

Supporting Student Associates Through Clear Instruction and Reflection

When providing instructions to your Student Associates, it is important to provide clear explanations and instructions to ensure they are able to complete the projects accurately and efficiently. By learning your Student Associates' preferred method of receiving instruction (i.e. verbal instructions accompanied by written instructions), you can best support their growth and development. Here are some reflection questions for both supervisors and Student Associates that will ensure clear and effective instruction and support.

Supervisor Instruction Checklist

- Have I clearly explained the objective of the task or project?
- Have I outlined the steps or process to complete the task?
- Have I provided a clear deadline or timeframe?
- Have I confirmed the Student Associate understands the instructions?
- Have I asked how they prefer to receive instructions (e.g. verbal, written, both)?
- Have I provided written instructions if helpful or requested?
- Have I shared any reference materials, examples, or templates?
- Have I encouraged them to ask questions if they need clarification?
- Have I checked in periodically to see how they're progressing?
- Have I provided feedback after the task is completed to support growth?

Supervisor Reflection Questions

- How does my Student Associate prefer to receive instructions?
- Did I make the task expectations and deadlines clear?
- Did I create a space where the Student Associate felt comfortable asking questions?
- How often do I check in without micromanaging?
- Have I adapted my communication style based on the intern's needs and experience level?
- Am I providing enough guidance while still encouraging independence?
- What feedback did I give, and how can I improve how I deliver it?
- What could I do differently next time to support their understanding and success?

Taking time to reflect on how we communicate instructions and support Student Associates is essential to creating a positive and effective learning environment. These questions are meant to help you assess and refine your supervisory approach, ensuring that your Student Associates feel guided, empowered, and confident in their work. This helps reinforce a culture of open communication, accountability, and mutual respect - qualities that benefit not just your Student Associate, but your entire team. Your commitment to thoughtful mentorship plays a critical role in shaping a meaningful and successful internship experience.