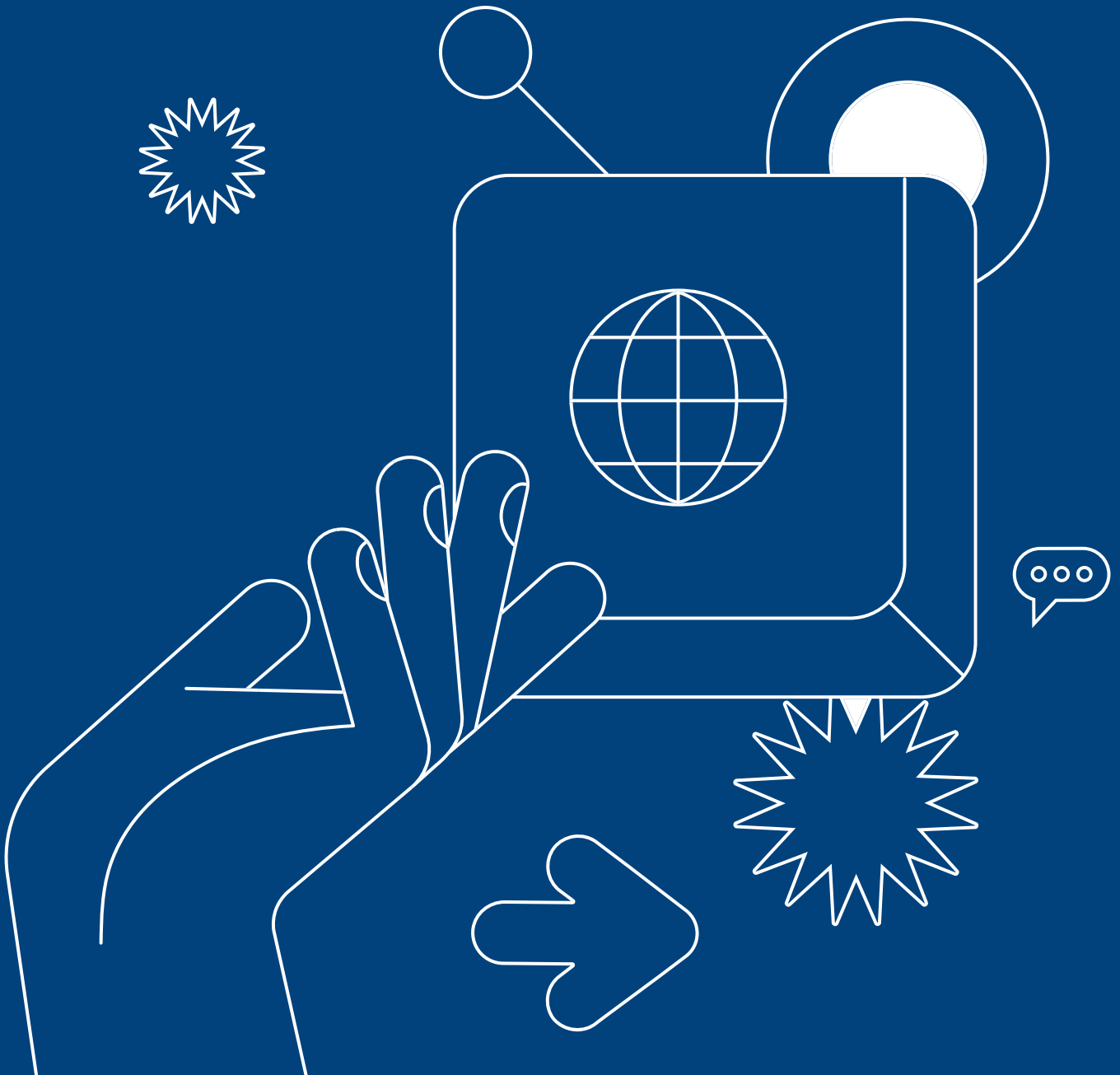


# MAKING YOUR INTERNSHIP A SUCCESS!

A guide for companies





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Up to Youth is a five-year activity, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), committed to improving the capacities and enabling the aspirations of youth so that they can contribute to and benefit from more stable, democratic, and prosperous communities.

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# Internship Program

## Onboarding Interns

# Program Introduction

Thank you for opening the doors for Kosovo's talented youth to learn and grow professionally by interning in your company/ organization. By agreeing to host an intern in your company for three to six months, you are not only helping a young person gain professional experience, you are also becoming a partner in making Kosovo's economy more competitive

This document is a tool that contains recommendations and lessons learned from previous internship programs in Kosovo. The main take out of this should be the fact that internships that are properly executed are always a "win-win-win" situation. The intern grows from the experience and is more successful in their life. The host company benefits from the energy and effort of a young person who's been trained or is willing to be trained. And, finally, Kosovo's economy grows because workers and companies perform better.

What do companies benefit from internship programs?

1. Internships can be a recruitment technique for companies seeking good workers

2. In almost ½ of all placements, interns are hired by the host company.
3. Taking an intern saves companies time identifying and hiring new talent
4. A quality intern can save companies money by getting their job done
5. Increase the capacity and productivity on short-term assignments
6. Interns can bring new energy and bring innovative ideas to the workplace
7. Hosting an intern demonstrates your firm's corporate social responsibility

## **What does it take to successfully integrate interns in any team?**

An intern's success depends greatly on the host firm's planning, support, and management. By giving interns clear guidance, you improve their experience and increase their value to your firm. A well-managed onboarding process can make all the difference when it comes to the intern's experience and success.

## Onboarding Checklist:

Guarantee Your Success by checking each of these items in your onboarding process!

<b>ORGANIZATIONAL</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explain company culture	<input type="checkbox"/>
Share your mission	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearly describe processes	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TECHNICAL</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Company goals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Departmental goals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Daily tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>SOCIAL</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welcome intern into your community	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage interpersonal connections	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Important factors for success:

### Inclusion and mentorship drive performance

Create a feeling of collaboration between the intern and the rest of the team by including a social element to your onboarding process. Consider assigning a mentor or a buddy to the intern. This will make them feel comfortable and improve their performance.

### Learning comes from real experience

Expect your interns to engage in meaningful work that has outcomes for the team. Internships that focus only on observation with no hands-on tasks are often not successful because people learn by doing and from making mistakes.

### Establishing requirements and responsibilities in a job description

A well-written job description will establish a solid set of expectations for the intern and keep them on track. You and they can evaluate their progress and achievements against the job description. It helps the intern to know what is expected of them to succeed. *Send the job description to the intern prior to the start date.*

### Follow-up & Feedback are key

Your intern is there to learn and contribute. By giving them regular, direct feedback on their performance, you will help them perform better and, if necessary, correct course. Remember that the best feedback is a two-way street. Remember to ask the intern how they believe they are doing, about challenges they are facing, and how the internship is going overall. If your intern brings up any challenges, coach them to find a solution. It can also be useful to ask your intern for any process improvements that they may see in your company. A fresh perspective may help you identify weaknesses of simple solutions that only a fresh set of young eyes can see.

# Detailed Checklist for Hosts

The table below is designed to help intern hosting companies and organizations to effectively manage the internship program, to make interns feel welcomed, and to give them a sense of belonging in the new environment.

This tool will help businesses keep better track of the intern's progress throughout the internship.

## PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| Send a confirmation/ introductory email with the point of contact and agreed start date to the intern | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Prepare a job-description and list of expected activities for the intern                              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Set-up a designated work space, email, and organization account (if required)                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## FIRST DAY OF INTERNSHIP

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Organize a warm welcome for the new intern on their first day                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Present your organization, office, policies and regulations, dress code                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Show them their workspace; table, devices, machinery (if applicable)                             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tour the office and introduce interns to the staff   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Review hours of work, schedule, procedures for absences or coming in late or leaving early       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Inform the intern about personal calls, social media, and personal computing rules while at work | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Inform the intern about transport options (organized transport, bus, taxi)                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Take care of the necessary paperwork   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## THROUGHOUT THE INTERNSHIP

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Assign a mentor and check that they provide assistance, advice, and regular feedback | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Provide training and networking opportunities if you have the resources to do so     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Keep the intern informed about the job expectations                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Review monthly timesheets and make sure the intern's attendance is regular           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Include the intern in team activities, outings, lunch, or coffee breaks              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Consider job rotations to provide a full experience of the job                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ask the intern for feedback on the organization and the assigned tasks to them       | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## LAST WEEK OF INTERNSHIP

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Inform the intern in time if you wish to extend the contract- offer a job position       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Provide constructive performance feedback whether extending the contract or not          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If deserved, provide a reference letter highlighting their achievements and skills       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Please be attentive at fulfilling all the necessary administrative requirements          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Please complete and communicate the conclusions of the Performance Evaluations timely    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Consider organizing a farewell meeting with the team                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Consider a small farewell gift for the intern, even if that is just a notebook or a pen  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Consider referring the youngster for a job elsewhere if you cannot extend their contract | <input type="checkbox"/> |

# Onboarding Document templates



## APPENDIX A: Reference Letter Template

Dear [insert name],

I am writing to recommend [intern\_name]. [He/She/] worked with us at [company\_name] as an [intern\_job\_title] and [reported to me/ worked with me] in my position as [insert your job title].

As an employee, [intern\_name] was [insert quality ( examples: reliable, team player, good communicator, ready to learn, honest, adaptable, approachable, enthusiastic, good attitude, responsible, hard working, results oriented, detail oriented, positive, good listener, flexible, intelligent, sharp, optimistic) ]. During [his/her/their] time in my team, [he/she/they] managed to [insert example (mention two to three tasks completed successfully)].

I've always put a premium on [insert quality (the most important quality to succeed in your industry)] among my team members and [intern\_name] understood it and put great effort into this and didn't fail to deliver to the expectations. An example was when [insert example].

[inetrn\_name] is a delight to work with and I wouldn't hesitate to hire [him/her/them] again.

Should you have any further questions about [him/her/them], feel free to reach me at [phone number].

Thanks,

[Your name and signature]

## APPENDIX B: Job Description Template

[NAME OF THE COMPANY] is the first pure-play agency in Kosovo with offices in Prishtina, that offers specialised services in creating, developing, and managing online presence for brands, organisations, and individuals! We are always searching for new talent and energetic and creative people to join our team. Company is currently redesigning our website and will soon launch a social media campaign. The intern hired for this position will need strong critical thinking skills in order to integrate into our vibrant and passionate team, who are very excited to share this launch with an intern hoping to gain extensive online experience.

### Responsibilities

- Contribute to website redesign project
- Monitor and post on blogs, forums, and social networks
- Assist with online outreach and promotion using Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and more
- Optimize website and social media
- Perform keyword analysis
- Perform cost/benefit analysis

### Requirements

- Study Marketing/Business or Languages
- Prior experience with Internet and social media platforms
- Solid understanding of youth markets
- Energetic and creative
- Hard-working and team-oriented

### Benefits

- Practical experience with website launch and social media campaigns
- Shadowing, mentoring, and training opportunities with experienced, knowledgeable professionals
- Opportunity to participate in networking events and company meetings
- Flexible schedule for students
- A positive working environment and a workplace that promotes employee safety, growth, and goal attainment
- With clients distributed across industries, you will have the chance to work for different customers & campaigns
- Every person here is a key player in our success, whether intern or full-time employee

## APPENDIX C: WHAT is mentoring?

Mentoring is the pairing of an experienced or skilled person (employee) with an intern. The mentor acts as a role model and supports the intern by sharing knowledge, resources and advice to help them improve their skills.

1. Assign the mentor formally:  
As a formally assigned mentor you add to the responsibility of the mentor to take the task seriously, at the same time you help the intern with an address for an easier adapting phase.
2. As a mentor ensure the intern assigned to you has the resources they need: Make sure to provide your intern with whatever resources they need to accomplish the tasks set before them.
3. Take an interest in your intern: Learn about their interests and aspirations at work and outside of work. Do your best to understand them.
4. Foster autonomy and independence by challenging them wherever possible: Find that dynamic balance between supporting and challenging them. Encourage risk-taking and the exploration of innovation and creative ideas.
5. Provide and receive feedback regularly: Foster an environment where feedback is the most valuable resource. Give credit where credit is due to reinforce good behaviour and give advice on how to handle tasks they may be struggling with.
6. Be a role model: It is important that a mentor serve as a role model for high standards of professionalism. This includes ensuring that discussion between you and your intern is safe and confidential (if necessary). Create a safe space for interns to ask questions and discuss concerns.

## APPENDIX D: How to Give constructive feedback

Receiving feedback gives the intern an opportunity to listen, absorb, and act on things that are important to improving their individual performance or the performance of a given task. Constructive feedback allows for personal improvement because it can highlight areas that an intern needs to improve upon.

Motivations to give feedback could be, for example, to help interns to:

- understand how other people perceive and interpret the intern's words and actions.
- reflect on what they could change about their communication and their actions.
- to better achieve their intended tasks or learning goals.

When giving feedback, keep in mind to:

1. **Be honest.** Provide feedback in a way that is not threatening or demeaning. Offer a safe environment.
2. **Be specific.** Give examples of where the person performed well and situations where it didn't go well.
3. **Be timely.** Don't wait until the sanctioned feedback schedule to offer feedback. Give feedback proactively.

Remember: DON'T GIVE GENERAL FEEDBACK such as:

- **"That was good presentation"** instead, add reasons why the presentation was good
- **"Well done"** instead, elaborate further what the intern did well and what can they do more in the future
- **"You did this wrong"** instead, add what was wrong, only that way the intern will know what not to repeat in the future
- **"Don't do this again"** instead, add clarity to the behavior that was so wrong, and why was it wrong
- **"You are doing OK"** this does not inspire for improvement, highlight what is OK, but also make sure to tell what is expected of the intern to do in order to be GREAT



