



HOW TO HIRE INTERNS

A Complete Guide for
Companies in China

PREPARED BY
CHINA INTERNSHIP
PLACEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Considering a new project, research, growth potentials or even mopping up excess office task? You do not need to hire a full-time employee to support your growth strategies or push for the completion of existing projects. Sometimes, there are more advantages to bring on board an intern to fill the void. It is not an opportunity for free labor but instead several other merits.

Internships in China are an excellent opportunity for recent graduates who have gained theoretical knowledge willing to work in a real environment and acquire some experience in one of the biggest world economies. They come on board hungry for exposure and ready to push the boundary to be challenged. However, companies can also benefit from these excellent, talented and international interns who will add value to their teams, as long as they have well-structured intern programs.

To succeed in designing an in-house internship program, companies need to adhere to some fundamental principles that HR Managers and Departmental Heads must get right. This guidebook provides step by step Guide to companies in China or any part of the world to design Solid Internship Programs reaping full benefits of the scheme

For questions about or arising from this handbook, please contact our team via **info@cipinternship.com**. If you would like to have access to our Pool of interns for free, please visit our website and inquire us.

“There are basic principles that you need to implement; If you get it right, you will never run out of interns who are motivated to work for you.”



WHAT YOU WILL GET FROM THIS GUIDE

AFTER GOING THROUGH THIS E-BOOK, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- Understand the importance of hiring interns and if you need them on your team;
- Know when you need an intern and whether you are ready for it
- Design and develop internship programs appealing to International interns;
- Understand and conduct a recruitment process;
- Measure interns' performance;
- Deal with contract and visa issues;
- Avoid common mistakes that could ruin your program.

We wrote this guide because we noticed most international companies would like to have internship programs but have issues. Either they have failed at it in the past and therefore are cautious or do not know how to start it all. We have interacted with more than 400 organizations to understand what the general issues are and how to solve them.

So, we did the hard work on your behalf by combining **10 years of our experience** as an internship Placement Agency, best practices, what works as well as templates that will make your work easier recruiting intern. *Hiring Interns* is a handbook that will help you to build excellent internship programs able to attract the best interns to your company.

WHO CAN USE THIS GUIDE?

- Head of Departments;
- HR managers or Associates;
- Entrepreneurs and Business Owners;
- Alternatively, anyone within the organizational hierarchy looking to improve, re-design or implement a Great Internship Program.

WHY TAKE INTERNATIONAL INTERNS?



BRING DIVERSITY

Diversity is ideal for every work environment and enhances knowledge distribution. It also prepares your existing staff for the globalized future, stimulating cultural empathy.

NEW AND FRESH IDEAS

Interns challenge “the way we’ve always done it” mentality and bring fresh, new ideas to the company. Interns are good at questioning processes and can often see a better way of doing things that a manager might not.

TRIAL PERIOD

An internship is a great way to see how much potential a student or recent graduate has in the field. You’ll get to look at their skills and work ethic as an intern—and might choose to bring them on as a paid employee down the line.

INTERNAL LEADERSHIP

It is always a good bet to provide leadership opportunities for existing staff members – it increases leadership skills of staff, and prepares them for more robust roles ahead as they climb the organizational ladder.

COMPLETE PROJECTS

An interested candidate takes on an internship in hope of accomplishing something to use on their resume or in future interviews. Give them real, meaningful work that will help your organization run smoother, achieve more, or be more successful.

GAIN BRAND ADVOCATES

Hiring an intern helps spread the word about your company—whether you mean to or not. If you’re an impressive internship supervisor and mentor, your interns will probably talk about their experience with peers, friends and family members, mostly advertising for your organization (but it’s free!).

WORK WITH UNIVERSITIES

Opportunity to establish your brand with top universities and increase your awareness abroad – past interns will talk about your company and their experience with you when they go back to University. If combined with deliberate recruitment strategies, you will never lack interns.

COST EFFECTIVE

It's cost-effective part of your recruitment process. There is an ethical discussion about whether Internship schemes should be used as free labor engagements but surely Value trumps these arguments. It is a two-way affair and both parties should benefit.

THE MYTHS ABOUT INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

You need “free labor.”

An internship isn't something to take lightly—you need to provide mentorship and training for the student or young professional for them to learn something. An intern should not be a replacement for a paid employee; however, they should have real goals and leave the opportunity with additional skills for their career.

You're too busy. If you know you won't be an excellent intern supervisor, don't bring on interns. Unless you can dedicate much of your time to training and mentorship, it won't be a beneficial experience for either party.

You don't have any clear goals in mind for the program.

Just because you need additional help does not mean you should hire interns.

Instead, you can consider hiring temporary employees or contractors to help with your workload. If you do want to bring on interns, consider what goals you'd like them to reach by the end of the internship period.

WHAT IS AN INTERN EXPECTING FROM YOUR ORGANIZATION?

- Opportunity to develop skills relevant to their future Career Plans;
- Challenging assignments that get them applying their theoretical understandings;
- Job orientation and training;
- Social Networking;
- To be treated with recognition and basic respect;
- Flexible working conditions;
- Good references;
- Opportunity to fulltime employment:- not a requirement.





GETTING IT ALL STARTED

“I am convinced that nothing we do is more important than hiring and developing people. At the end of the day, you bet on people, not on strategies.”

A busy office building interior with a large staircase and many people walking around. The scene is captured from a high angle, showing a wide staircase with a glass railing. People are seen walking on the stairs and on the ground floor. The background shows office buildings with large windows and glass facades. The overall atmosphere is one of a modern, active workplace.

Internships are an excellent opportunity to add value to your company and develop your future talent. However, it needs to be well planned to work.

Before hiring an intern, a company must design a program according to its needs and goals. These are the steps you should follow when creating a new internship program



DESIGNING AN INTERNAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

1

DECIDE WHETHER YOU NEED INTERNS

First of all, you should understand if you need interns. You should easily answer questions like *What is the organization's expectation from the internship program?*, *How can an intern help you with your business goals?*, *Do you have enough work to cover an intern's (short-term and long-term assignments)?*, *Do you have available office space and other resources?*, *Do you want a sustainable program or just ad-hoc?*.

2

ENGAGE STAFF MEMBERS

If you decided you need interns, at this point you should have meetings with your staff or team members concerned to understand the rules of engagement and answer the question *What will be the intern's role?*, *What will be his tasks?*, *How much time is needed?*, *What skills and academic background should the intern have?*, *Who will be his/ her mentor?*. They are the ones who know better the needs and goals of their departments, so it's fundamental to the program you engage them since the beginning.



DESIGNING AN INTERNAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

3

DOCUMENT AVAILABLE POSITIONS

After the considerations above, collect all the information needed and identify available areas that interns can fill. In this step, you will design job roles and set requirements are necessary to fit the areas you identified as in need of an intern. You can learn more about developing job roles in *The Chapter - The Job descriptions*.

4

INTERVIEW CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

An interview is vital to the intern and employer to understand each other better and clarify what is at stake. It's also an excellent opportunity for companies to evaluate the candidate's profile and some of his skills. You can learn more about interviews in our *Chapter Selecting the right Intern - What to measure during an interview*.



DESIGNING AN INTERNAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

5

SET TOOLS TO MEASURE PERFORMANCE

This is a critical part of your program because will allow you to continuously improve your internship programs. Choose a few techniques to evaluate your interns' performance on a regular basis and help them to improve their efficiency. You can learn more about this in our Chapter *Measuring performance*.

6

IMPLEMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Congrats! You have just hired an intern who is motivated to work with your organization. What is next? It is essential to understand that first impressions are crucial. *How do you develop a training program? What measures are put in place building excitement in interns till they arrive?*

7

REPEAT

Repeat step 1 to 5 at a predetermined time interval For your internship Program keep attracting great talents, you need to keep the talent pipeline full of new interests and also review the steps to make sure you are always engaged in the best standards and process.



HOW TO RECRUIT INTERNATIONAL INTERNS?

After your internship program is ready and designed it's time to promote it and attract potential interns. We give 4 options and how you can do this correctly with at a zero budget.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media where you can post international internship opportunities (like LinkedIn) can be a conducive and a powerful tool to start.

- Join Facebook groups of similar interest;
- Promote testimonials from past interns;
- Set up an Application Page/landing pages to collect all applications.

UNIVERSITY CAREER CENTER

Develop partnerships with Universities around the world and create together, a well-established international internship program for their students. The emphasis should be on a win-win outcome. Universities are very careful about recommending companies to their students and we urge the steps above. Universities are a sustainable source of interns for every company.

HOSTING YOUR PROGRAM

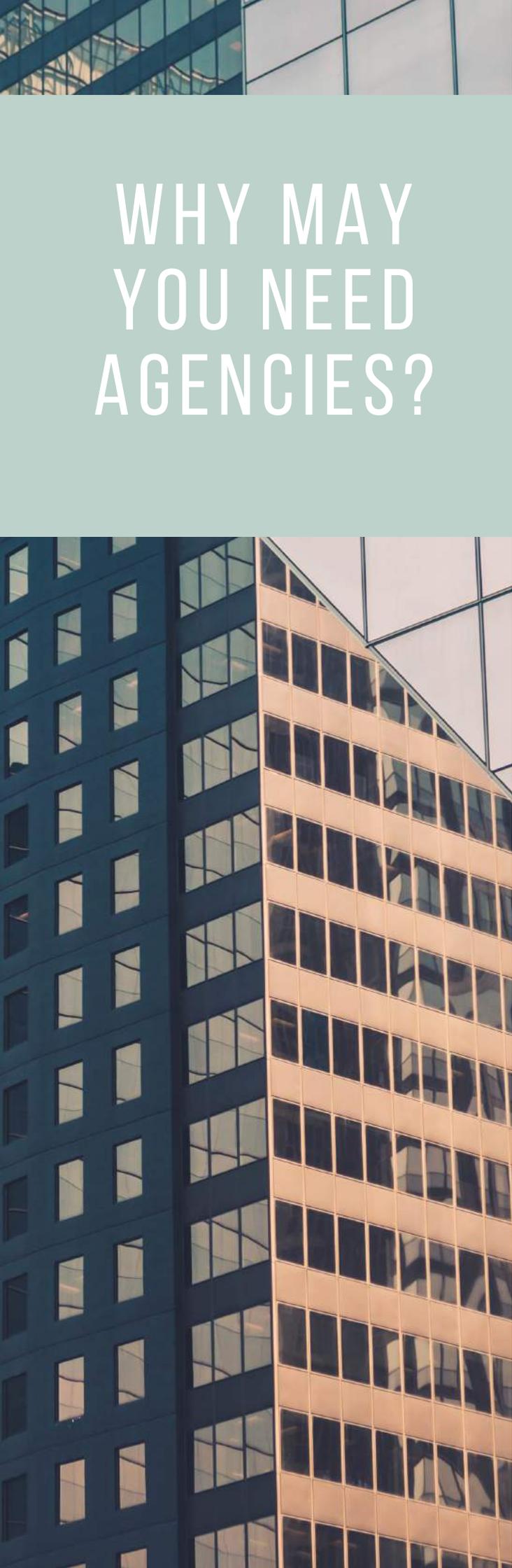
Start your own Internship program if you have resources and interest in it. This may take you some time to build and you will need to allocate much more resources to it from the start but your company will be able to manage all the recruitment process. You can look at great examples like Deloitte's or KPMG's programs. Also, note that you are competing with other organizations in the space –a good reason to stand out.

PLACEMENT AGENCIES

Outsource this process for agencies specialized in internship programs in China can save you much time. You are guaranteed the best and hard-working students and Graduates for your organization. They take care of all the difficult tasks and scale up for smooth placement of interns.

Why may you need an Agency?

See next page



WHY MAY YOU NEED AGENCIES?

Program Design and implementation is handled by the Agency taking off your stress

Internship Placement Agencies bring onboard experience, knowledge and resource base that are very **useful to make quick decisions and avoiding mistakes**

They take care of the complex Chinese **Visa requirements;**

Training and orientation -prepare interns to deliver, you may always call on them if there is a mismatch. Agencies provide cultural lessons such that students are prepared for the new environment

Keep the students in Check. They also monitor these students

Provide them **mentoring and career coaching**- very essential to improving their professional ethics before starting work

Will cost you nothing - it's free. Agencies do not charge anything for the services they render you! It's no brainer

Free your Human Resources staff to other tasks;

Contracts, evaluation documents, etc will be written for your approval

You gain **extensive access to University databases** and a broader range of University Career Center

Extra Campus Branding at no cost.

WHAT MAKES THE RIGHT AGENCY?

How organized are they?

Review their recruitment process. Is it standard?

How do they screen these interns? Is it according to their ability to pay for their services only?

Do they provide you with after-placement Support?

Which universities do they partner?

Are their staff well vexed in the subject areas?

Do they have to mentor and coaching as well as Cultural training for their interns?

HOW DOES CIP ENGAGE YOUR COMPANY?

Over the years our agency (*China Internship Placements* or CIP) carefully selected International Young Graduates and College Students for befitting internship placement for companies in China. **We place highly motivated, critical thinking and hungry-for-experience interns** who can lead corporate revolutions and are team players. CIP's China Internship Program participants are **noted industry-wide for being the best.**

Once you **join our agency network (for free)** you will have access to our excellent and qualify interns database of about **10,000 Applicants**. Our process has the following 6 steps.



STEP 1. ASSESSMENT & CONSULTATION

Diversity is ideal for every The process of hiring interns begins with us setting up a meeting with your organization to understand your expectations and goals. We will conduct an Intern-Need-Assessment.

STEP 2. THE MATCHING PROCESS

After identifying the intern roles, we work with our partner university career centers and use our extensive network to generate intern applications. We will create profiles for them, and you are called upon to review and select.

STEP 3. FINAL INTERVIEW AND DECISION

If your company is interested in any of the candidates, we process with arranging an interview through Skype or telephone. The key to a successful internship program is understanding their expectations.

STEP 4. LOGISTICS

After selecting right candidates, we process to handle the logistic preparations regarding visa, accommodation, and orientation. This puts interns in the right state of mind to deliver their best away from home.

STEP 5. ARRIVAL AND HOSTING

Welcome the Intern to your team with the right set of training as established by the Training Schedule. They are more than happy to contribute meaningfully. They are mentored on the Job to deliver. Cross your fingers and watch blow performance appraisal scores.

STEP 6. ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

We operate in a loop, and we look forward to your feedback about these interns as well as about the entire process. We use these recommendations to tailor recruitment in the future and train our staff on contingency plans. You own the process.

PROCEDURE FOR INTERVIEWING

The interview is a vital recruitment process' stage. You should follow the next four simple rules when preparing it to make sure there are no mistakes or misunderstandings:

1. Send the interview and selection process through email:
to the intern;
2. Confirm the position and job descriptions;
3. State the time for the interview precisely –and get interns to convert the time to their local time;
4. If there are any written test, collect all of it before interview so you can ask further questions;



SELECTING THE RIGHT INTERN – WHAT TO LOOK FOR DURING INTERVIEW

The interview is the moment when intern and employer meet for the first time, so it's critical to give a good first impression. The primary goal is for both sides know each other better and comprehend precisely with what is at stake to avoid future misunderstandings.

During the interview, you should try to know more about the intern, check what he/she stated in the Curriculum Vitae. Run a simple review to understand if they fit your company values and the internship position you're offering.

On the other hand, you also should be open to answering to some question the intern could have such as what kinds of assignments can him/her expect to get, what did your last (current) intern do and what do you expect of interns.

You should define a set of criteria and during the interview evaluate the interns according to them. This is an Applicant Selection Criteria Matrix we prepared for making your life easier.

APPLICANT SELECTION CRITERIA MATRIX

Suggested Scoring System:

- 5 – Excellent (significantly exceeds criteria)
- 4 – Above Average (exceeds criteria)
- 3 – Average (meets criteria)
- 2 – Below Average (generally does not meet criteria)
- 1 – Unacceptable (significantly below criteria)

	Score (1-5)	Notes/Comments
Decision making/Judgment:		
Functional & technical:		
Communication Skills:		
Education:		
Cultural fit:		
Initiative:		
Problem solving:		
Quality:		
Teamwork:		
Enthusiasm:		
Overall evaluation:		
Additional notes/comments:		

THE JOB DESCRIPTION

Job descriptions are essential to attracting the best interns but also to manage their expectations. Ensure they are interesting enough to catch their attention but also have some less exciting tasks they will need to do. It should be **a combination of challenging and “boring” roles.**

Our second advice is to **avoid vague descriptions.** Interns want to know what they will do during their internship, so you should provide concrete descriptions with details of their role.

Another two essential things are let them know how you will be **measuring their performance** and leave **contact details** on the job description stating whom they can contact.

The last but not the least, you should **highlight why interns should choose you.** Don't forget they will also receive other job descriptions, so you're competing with other companies. Just like in any other competition, you need to be the best to win.





MEASURING PERFORMANCE

Measuring and evaluating the performance of your interns is an integral part of the program. They expect some feedback about their work/professional skills and competencies from supervisors to improve their performance –keep the feedback flowing continuousl.

You should do it on a regular basis –at least 2x for short-term Programs and 3x for long-term programs.

“Avoid conducting performance reviews at the end of the internships only. This way you’ll be able to have more consistent and detailed feedback and correct behavior of interns.”



PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUES

There are several performance measurement techniques. These are some recommended ones:

- > Design forms and issue them to interns and their supervisors at a predetermined time (for example, 4 weeks after the start of the internship);
- > Ask for feedback about what they think of the entire process (recruitment and on-boarding);
- > Have a meeting with Interns to brief them about their performance and correct areas that they are lacking. Provide a concise and detailed approach to how they should improve performance;
- > Speak with their team members and collect information;

There are a couple more options. You need to choose the ones that fit better your internship program.

You should have a set of factors predetermined to measure an intern's performance. This should reflect your organization's expectation from the interns. On a scale rate of 1 to 5, these are some examples of criteria you can cover:

- Ability to learn fast;
- Reading / Writing /Computation skills;
- Listening skills;
- Creative Thinking and Problem Solving;
- Professional and Career Development Skills;
- Interpersonal and Teamwork Skills;
- Organizational Effectiveness skills;
- Basic work skills;
- Overall Performance;

PAID OR UNPAID INTERNSHIP

You decide if you want a paid or unpaid internship program. It's **not compulsory** to give any compensation to your intern especially 2 months internships. **However**, it's important to bear in mind that **interns feel more excited and motivated** if you appreciate their contribution.

You may not have a budget for it but try to be **creative about rewarding** them. You may offer launch coupons, give a lump sum at the end of the program, charge their transport cards and so on. There are plenty of options – little creativity is needed.

It's not mandatory, but we recommend long-term interns should get some basic remuneration as they will be covering their **accommodation, food, flight and local transportation**.

Our advice is that you shouldn't forget you're **competing with other companies** to attract and keep the best interns so you must be competitive to get the most qualified ones.

HOW TO ORIENT INTERNATIONAL INTERNS ON THE FIRST DAY OF WORK



The first day at the office is significant for an intern. He is in an entirely new environment and country. It's normal if they feel nervous and anxious so you must be there to provide the best conditions at the start of the internship. Let them feel welcomed.

First of all, provide a detailed orientation plan, email this to the intern as well as the supervisor – so that they don't miss any vital item

It's also important to have a mentor or supervisor who knows more about the intern's role and can provide in-depth training. Someone the intern can learn from and ask questions.

Thirdly, the first day should be light. You can engage in activities like:

- Explaining what he will be doing in brief,
- Showing them around –workspace,
- Talking about the working conditions,
- Introducing the intern to other team members
- Helping him scheduling his week.
- Train and prepare them for the tasks ahead. Interns will usually perform if the training goes well.
- Feel free to treat them to lunch [optional but works]

The checklist you should run through before the first day of work

- Intern has signed an offer letter and a contract;
- Make sure they have also read through the Work ethics/code;
- Brief them on dressing codes and how you expect them to appear;
- The supervisor should have at least connected with the intern in an email;
- Intern's desk is set with working materials like Pen, Books or any printout;
- Orientation itinerary is well set.



HOW TO KEEP INTERNS MOTIVATED TO WORK HARD

It's common to see interns who are more dedicated to ensuring projects are completed than existing staff –but this attitude needs to be nurtured to last. If done well, interns become an incredible source of new ideas and hard work. They are genuinely interested in the experience and 80% of times prepared to give their best –it is the reason why they spend thousands of dollars to finance their journey to China. However, you also need to play your role and keep them motivated. These are some techniques you can use for it:

-
- Provide a **streamlined operation process**. Interns get confused and frustrated when the process leading to recruitment isn't well designed. Don't keep postponing interview times;
 - **Communicate your decisions promptly** and provide an offer letter and get them to append their signature;
 - Keep a **good reputation** with past interns who are always willing to speak with your new hires;
 - **Provide details** of office address and other necessary documents;
 - You may also **provide city-specific information** about accommodation, transport, travel and so on –You don't need to do this if you are using an agency;
 - **Prepare a well-detailed orientation process**. First impressions are always important. If the first week goes well, interns remain curious to accomplish their goals;
 - **Allocate them mentors** within the office environment. As interns don't have a lot of real work experience, they need someone who can help and guide them. This is also an excellent opportunity to get your existing staff to practice leadership skills;
 - Give them **challenging assignments**. They want to be challenged, and they will give their best to prove how valuable they are;
 - **Train them** to deliver; they are as good as their supervisors;
 - Organize **periodic meetings** with all interns;
 - **Measure their performance** and train them;
 - Issue questionnaires periodically for **feedback**. There is always something to improve;
 - Occasionally take them out for **lunch or dinner** (optionally);
 - Arrange **cultural activities** and immerse them in the culture;

You can also review the chapter *What are interns looking for?* to find other ways to keep them motivated.

CONTRACT ISSUES

It is essential to get interns to commit to specific terms of expectations. Without contracts, interns may leave without notice, or even break basic work ethics. You are hiring them not for the fun of it; rather you want to get things done. One way to keep them staying with you through the program is motivating them and providing a well-organized system of coaching and on the job mentoring –don't underestimate the power of contracts.

Contracts are useful tools for getting interns committed to the task ahead. As the HR, you should state clearly all terms, conditions, responsibilities, duration, and process of Internship termination. Some of the essential themes that should feature in the contract are:

- Host Company's Role
- Intern's Role
- Duration of the internship
- Working hours
- Paid or not paid?
- Termination clause and required notices
- Codes of Ethics (some Companies usually makes this a separate document)
- Non- disclosure clause



VISA ISSUES

The only legal visa for an internship in China is the X category of Visa (Usually referred to as Student Visa).

It is always good to be law-abiding to avoid unnecessary penalties and fines. The Public Safety Bureau of the People's Republic of China still conduct routine site visits and you will like to be at the right side of the law. It is clear that companies cannot provide this form of Visa and therefore will need assistance.

Never accept Business Visa, Tourist Visa or any other category as a replacement.

If your organization works with an Agency, they are responsible for help you fix this quickly. We assist our partner companies in securing the right set of visa to avoid later stage stress.

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

Improperly laid work process and recruitment procedure frustrates them before arrival

Overwhelming them on the first day

Giving them too basic tasks that didn't match what was agreed on the offer letter –its ok to get started with essential functions but you should communicate this ahead of time

Putting them on projects that they don't have any knowledge or experience to contribute –strike a right balance

Not showing them around and isolating them

Not being aware of legal obligations

Not providing learning opportunities

Not staying connected with past interns when they are gone

A photograph of two men in a meeting. The man on the left is wearing glasses and a checkered shirt, looking at a smartphone. The man on the right is wearing a grey blazer and is smiling. They are sitting at a desk with a laptop, a smartphone, and a coffee cup. In the background, there is a window with a pink sticky note and a red sticky note.

CIP'S INTERN RECRUITMENT STRATEGY SOLUTIONS

Founded in 2008, CIP connects Companies in China to the world's professionals and students to integrate the international experience into their profile making them more productive and successful. With over 4.5k Alumni, 20k Database, access to over 350 University Career Center, CIP is one of the most extensive professional networks for your Intern Recruitment needs. We have a complete Database comprised of Chinese Students Abroad and International Talents serving over 400 Multinational Companies.

LET'S GET TALKING?

We're eager to help! Contact our team via **info@cipinternship.com** or click here to fill the form on our website, and we will be in touch to see how we can help.

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