

Dr. Die Cast



Even You Can Afford an Intern

Hiring interns isn't just for "summer jobs". With planning and coordination, you can have an intern year-round. Universities are working with students and employers to alternate students to fill those positions. It seems there are "Help Wanted" signs everywhere. And when a student applies for a "summer internship" job we immediately think we can't afford them. Wait a minute! Do you only hire seasoned professionals with lots of experience? Do you expect other companies to train your future employees? We tend to think that only Fortune 500 companies hire interns. That is false, relatively small companies are hiring interns with excellent results. If we expect students to show up at our door once they've graduated you are already too late. By this point many of them have already been working in their field and have a relationship with an employer. In fact, some students have already got their sights set on their chosen field while in high school. What have you done to cultivate your future staff? I became interested in the tool & die and die casting industry based on a presentation at my high school. I eventually completed an apprenticeship and progressed from there. When I started my apprenticeship, they employed less than 30 people. If they had waited until I was married with children to begin the recruiting process the outcome might have been completely different.

You might ask, "What if they don't stay after graduation"? I would offer a challenge, "why wouldn't they"? If the position you are offering is close to their home, that is to your advantage. While some are happy to move far away from home, a great many would rather be near family.

Tuition assistance: You can help build loyalty by offering tuition assistance to your interns. If they are attending school nearby, offering part-time employment could be a motivator.

NADCA Scholarships: There are a number of scholarships offered at both the NADCA national and local chapter level. Chapter 3 NADCA has offered scholarships for more than 20 years. One of our recent recipients stated that "Thanks to the generous scholarships from Chapter 3, I was able to graduate DEBT-FREE"! He is now working in the industry. The David Laine Scholarship program administered by NADCA national requires an internship, so there are several companies that have hired student interns. Why not be the next?

Who is your competition? What do you expect to pay an intern? Maybe you should consider what their options are. Many students work in retail, restaurants and other lower paying industries. Even entry level production pay may be much greater than other jobs they might be considering.

Blue print for Internships: It is essential that a future engineers and managers be familiar with their companies' products. There is no better way to learn that than by working in each department. One company that I'm familiar with required every new employee to work at least 2 weeks in every production department including die casting, trim, finishing/machining, assembly, quality assurance and shipping. They were tutored by the co-workers in those departments as they progressed. They would report to their internship supervisor at the end of each day with questions and comments concerning things they learned that day. By the time they completed this stage they are much better prepared to learn tooling engineering, cost estimating and other project-oriented disciplines.

So what are you waiting for? Now is a perfect time to start recruiting your next intern.

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