

# PROGRAM STAFF TIP SHEET

## Workplace Challenge: Success Factors

### A tip sheet for Intern & Earn Program staff

When developing and implementing Workplace Challenges for youth engaged in the Intern & Earn Program, keep the following success factors in mind.

#### BEFORE THE CHALLENGE

- ❑ Develop an effective employer or organization engagement strategy.
  - › Define the Return on Investment (ROI) for employers and organizations.
  - › Use the Employer Fact Sheet to explain the benefits of the challenge to prospective employers.
- ❑ Develop a project plan for the Workplace Challenge.
  - › Design and develop the challenge with the employer or organization, making sure that the challenge is one the youth and young adults can potentially address and teachers, instructors and program staff can support.
  - › Encourage the Workplace Challenge host to develop a real-world problem or issue—one that the industry is facing today. Make it real.
  - › Ensure that the challenge and its solution are tied in some way to the training curriculum, and that appropriate resources are in place to support the challenge.
  - › Identify a process to recruit interested and qualified youth and young adults. Create small teams of four to six youth and young adults to work together on addressing the challenge.
  - › Develop a timeline for the challenge. Include when and where the challenge will be issued, time slots set aside in the regular program schedule for youth and young adults to address the challenge, scheduled “touch” points with the challenge host, and when, where and with whom the solution presentation will take place.
  - › Define desired project outcomes.
- ❑ Apply the Work-Based Learning essential elements.
  - › Address the elements in the design of your Workplace Challenge.
  - › Check in with the elements periodically to ensure that all ten are being addressed in implementation of the challenge.
- ❑ Address logistics.
  - › If the challenge involves visiting the workplace, distribute and collect appropriate forms.
  - › Schedule a time for the challenge host to issue/explain the challenge, ideally at the worksite.
  - › Address any additional logistical issues such as transportation, safety gear or access to equipment and tools.
  - › Identify who will serve as the point of contact at your program and with the challenge host.
  - › Coordinate, facilitate and implement orientation activities for youth and young adults and challenge host(s).
  - › Determine the Workplace Challenge host’s preferred form and frequency of contact.
  - › Identify the level of engagement the challenge host would prefer during the challenge.
  - › Define an ongoing communication strategy and feedback protocols for the experience.

- ❑ Develop learning objectives.
  - › Meet with youth and young adults and instructors to help develop specific learning objectives.
  - › Share the expected outcomes with the challenge host.
  - › Consider identifying the three primary outcomes of the challenge.
- ❑ Support youth and young adult learning.
  - › Schedule regular time for the youth and young adults to work on the challenge.
  - › Provide orientation and professional development for instructors and other program staff.
  - › Organize and make available the resources needed to support youth and young adults as they address the challenge.

## **DURING THE CHALLENGE**

- ❑ Observe and meet with youth and young adults as they address the challenge and monitor their progress.
- ❑ Coordinate faculty involvement with the challenge.
  - › Identify and support roles for teaching and guidance faculty.
  - › Ensure they are engaged in the challenge and interacting with the employer or organization as appropriate.
- ❑ Provide ongoing support and Workplace Challenge hosts.
  - › Update and adapt the Challenge Host Tip Sheet and share/review with the challenge host.
  - › Provide a single point of contact for the challenge.
- ❑ Help challenge hosts understand and support the Career Pathways approach
  - › Share the Professional Skills Fact Sheet with the Workplace Challenge hosts.
  - › Share the current focus of classroom or workshop training activities and how the challenge supports key concepts being taught.
- ❑ Maintain ongoing communication with and/or provide periodic reports to the employer or organization. It is important that requests for clarification or additional information be coordinated through a single point of contact at the youth organization and at the workplace.
- ❑ Help ensure that challenge activities are authentic and engaging, and provide opportunities to learn about a range of topics related to the industry or organization.
- ❑ Provide opportunities for youth and young adults to reflect on the challenge while it is in process.
- ❑ Support the challenge host in preparing to receive a presentation on the challenge solution.

## **AFTER THE CHALLENGE**

- ❑ Generate publicity about the challenge.
  - › Send a press release about the challenge to local newspapers and television stations.
- ❑ Have youth and young adults write thank-you letters to the challenge hosts.
- ❑ Reflect on the experience.
  - › Conduct an assessment of youth and young adult learning outcomes. Have them reflect on what they've learned, and identify what else they would like to learn.
  - › Provide classroom or workshop experiences that help youth and young adults make the connection between this Workplace Challenge and their next steps.
  - › Provide avenues for feedback on the effectiveness of the challenge. (Set a time to meet with the challenge host to debrief the experience and identify improvements going forward.)
- ❑ Document youth and young adult learning and record the experience.
- ❑ Identify a next step with the employer or organization.
- ❑ Archive information and materials related to the challenge for future use (and to be shared with other New York City program providers).