

Small Group Activity

- Objectives:**
- Students will identify solutions to potential internship challenges.
 - Students will understand how to handle some common internship challenges.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Pens/pencils, paper

Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have them create four potentially challenging scenarios that an intern might face and write them out neatly on one piece of paper. Once all of the groups have created their scenarios, instruct each group to pass their scenarios to the group to their right (or however you want them to pass the scenarios).

Explain to the groups that they will have about 10 minutes to discuss the scenarios and work together to figure out how they could best handle each situation. Groups will then either present the scenarios as well as their suggested best way to handle each situation OR choose 2 of the scenarios to act out for the larger group.

Once the scenarios have been presented and/or acted out, the larger group should discuss the different situations and suggest other professional ways to handle the challenge. Four common internship problems are listed below. If these challenges are not presented to the group, you should introduce the challenges to the group and ask for possible solutions. Offer the possible solutions below as other options, if they are not mentioned.

Possible Problem	Possible Solution
The internship doesn't meet your expectations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) List out and assess your expectations. Are they realistic? If so, think about ways to meet them and consider talking to your internship supervisor about them. If you decide they're not realistic, try to figure out why. 2) If you started the internship with a specific position description, reference that description to see if it accurately represents the work you're doing. 3) If you don't already have one, consider working with your supervisor to create a learning contract. This is a good way to chart out internship expectations for both you and the organization. If you already have a learning contract, review it and modify if possible.
You and your internship supervisor have conflicting goals or priorities.	Some degree of difference is natural. If your differences are extreme, talk to your supervisor openly and positively to see if you can find a middle ground. Remember that your supervisor should want you to have a positive, useful experience. Try to meet your supervisor's expectations while also meeting your own.
Boredom	Ask for new projects. If you notice a need or an area that could use some work, offer to work on it. If you show initiative and help solve problems, you'll stand out and gain even better experience for your future.
Poor communication	Many workplace problems are a result of poor communication. Don't hesitate to talk to your supervisor about your concerns, but be sure to do so in a diplomatic, positive, and professional way. Most supervisors do not take on an intern unless they're committed to providing a positive experience.