Spring 2016

How to Run a Production Management Internship

Elana Schlossberg
Binghamton University--SUNY

Follow this and additional works at: https://orb.binghamton.edu/mpa_capstone

🔗 Part of the Educational Administration and Supervision Commons, and the Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons

Recommended Citation
https://orb.binghamton.edu/mpa_capstone/15

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Public Administration at The Open Repository @ Binghamton (The ORB). It has been accepted for inclusion in Capstone Projects 2015-Present by an authorized administrator of The Open Repository @ Binghamton (The ORB). For more information, please contact ORB@binghamton.edu.
How to Run a Production Management Internship

Presented by: Elana Schlossberg
Faculty Advisor: George Homsy
Spring 2016

Introduction
In Summer 2015, I was a production management intern at Williamstown Theatre Festival (WTF) in Williamstown, MA. From this experience, I discovered that, while the internship was a great overall experience, there were some aspects missing from the program. As an intern, I recognized that there were educational opportunities at WTF of which the intern supervisors did not take advantage.

This project is my Master’s of Public Administration capstone project, and is important because it has the potential to change the course of the production management internship at WTF, and potentially at other theatre companies nationwide.

The Research Question
How can a theatre company best coordinate and organize an educational and sophisticated production management internship experience?

Methodology
15 interviews with theatre professionals who work at WTF and other theatre companies across the country
• Professionals include: production managers, stage managers, scenic designers and painters, technical director, production designer

• Questions asked include:
  Please describe your experience as a production manager/department head working with interns. How do you manage interns?
  Insight on how other programs work with interns and provide educational internship experiences.
  What do you think are the main competencies of being a production manager?
  Basic components and characteristics necessary to being a successful production manager. Shaped the content of the internship manual.
  What are some of your daily activities as a production manager?
  Activities to be used as daily intern activities.
  How did you accommodate specific interns’ educational goals, if any?
  Insight on how to structure an internship geared towards achieving interns’ goals.
  Did your department hold workshops this summer? Please describe one and how you fit it into the busy schedule.
  Inspiration for production management workshops, as well as possible workshops for production management interns to attend.

The Internship Manual
The end product of my research is a Production Management Internship Manual, for use at WTF and other theatre companies.
  • Part I: The Job Description
    Some important characteristics of a good production management intern include: organization, calmness/level-headed in stressful situations, efficient and effective communication, time management
  • Part II: The Interview
    Behavior-based interviews are most effective.
    Can ask the question: What do you want to learn from this internship?
  • Part III: Prep/The First Day
    Preparation is key, because the season is very busy.
    Set goals for yourself as supervisor.
    The Preseason Plan includes preparing a list of intern tasks, allowing for equal distribution among interns.
  • Part IV: Implementation
    Involve the interns as much as possible.
    Opportunities for interns to learn by observing and participating.
    Remember that everyone at the festival is still learning.
  • Part V: Workshops/Working with Other Departments
    Workshops as a collaborative tool
    Weekly meetings are helpful, with and/or without supervisors.
    Stories from professionals in action
  • Sample job description (appendix A)

Intended audience: Production management internship supervisors
Manual can be used to help guide a successful production management internship. Can be used for other internships.

Acknowledgements
Thank you to my Capstone advisor, Professor George Homsy; my Internship supervisor and WTF’s Director of Production, Eric Nottke; and Binghamton University Undergraduate Research Center.