are going

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to remember and two, five, ten years from now.

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So it's a long term gamble. Sure.

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So let's say you're a company that's never really invested

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in interns, never had the opportunity.

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What is your advice on a company like that?

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Should they be looking into that or interns for everybody?

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And what if it's like a super small company?

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Yeah, it was a lot of questions, you know, it's that.

00:07:36:05 - 00:07:39:09

Well, I think honestly, I don't think size really matters.

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I think you have to take a step back and say, Why do I want an intern?

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Is that

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because we have so much work to do that we can't possibly do it by ourselves?

00:07:48:12 - 00:07:51:15

Is that because you're truly looking to build that talent supply chain?

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So understanding that why first helps you build out your program,

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I think you also have to take a look at do you have enough meaningful work



00:08:00:06 - 00:08:04:10
for the interns because they're trying to get a good experience too.

00:08:04:10 - 00:08:06:03
And I'm not saying you can't file paperwork.

00:08:06:03 - 00:08:09:09
It's all part of the day to day work, but I think they need

00:08:09:09 - 00:08:12:17
to have a capstone project or something that can help them build their resume.

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And I think from an employer standpoint, you'll be really surprised

00:08:15:18 - 00:08:19:09
and happy with the quality of work that interns can do.

00:08:20:10 - 00:08:21:19
And then lastly, I would say,

00:08:21:19 - 00:08:24:20
do you have a manager or someone on your team

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that can take the time to help mentor and coach those interns

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just because a lot of them get is their first job.

00:08:30:05 - 00:08:33:05
So they're going to have questions and they want to do a good job,

00:08:33:05 - 00:08:35:16
so they just have to have the resources to be successful.

00:08:36:02 - 00:08:40:11
Honestly, I interned at a fairly small company and I got to go on a workshop too.

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So again, another memory I actually went down to New Orleans

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for the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina.

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But I think because it was a smaller group that I was working with,

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I had the opportunity to do a lot of different, cool projects

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that sometimes when you were at the bigger companies, it's so specialized,

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so I don't think size of the company really matters.

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But overall, I'd say it's important to understand like what your goals are.

00:09:02:04 - 00:09:06:07
Yeah, I was the only intern here too, and I have no complaints.

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Honestly, I feel like it was the best internship I could have had.

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This is

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because I got special treatment because I was the only one.

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And but no, I think definitely having a capstone

00:09:18:14 - 00:09:22:02
project helped and even having a couple of them, it's

00:09:22:02 - 00:09:25:10
like you can always have them in your back pocket if you if you don't

00:09:25:10 - 00:09:28:14
want to do a project that you're currently working on, pull out your capstone.

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Like it's just nice to always have in your back pocket.

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Well, and companies have gotten

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really creative with different projects interns can work on.

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Like I know there was one company

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that had their interns go through all their standard operating procedures

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and document it, and it was a huge project to take on

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because they had nothing documented, but it really gave the Intern

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a chance to be like, Well, why do you do it like this?

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And just ask and then, I mean, like, you know, I don't know.

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I would do it like that.

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And so to be able for that student to then go say, Yeah, my last company,

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I help document our processes and, you know, make recommendations for change.

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And I think he actually presented it to their senior leadership team,

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which was awesome. It's awesome. Yeah.

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Well, kind of going off of that, let's say a company

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has a group of interns, but they never have really created

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an intern program to go with the intern group.

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So what is your advice around that?

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Should there be a intern program that the interns follow?

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I think structure definitely helps when you take a step back.

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It really is all about the experience, but when you have somebody in one building

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and somebody in the other, you want them to have similar experiences.

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And I know we've talked to interns in the past where maybe one

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manager is really engaged and they buy the intern lunch

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and they buy their intern swag, and then the other one's like,

00:10:50:18 - 00:10:52:11

I don't even know who my manager is.

00:10:52:11 - 00:10:53:22

My manager doesn't talk to me.

00:10:53:22 - 00:10:56:05

So I think it really is about putting that structure in place.

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So no matter what your manager is like or what projects you're working



00:11:01:04 - 00:11:03:10

on, you have a similar experience

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and I guess I would say that with all internships, the interns talk,

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especially with social media and that type of thing.

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Your brand is out there with your experience.

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So really think, take a look at what do you want

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your interns to be saying to other interns and to their families

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that night and their roommates and whoever they're talking to.

00:11:20:13 - 00:11:23:18

It really puts your brand out there.

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The other thing I would say is, if you can onboard all of the interns together,

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I think that would be very beneficial, because you kind of build a bond when you

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start working on the same day as someone, even if you're in a different department.

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So it gives them an opportunity to, you know, be together

00:11:39:16 - 00:11:43:19

and really start fresh and have that same experience.

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I would also say if you can have a you know, if you have multiple interns,

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if you can give them an opportunity to work on a project together, maybe

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that's not specific to their department, but could help the business as a whole.

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I think that could be a really fun way to get them together to.

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Oh, totally.

00:11:57:13 - 00:12:00:15

I feel like interns want to meet each other and want to be

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like friends outside of work too, So that's a good idea.

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So I guess I'm curious to know your five core tools

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that you would kind of put together that all intern programs should have,

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and you start with the first one, but what would you say that is?

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I would say first and foremost,

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the manager is the

00:12:21:06 - 00:12:25:01

most important piece of this So, you know, from an HR standpoint,

00:12:25:01 - 00:12:28:14

you probably have managers coming to you saying, I need an intern.

00:12:28:14 - 00:12:30:00

And I think that's great.



00:12:30:00 - 00:12:32:07

And maybe they do, and maybe they have a plan,

00:12:32:07 - 00:12:34:05

and they had a great internship experience.

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But I mean, we talked about this earlier today is people don't quit their job.

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They quit their manager.

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So and especially at that intern level, they want an opportunity to learn

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to get coaching, to have that mentorship experience.

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So you really have to have that

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right person in place to help manage and coach those interns.

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The feedback part of an internship is also very important,

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and I know we talked about this, I mean, I think it's so easy,

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and like you started ,and you did a great job from day one,

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and it's so easy to just like have that expectation

00:13:07:13 - 00:13:09:12

that everything you do is going to be great.

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And I got I got into the habit of saying like, Great, thanks, I appreciate it.

00:13:13:01 - 00:13:15:05

Like, everything's perfect, like, looks good.

00:13:15:10 - 00:13:19:12

And you're like, like, I know, but can you give me something more specific?

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And I'm like, Oh my gosh, you're right. And like, I think about myself, too.

00:13:22:10 - 00:13:26:10

Like, I would want specific feedback of what am I doing right

00:13:26:10 - 00:13:28:01

and what is so great about it.

00:13:28:01 - 00:13:31:14

And I think it helped you kind of build on top of what you were doing, right?

00:13:31:14 - 00:13:33:10

I don't know. Totally. And you want to say on that?

00:13:33:10 - 00:13:37:08

I don't what I was just going to go off that like, especially at the intern level,

00:13:37:08 - 00:13:40:23

you're trying to learn as much as you can and you want to know

00:13:41:08 - 00:13:44:01

what can I get better at and what am I doing?

00:13:44:01 - 00:13:45:07

That's okay.

00:13:45:07 - 00:13:48:14

So it's like that feedback is so important at an intern level,

00:13:48:14 - 00:13:51:06

so it's like you can fix

00:13:51:23 - 00:13:54:23

whatever you're doing wrong or not wrong, I should say.



00:13:54:23 - 00:13:57:00

What you can improve on. Yeah.

00:13:57:05 - 00:13:58:08

At the intern level.

00:13:58:08 - 00:14:00:15

So that just as you continue to grow, you don't

00:14:00:15 - 00:14:02:16

have to worry about those anymore.

00:14:02:16 - 00:14:04:12

Yeah, and I know we were talking to one company

00:14:04:12 - 00:14:07:19

and they were all they were raving in.

00:14:07:19 - 00:14:08:08

You were with me.

00:14:08:08 - 00:14:10:13

They were raving about how great their interns were.

00:14:10:13 - 00:14:14:02

And like and their CEO said something about, like, I was really impressed

00:14:14:02 - 00:14:17:21

with the interns this summer, and I was like, Oh, what did you do?

00:14:17:21 - 00:14:18:12

Did they know that?

00:14:18:12 - 00:14:21:06

Like, did you tell the interns how great they were?

00:14:21:06 - 00:14:21:22

Like.

00:14:22:03 - 00:14:23:21

I don't know if we ever did.

00:14:23:21 - 00:14:26:02

I'd like to think about I was like, I think you should tell them.

00:14:26:02 - 00:14:29:18

I think they would really like that feedback and, and especially the CEO.

00:14:29:20 - 00:14:34:01

Is that how impressed that she was with them, it's such a cool experience.

00:14:34:01 - 00:14:36:20

And for the intern to really carry that confidence with them

00:14:37:06 - 00:14:40:13

on something that everybody else knows, but maybe they don't know.

00:14:40:13 - 00:14:43:19

Absolutely. So what about the second tool?

00:14:43:19 - 00:14:47:08

Yeah, I think meaningful work is a huge piece of it.

00:14:47:15 - 00:14:51:12

I know company is sometimes we'll be like, I'll just get an intern and help me file

00:14:51:12 - 00:14:52:22

paperwork and that's great.

00:14:52:22 - 00:14:57:07

And like we said, it's part of the job sometimes, but the meaningful work really

00:14:57:20 - 00:15:00:10

helps the interns learn and grow.

00:15:00:10 - 00:15:04:13

And I would also say they're capable of doing more than just filing paperwork,

00:15:04:13 - 00:15:06:00

so don't let them

00:15:07:11 - 00:15:09:20

hold that back.



00:15:09:20 - 00:15:12:20

I would also give them a meaningful project to work on all summer.

00:15:12:20 - 00:15:16:16

We talked about that capstone project and also,

00:15:16:16 - 00:15:19:21

I mean, what we did with you as we we created,

00:15:19:21 - 00:15:23:03

I think, three and a half pages of things that I never got to.

00:15:23:04 - 00:15:24:23

Some of the other people on our team never got to do.

00:15:24:23 - 00:15:28:11

And I was like, It'd be awesome if this could get done.

00:15:28:17 - 00:15:29:14

We'd be like, Here you go.

00:15:29:14 - 00:15:32:05

And just kind of let you run because of those.

00:15:32:05 - 00:15:35:11

Yeah, we weren't getting to it, so it would be an extra benefit for you

00:15:35:11 - 00:15:36:09

to be part of it.

00:15:36:09 - 00:15:39:06

When they accept an internship, they have three different opportunities

00:15:39:07 - 00:15:41:21

to have an internship, so they get to be picky.

00:15:41:21 - 00:15:43:17

They're really in the driver's seat.

00:15:43:17 - 00:15:44:15

And so,



00:15:44:16 - 00:15:48:11

I mean, I'm just saying, like I saw interns that were at a company

00:15:48:11 - 00:15:50:00

for like a week, two weeks,

00:15:50:00 - 00:15:51:23

and they were like, I got a different internship experience.

00:15:51:23 - 00:15:52:16

I'm leaving.

00:15:52:16 - 00:15:55:17

So even before the program, and during the program,

00:15:55:17 - 00:15:57:00

and then even after the program.

00:15:57:00 - 00:16:01:00

And so you want to retain them, it's so important to make sure

00:16:01:00 - 00:16:04:00

that you're providing the best experience no matter what.

00:16:04:08 - 00:16:06:13

So I think that meaningful work is huge.

00:16:06:22 - 00:16:10:02

And I you know, we've also talked to like people have said,

00:16:11:03 - 00:16:12:18

I'm bored of my managers in a meeting.

00:16:12:18 - 00:16:14:19

I can't I don't know nothing to do.

00:16:14:19 - 00:16:17:20

And they go talk to other people and some people don't take the initiative

00:16:17:20 - 00:16:18:23

to do that either.



00:16:18:23 - 00:16:22:14

But don't let your interns be bored like your paying them to help with stuff.

00:16:22:14 - 00:16:24:15

And I think they are capable of so much.

00:16:24:20 - 00:16:25:06

Oh yeah.

00:16:25:06 - 00:16:28:07

You just talked about the three pages,

00:16:28:07 - 00:16:31:13

so I've got notes that you gave me, your projects that you gave me.

00:16:31:13 - 00:16:34:08

And I will say I told you on the first day, I was like,

00:16:34:15 - 00:16:37:03

Oh my gosh, how am I going to get any of this done?

00:16:37:03 - 00:16:40:15

I'm like, I remember going home, like man, I got three pages.

00:16:41:02 - 00:16:44:00

But then by the end of my internship, it was like man,

00:16:44:00 - 00:16:48:22

I was able to complete 85% of that or even if I did 50%.

00:16:48:22 - 00:16:51:01

It's like, look at how much I did.

00:16:51:01 - 00:16:55:16

And it wasn't that intimidating when I looked at it at the end of my internship

00:16:55:16 - 00:16:59:21

and it was nice to be like, Oh, well, I could go work on this project

00:16:59:21 - 00:17:03:15

with this department or, Oh, look at this project, it's with IT.



00:17:04:06 - 00:17:07:15

So it wasn't just my typical marketing projects.

00:17:07:15 - 00:17:09:18

It was a good realm of.

00:17:10:14 - 00:17:13:14

Yeah, maybe a note to managers, create that list,

00:17:13:14 - 00:17:15:14

but don't share it on the first day.

00:17:15:18 - 00:17:17:08

We might have even sent it to you before.

00:17:17:08 - 00:17:19:03

Like, look at all these fun projects.

00:17:19:03 - 00:17:20:13

You're probably like, Oh gosh, no.

00:17:20:13 - 00:17:24:12

But it was a good thing to be like, This is all of the things

00:17:24:12 - 00:17:28:14

that you can accomplish in your internship and just a short summer that we have.

00:17:28:19 - 00:17:32:09

Well, and think about how much you did that wasn't even on that list.

00:17:32:09 - 00:17:36:06

It would be like you'd be working on item number eight, and I'd be like, Sophie,

00:17:36:06 - 00:17:37:01

I need help with this.

00:17:37:01 - 00:17:37:19

Like, you got this.

00:17:37:19 - 00:17:40:07

Done in the next couple hours and you're like, Oh yeah, of course.



00:17:40:07 - 00:17:43:06

And so it's like you you did so much more than even that list.

00:17:43:06 - 00:17:46:21

Which is, yeah, I'm so, you know, so just moving on.

00:17:46:21 - 00:17:49:17

How about third? The third tool. Tool.

00:17:50:18 - 00:17:51:12

The third tool

00:17:51:12 - 00:17:54:06

I would say is help the interns explore the business.

00:17:54:13 - 00:17:56:13

I remember for myself,

00:17:56:13 - 00:18:00:01

I wanted to learn as much as possible, even beyond marketing.

00:18:00:08 - 00:18:03:20

And I like I remember being a sophomore in college and kind of

00:18:03:20 - 00:18:07:12

getting to the point of them saying, like, you need to declare your major.

00:18:07:12 - 00:18:09:21

I'm like, Hey, like business, I guess.

00:18:09:21 - 00:18:10:14

Like, I don't know.

00:18:10:14 - 00:18:14:16

And I ended up picking marketing, but not really for any reason.

00:18:14:16 - 00:18:17:23

Besides, somebody had told me one time, like, I think you'd be good at marketing.

00:18:17:23 - 00:18:19:22

And I'm like, Well, I guess that sounds good.

00:18:19:22 - 00:18:20:13

And then I

00:18:20:13 - 00:18:24:02

had a couple of marketing internships and I really like different aspects of it,

00:18:24:07 - 00:18:28:05

and I think all of the experiences I've had have led me to where I am today.

00:18:28:14 - 00:18:31:19

But it's been that ability to work on projects

00:18:31:19 - 00:18:35:16

outside of my department and being able to work with other leaders.

00:18:35:16 - 00:18:38:20

And I think that's something we hear too, from interns,

00:18:38:21 - 00:18:42:12

even like for example, with HR It's like, okay, I'm an HR major,

00:18:42:12 - 00:18:44:19

but there is so much to HR, like there's the compliance

00:18:44:19 - 00:18:48:23

side, there's the benefits side, and then there's recruiting and a lot of

00:18:49:05 - 00:18:52:09

HR Interns tend to do recruiting or filing and they're like,

00:18:52:09 - 00:18:55:14

i don't even know how to explore the other areas of HR

00:18:55:20 - 00:18:59:10

So being able to give them as many opportunities as they can

00:19:00:11 - 00:19:02:21

to just sit in the meetings with people

00:19:02:21 - 00:19:06:15

or help with projects or have lunch with the ceo if it's possible.

00:19:06:15 - 00:19:07:17

But really



00:19:07:17 - 00:19:09:15

and I know we've said it a million times a day,

00:19:09:15 - 00:19:13:08

they just want to learn and have different experiences to help them grow.

00:19:13:08 - 00:19:18:06

And, and who knows, maybe someone in I.T ends up

00:19:18:06 - 00:19:20:10

wanting to be in finance or something.

00:19:20:10 - 00:19:24:16

It's like internships are there to, like you said, help interns

00:19:25:01 - 00:19:28:04

learn more about the company and learn more about themselves to.

00:19:28:23 - 00:19:31:16

It cracked me up, during one of our intern program

00:19:32:04 - 00:19:37:05

business case discussions and presentations, we did one about accounting

00:19:37:05 - 00:19:41:05

and finance for the non financial leader and I kind of teed it off.

00:19:41:06 - 00:19:44:07

It was with our CFO and I was like, This is not my area.

00:19:44:07 - 00:19:46:15

Like I'm more like creative, that type of thing.

00:19:46:23 - 00:19:49:04

And like marketing, you know, whatever.

00:19:49:04 - 00:19:51:02

Like that's, that's okay, this isn't your thing,

00:19:51:02 - 00:19:53:08

but it's good for everyone to learn and get exposure to it.

00:19:53:16 - 00:19:57:19



And we're meeting with a company and one of the marketing interns was like,

00:19:58:01 - 00:19:59:04

That was my favorite session.

00:19:59:04 - 00:20:00:20

And she's like, I might switch my major.

00:20:00:20 - 00:20:02:04

And I'm like, That's awesome.

00:20:02:04 - 00:20:04:13

Like, you know, you know, like, you just, I don't know.

00:20:04:13 - 00:20:06:02

It's that exposure and

00:20:06:02 - 00:20:09:18

experience that gives people the clarity of what they need for their careers.

00:20:09:22 - 00:20:11:07

Oh, absolutely.

00:20:11:07 - 00:20:14:08

So then going on to the fourth tool, what would you say.

00:20:15:07 - 00:20:17:07

Networking is the other piece.

00:20:17:07 - 00:20:22:05

I think giving them an opportunity to meet people both internally at your company.

00:20:22:05 - 00:20:25:09

Obviously within your own department, but all their leaders

00:20:25:09 - 00:20:29:08

in other areas of the business, but also other interns too.

00:20:29:08 - 00:20:34:04

And honestly, like there is one company that he took it on himself

00:20:34:04 - 00:20:37:00

to take every intern to one networking event.





00:20:37:08 - 00:20:39:20

And I know he was like, we had a lot of interns last year,

00:20:39:20 - 00:20:41:06

so I brought two of them

00:20:41:06 - 00:20:44:03

with me to one of them, and I was like, I'm in a competition.

00:20:44:07 - 00:20:45:23

Go talk to as many people as you can.

00:20:45:23 - 00:20:49:07

And whoever wins, I can't remember if they got lunch or something like that,

00:20:49:14 - 00:20:53:04

but they, they really just want to network.

00:20:53:04 - 00:20:54:12

And I think it's hard, because

00:20:54:12 - 00:20:58:10

especially if you think of COVID and the last couple of years with school

00:20:58:10 - 00:21:01:22

being virtual and that type of thing, it's not an easy thing to do.

00:21:01:22 - 00:21:05:10

So if you can be there and help mentor and help guide and just give them those

00:21:05:10 - 00:21:10:17

opportunities, meeting people will really just allow them to grow in their careers.

00:21:10:17 - 00:21:14:01

And I think I look back to the people that I've worked with

00:21:14:01 - 00:21:17:11

in my last couple internships, and I still talk to a lot of them.

00:21:17:11 - 00:21:19:10

I mean, like think about how many people you're so connected

00:21:19:10 - 00:21:22:22



with from then here in program to just our member companies as well.

00:21:23:04 - 00:21:27:10

I was going to say just the mini plug for the MRA's intern program.

00:21:27:10 - 00:21:28:19

Again, you're given

00:21:28:19 - 00:21:33:02

over 100 interns, right there that you're automatically connected with.

00:21:33:02 - 00:21:36:05

So it's like you don't really have to go out and do that extra

00:21:36:05 - 00:21:41:07

step of really like introducing yourself, finding I mean, yourself to do that.

00:21:41:07 - 00:21:43:04

But it's there, all right there.

00:21:43:04 - 00:21:45:07

And you see them every single week, some.

00:21:45:14 - 00:21:47:15

Plus plus the business leaders.

00:21:47:15 - 00:21:48:22

I mean, we have a different presenter

00:21:48:22 - 00:21:51:18

every week of the program and all of the panels.

00:21:51:18 - 00:21:54:07

I mean, over all, they probably met 30 other business leaders.

00:21:54:17 - 00:21:56:17

But I just think it's a cool experience.

00:21:56:17 - 00:22:00:16

And no matter what you can do to provide those experiences for them as huge.

00:22:00:16 - 00:22:04:01

And I've still been in contact with a lot of people from the intern program





00:22:04:01 - 00:22:08:03
from a couple of years ago, even help on my college project.

00:22:08:03 - 00:22:11:11
One of them was able to help me out and we're still talking

00:22:11:11 - 00:22:14:05
to a few of them now too, so yeah.

00:22:14:11 - 00:22:16:09
Oh, it's fun. That's very cool.

00:22:16:09 - 00:22:19:06
But I guess what is the last last thing

00:22:19:06 - 00:22:23:11
that every intern program should have in order to be successful?

00:22:23:21 - 00:22:27:15
Yeah, I think, you know, we covered the main pieces, but I think

00:22:28:02 - 00:22:29:23
when an intern has a great experience

00:22:29:23 - 00:22:30:13
and then when they're

00:22:30:13 - 00:22:34:14
going into an internship, especially going into like their last year of school,

00:22:35:16 - 00:22:37:14
they want to know what does the future look like?

00:22:37:14 - 00:22:38:18
Do I have a place here?

00:22:38:18 - 00:22:40:01
Do I not?

00:22:40:01 - 00:22:43:06
And I think it's good to be open from the beginning.

00:22:43:06 - 00:22:46:20

I mean, I know when we interviewed you, you had said, like, is there a possibility

00:22:46:20 - 00:22:50:02
of a full time role after the internship is over?

00:22:50:21 - 00:22:52:09
And I think we're pretty honest with you.

00:22:52:09 - 00:22:55:11
And but we continue that conversation throughout the summer.

00:22:56:19 - 00:22:59:11
And then obviously, once it got closer, we were pretty

00:23:00:07 - 00:23:04:12
adamant that we were able to offer you something before you went back to school

00:23:04:12 - 00:23:08:05
just because, like we said earlier, you have so many choices nowadays and

00:23:08:11 - 00:23:11:06
you really are in the driver's seat and you made such an impact

00:23:11:06 - 00:23:14:12
that we didn't want to lose you and we wanted to be flexible about it.

00:23:14:13 - 00:23:16:05
We could work around your school schedule

00:23:16:05 - 00:23:18:20
and you could work on projects and just keep you engaged

00:23:18:20 - 00:23:20:21
throughout the school year that you wanted to come back.

00:23:21:04 - 00:23:23:12
So I think having those conversations is huge.

00:23:23:21 - 00:23:27:13
But I would also say that, you know, we talked about feedback from the manager

00:23:27:13 - 00:23:31:15
to the intern, but I would say I would ask them to like for feedback.



00:23:31:15 - 00:23:34:13

You know, there's a lot of companies that halfway through the program

00:23:34:21 - 00:23:37:12

sits down with the interns and say, like, what's working?

00:23:37:12 - 00:23:39:20

What's not? How is your manager?

00:23:39:21 - 00:23:41:02

What do you need from us?

00:23:41:02 - 00:23:43:09

And having those conversations.

00:23:43:09 - 00:23:48:18

So, you know, after week ten or 11 or 12 or whatever it is, they leave and they do

00:23:48:18 - 00:23:52:09

their exit interview and you're like, Wow, this person had a horrible experience.

00:23:52:09 - 00:23:53:23

I wish I would have known earlier.

00:23:53:23 - 00:23:55:07

And it's it's a two way street.

00:23:55:07 - 00:23:57:04

So I think just having those conversations

00:23:58:09 - 00:23:59:11

is huge,

00:23:59:11 - 00:24:02:11

but I guess so I went through five things and I think we covered a lot of it.

00:24:02:11 - 00:24:05:01

But like thinking back to your internship experience,

00:24:05:06 - 00:24:07:19

was there anything I was missing like that?

00:24:07:19 - 00:24:11:11



I didn't cover that you thought was either I wish you guys would have done this,

00:24:11:11 - 00:24:14:18

or maybe like you did this really well, but we didn't touch this.

00:24:15:04 - 00:24:16:12

Or do we cover it off.

00:24:16:12 - 00:24:19:03

So, like, we covered or have

00:24:19:03 - 00:24:22:07

all great stuff, I would just say, like you, like you said,

00:24:22:07 - 00:24:26:15

to be very clear with the intern and have a good working relationship

00:24:26:15 - 00:24:29:16

between the manager and the intern, I feel like that's almost

00:24:29:16 - 00:24:34:13

make it or break it if you don't have a good relationship with your intern.

00:24:35:05 - 00:24:37:17

Chances are its not going to be a great internship for them.

00:24:37:17 - 00:24:41:08

So I would just say be very open

00:24:41:08 - 00:24:45:05

and honest with them and provide feedback as much as you can.

00:24:46:15 - 00:24:49:11

And yeah, everything else we said covered it.

00:24:49:11 - 00:24:50:15

I'll do that.

00:24:50:15 - 00:24:54:13

But as we wrap up here, do you have any last bits of advice

00:24:54:13 - 00:24:56:14

or any last pieces to share with us?





00:24:56:14 - 00:24:58:07
I have a few a little things.

00:24:58:07 - 00:25:01:10
I know we talked a lot about that experience as an intern,

00:25:01:18 - 00:25:04:09
but I just want to kind of remind employers,

00:25:05:12 - 00:25:07:21
keeping them engaged after you give them an offer

00:25:07:21 - 00:25:09:20
and keeping that excitement going

00:25:09:20 - 00:25:12:01
is almost as important as getting them there,

00:25:12:01 - 00:25:14:18
because if they don't show up on the first day, you have to start over.

00:25:15:00 - 00:25:19:01
So really think about that excitement and that communication with them beforehand

00:25:20:14 - 00:25:23:07
and then just a couple of little tactical things.

00:25:23:07 - 00:25:26:05
But when we had our first internship program, I remember really

00:25:26:06 - 00:25:29:23
one of the first weeks, we asked them like, what could your company do better?

00:25:29:23 - 00:25:32:03
You know, we just want to provide some feedback.

00:25:32:11 - 00:25:34:02
And I think like half of them were like,

00:25:34:02 - 00:25:36:02
I don't even have my manager cell phone number.

00:25:36:02 - 00:25:39:15

Like, I just want to be able like if I get a flat tire to call them and say like,

00:25:40:04 - 00:25:41:18
Hey, I'm not going to make it.

00:25:41:18 - 00:25:44:16
Like I'm going to be a little bit late or I'm not feeling well today or whatever

00:25:44:16 - 00:25:49:02
it might be just to have that phone number in that contact information was huge.

00:25:49:07 - 00:25:52:05
And from an employer standpoint, it's such an easy win, like I don't

00:25:52:05 - 00:25:56:11
think--they're not going to contact you unless they need to or so And it almost.

00:25:56:11 - 00:25:57:18
Gives them like

00:25:57:18 - 00:26:01:06
it builds some trust, you know, like, hey, like, here's my phone number.

00:26:01:06 - 00:26:04:16
I'm here whenever you want my whenever you need to reach me.

00:26:04:16 - 00:26:08:09
And it's, it's like a little more personal than just like, here's my email.

00:26:08:14 - 00:26:11:02
Yeah, email me whenever it's like, no, call me.

00:26:11:02 - 00:26:13:04
Yeah, I need to. Call you if you need to.

00:26:13:04 - 00:26:15:00
Yeah, I know there's one company

00:26:15:00 - 00:26:18:13
that the CEO gave out the enter their phone number and they were like,

00:26:18:18 - 00:26:20:12
We're excited to have you intern this summer.



00:26:20:12 - 00:26:22:19

Here's my phone number. Call me if you need anything.

00:26:23:01 - 00:26:25:09

And I'm pretty sure the intern never called,

00:26:25:09 - 00:26:28:03

but it's kind of like, Wow, the CEO really cares about me.

00:26:28:04 - 00:26:31:04

So kind of a cool touch, if you're willing to do that,

00:26:32:00 - 00:26:35:03

the last thing I would say is think about what they need to know

00:26:35:03 - 00:26:37:20

and again, a lot of them, this may be their first experience.

00:26:38:04 - 00:26:42:07

And I remember when you emailed me and we're like, What do I wear?

00:26:42:13 - 00:26:43:17

I was like.

00:26:43:17 - 00:26:45:03

I was like, That's such a good question.

00:26:45:03 - 00:26:46:05

Like, we never even told you.

00:26:46:05 - 00:26:48:03

Like, we're business casual.

00:26:48:03 - 00:26:50:18

Like you can wear what you know, whatever you're comfortable with.

00:26:50:18 - 00:26:53:22

But we do dress business casual and it's like, I don't know, you just aren't.

00:26:54:00 - 00:26:57:14

Yeah, you don't know those things and you don't want to mess up from the first day.

00:26:57:14 - 00:26:59:05

And I give you a lot of credit for asking,

00:26:59:05 - 00:27:02:04

but that should have been on the back of our minds to tell you too.

00:27:02:04 - 00:27:04:02

So all things considered.

00:27:04:02 - 00:27:06:18

Yeah, I know like, what do I wear? What's really fun?

00:27:06:18 - 00:27:08:04

I missed something.

00:27:08:06 - 00:27:11:05

But lastly, I have to say, when you're going through this program

00:27:11:13 - 00:27:13:12

does a lot of the entire experience as a whole.

00:27:13:12 - 00:27:16:12

It's all about the experience and it's you really want to leave

00:27:16:12 - 00:27:18:09

that lasting impression with the interns.

00:27:18:09 - 00:27:20:18

Absolutely. Great ending. Thank you.

00:27:21:07 - 00:27:24:01

Well, I want to thank you for being a great guest today

00:27:24:01 - 00:27:27:05

and really sharing your knowledge on how companies can either

00:27:27:05 - 00:27:29:22

begin or enhance their intern programs.

00:27:30:08 - 00:27:34:20

So if you liked our chat and topic today, make sure you share this episode.

00:27:35:03 - 00:27:38:06

Leave a comment or review and consider joining MRA



EPISODE 27

5 Core Tools to Lead Your Intern Program

00:27:38:06 - 00:27:40:11

if you aren't a member already.

00:27:40:11 - 00:27:41:13

We have all the resources

00:27:41:13 - 00:27:44:18

you need in the show notes below, so make sure to take a look at those,

00:27:45:10 - 00:27:49:10

including Courtney's email and LinkedIn profile in the show notes.

00:27:49:10 - 00:27:53:08

So if you want to get in touch with her or learn more about the MRA's

00:27:53:08 - 00:27:56:23

Intern Leadership Program, she's the girl to contact.

00:27:57:10 - 00:28:00:23

Otherwise, thank you for tuning in today and thanks for all the great

00:28:00:23 - 00:28:03:17

info, Courtney, and we will see you next week.

00:28:04:00 - 00:28:05:01

Thanks for having me.

00:28:05:01 - 00:28:07:20

And that wraps up our content for this episode.

00:28:07:21 - 00:28:11:00

Be sure to reference the show notes where you can sign up to connect

00:28:11:00 - 00:28:12:16

for more podcast updates,

00:28:12:16 - 00:28:16:11

check out other MRA episodes on your favorite podcast platform.

00:28:16:12 - 00:28:21:10

And as always, make sure to follow MRA's 30 minutes Thrive, so you don't miss out.



EPISODE 27

5 Core Tools to Lead Your Intern Program

00:28:21:11 - 00:28:24:15

Thanks for tuning in ,and we'll see you next Wednesday to carry on

00:28:24:17 - 00:28:26:00

the HR conversation.