Tips for Selecting and Supervising Student Employees
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This publication is available in alternative format upon request. Contact Organizational Effectiveness at 612-626-0774 or send an e-mail to orgeff@umn.edu
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Objectives

• Learn important steps to take to improve your ability to select the most qualified students
• Understand what to do during orientation that will increase retention and engagement of students
• Become familiar with how to set work and performance expectations and standards
• Prepare you to more effectively train students on-the-job
• Learn how the Student Development Outcomes (SDO's) can be used to motivate and manage the performance of students
Benefits and Challenges of Student Employees

Introduction
In March 2002, the University of Minnesota’s Supervisory Training Program circulated a survey to individuals who supervise student employees. It asked questions about the types of assignments given to student employees, as well as the challenges and benefits of working with student employees. The supervisors were eager to share their experiences. We received 182 completed responses, many with several paragraphs of advice and suggestions. The information is reflected in this document.

Typical University student employees
According to the survey results, a typical student employee:

- is an undergraduate
- works in a unit with fewer than ten other student workers
- performs office support work (photocopying, phone reception, word processing, data entry, etc.)
- performs public contact work, either as part office support responsibilities or in specific customer service assignments such as parking attendant, security monitor, or library attendant

Benefits of hiring students
Of 182 supervisors who responded, only two indicated that student employees had not been successful in their units. The vast majority of responses indicated that student employees were a useful and welcome addition to the unit staff. Some of the key benefits of hiring student employees are:

Financial benefits, including access to work study funding

- Willingness of student employees to perform routine tasks, thereby freeing up full time staff for other duties
- Flexibility of student employees to work varying hours per week, handle seasonal workloads, and work odd hours.
- Ability of student staff to understand the needs and viewpoints of other students, helping student customers feel more comfortable and letting the full time staff know about issues from the student point of view
- Energy and enthusiasm; ability to bring new ideas and new perspectives to the workplace

Challenges of hiring students
A great benefit of hiring student employees was also seen as the biggest challenge – the need for flexibility. Student employees are valuable to units because of their flexibility to do a variety of tasks and work a variety of hours. However, supervisors often face a scheduling challenge because student schedules change each semester, and they often need time off during exam and break times.
Another challenge mentioned by many supervisors was the need for more training and coaching on basic job skills. Student employees may come to the job with excellent computer or technical skills, but they are often inexperienced in formal work settings. This means that supervisors have to spend more time emphasizing the importance of issues such as arriving on time, calling in sick, and limiting personal phone calls – things that might be commonly understood by full time staff.

The consensus of the survey responses was that if supervisors provide reasonable and clearly defined expectations, student employees can be a valuable and enjoyable part of the University workplace.

* * * * * * *

**Survey Comments**

Working with students is great. It’s been my experience that they bring a lot of character and enthusiasm to the job. They have fresh insights, and they help our unit continue to evolve. Often, they are highly skilled and talented as well. (Stephanie Treat, CLA)

*Because they themselves are students they have a strong sense of the need for good customer service at the front desk...they often themselves experience the same kinds of struggles, problems, needs for assistance, and give us helpful insights from their own experiences.* (Eunice Eckerly, Human Ecology)

*I have found that with quality students, if you work around their class schedule and other events, the student tends to be more productive in their work, as well as bring a positive attitude to the workplace.* (Renee Halvorson, Academic and Distributed Computing Services)

*Before you start ask yourself what are you willing to invest in your students, because they require time. Treat students as you would other workers, with respect, and requirement to finish their tasks as assigned. Give them real tasks, make them a part of the team and experience.* (Karen Kinoshita, CLA)

*Students want to do a good job. Your job is to help them do a good job.* (Nancy McCormick, Law Library)

*They become what we give them the chance to be.* (Nathaniel Pearson, Physics and Astronomy)
## Millenitial Generation Sterotypes (Fact or Fiction)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Millennial Characteristics as noted in “The Trophy Kids Go to Work” Article</th>
<th>Are These the Same Characteristics We Will See in “Millennial” Student Employees?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Millennials have a strong sense of entitlement (expect higher pay, more time off than non-millennial employees, etc.).</td>
<td><strong>No.</strong> Sense of entitlement isn’t strong because student employees understand the reality of their work (it’s not a long term job, school takes higher priority, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Millennials need lots of attention and guidance from managers.</td>
<td><strong>Situational.</strong> Many student employees have not had jobs before. But amount of attention and guidance depends on type of work and students education/experience. For example, in IT jobs, student employees are often more up-to-date on technology, software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Millennials crave positive feedback and react very strongly and adversely to constructive/negative feedback.</td>
<td><strong>Yes.</strong> Student like to be told when they are doing good work but don’t react well when told they could be doing things better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Millennials want things spelled out clearly and struggle without precise guidelines. They prefer structured situations that provide clearly defined rules and structure.</td>
<td><strong>Yes.</strong> Because school is priority student employees don’t like to, or can’t take time to, figure out how to do things so they would prefer to be told.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Compared to other generations, Millennials aren’t as loyal to their employers. If they feel/see job isn’t fulfilling will leave quickly.</td>
<td><strong>No.</strong> If student employees are treated well they will come back. Understanding that school is priority, showing empathy is key.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Millennials have strong opinions, aren’t afraid to share them, and will challenge management.</td>
<td><strong>Yes.</strong> Student employees are often very confident in their abilities and opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Status and hierarchy don’t impress them. They want to be treated like colleagues rather than subordinates and expect ready access to senior leaders.</td>
<td><strong>Situational.</strong> Depends upon how much work in department is done by students. If larger percentage of work is done by students they know who “runs” the place and want to be treated equally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selecting Student Employees

1) Identify job duties and knowledge, skills and abilities required
   • Review job description and identify main duties and responsibilities (job duties)
   • Identify the knowledge, skills and behaviors needed to perform the job successfully.
     o For example, reception desk duties require good customer service skills and the ability to communicate clearly.
     o An Accounting Assistant would need to be able to accurately record data and be comfortable working with details.

2) Use application or resume to screen for knowledge and skills before interviewing

3) Interview the top candidates
   • Not necessary to interview all applicants who apply.
     o You should talk to top candidates before making offer.
     o Interviews can be conducted in person or over phone, and can have differing levels of formality.
     o Important to use the same interview strategy with all candidates.
   • Know candidates for student positions may not have much paid work experience.
     o However, it’s still possible to gauge their knowledge and skills
     o Candidate’s resume or application may include academic interests, volunteer work, and extracurricular activities that can give picture of knowledge and skills.
   • Use behaviorally based interview questions to assess candidate’s fit for the position.
     o Review job duties and ask about situations in past that reflect knowledge, skills and behaviors needed for employee to do job successfully:
     o For example:
       • **Attention to detail.** Tell me about a time when details were important to a project you were working on. How did you make sure you didn’t miss anything?
       • **Time Management.** How do you manage the conflicting demands on your time? Give an example of a time that you had to juggle multiple tasks at once? How did you handle the situation? What was the outcome?
       • **Communication skills.** Tell me about a time you had to explain complex information to other people? What the situation, how did you approach it and what was the outcome?
       • **Ability to work independently.** This position requires the ability to work independently. Tell me about a time you had a project where you were given little direction on how to carry it? What was the project, what did you do the accomplish it?
   • Clearly explain work hours or scheduling requirements of position in the interview.
It’s better for them hear about this information before being hired in case they can meet the requirements.

4) **Check references**

- Potential student employees may not have references from past employers, but individuals who have worked with the student in non-employment settings may provide appropriate references. Talking to athletic coaches, academic advisors, or volunteer committee chairs will provide useful information about a candidate’s skills and responsibility level. Useful questions could include:
  i) This position requires good customer service skills. Can you tell me about a time when this individual handled a difficult client successfully?
  ii) Tell me about this individual’s ability to follow through on projects without a lot of direct supervision?
  iii) How would you assess this individual’s ability to learn new skills?

5) **Select and hire the candidate**

- **Select a candidate and follow the hiring procedures recommended by the Office of Human Resources Job Center.** For further information, contact the Office of Human Resources at 612-625-2000.
  i) Complete the *Student Quick Hire form* (UM Form 1522)
     [http://umn.edu/ohr/forms/index.html](http://umn.edu/ohr/forms/index.html) and email to quickhire@umn.edu.
  ii) Receive verification from the Job Center that the individual is eligible for student employment
  iii) Complete the Work Study appointment in PeopleSoft, if applicable
  iv) Complete the *Student Employment Agreement Form*, if applicable

6) **Notify other candidates that position has been filled.**

- As a representative of the University, it’s important that you treat all job applicants with courtesy; don’t leave them wondering about the status of their applications
Orienting Student Employees

1) **Provide a welcoming atmosphere**
   
   - **Prepare their work area before they start.** Create a good first impression! Make sure the student employee:
     - Has clean work space
     - A place to store personal belongings
     - Mailbox or “in” box
     - Necessary equipment, such as a phone or computer access
     - Copies of unit handbooks, work procedures, manuals, etc.
   
   - **Introduce them to other staff members in unit.**
     - If several students work in unit, make sure they have opportunities to meet each other.
     - Even if students work independently of others, involving them in unit activities helps them feel a part of things and see the importance of their contributions.

2) **Familiarize them with the physical workplace**
   
   - Help them understand where important resources are – from nearest vending machines to office photocopier.
   - If necessary, provide campus maps and make sure they can find important offices and other sites.

3) **Provide an overview of the mission of the University, your unit, and their position**
   
   - Student may not be familiar with teaching, research, and outreach mission of University.
   - Take time to explain mission, and how unit’s responsibilities relate to it.
   - Help them understand why work they are doing is important and how it contributes to achievement of U’s mission and goals.

FACT: Research by the Corporate Leadership Council shows that employees who see clear link between the work they are doing and organization’s mission and goals typically perform up to 32% better than peers who haven’t been shown this link.
Example of Student Employee Checklist

http://www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/Career/campus_employment/dwnldfrms/designing_training.pdf

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOURS AND INTRODUCTIONS</th>
<th>PRIVACY / CONFIDENTIALITY</th>
<th>PHONES / FAX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restrooms</td>
<td>Accessibility to confidential records and information</td>
<td>Transferring calls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch room</td>
<td>Security codes, restricted passwords</td>
<td>Taking messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where to put personal items</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phone etiquette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where supplies are kept</td>
<td></td>
<td>Important numbers /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty / staff / co-workers</td>
<td></td>
<td>office web addresses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others who may share space / equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phone use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How to send a fax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(what is the department's fax number?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Copy machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(how to and policy for personal use)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPUTERS</th>
<th>OFFICE ETIQUETTE / PROCEDURES</th>
<th>MONEY QUESTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logging on / off (passwords, security, energy conservation)</td>
<td>Professional conduct</td>
<td>How to fill out timecard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office usage policy (checking mail, homework, internet usage)</td>
<td>Dress code</td>
<td>Pay periods and due dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eating / drinking at desk</td>
<td>Daily duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visitor policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breaks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creating a Supportive Environment

1) **Recognize student’s major focus is school**
   - Clearly explain work hours and scheduling requirements in advance and revisit frequently with them.
   - Understand student jobs will require more flexibility in scheduling than other staff positions.
     - Remember student employees provide you flexibility in meeting the needs of the unit.

2) **Help student employees feel valued and part of the unit**
   - **Include them in unit activities.** This includes:
     - Team meetings and events
     - Group gatherings or meals outside of work hours
   - Involve them in shared projects
   - Make sure they’re informed about issues important to the unit
   - Express interest in their academic careers and extracurricular activities
Preparing Students to Succeed

In order for a student employee to perform successfully they should know:

A. What to do (job duties)

B. How to do it (behaviors that will make them successful)

C. What successful performance looks like (performance standards)

The process of explaining what and how is called setting expectations.
A. Explain Job Duties

1) Carefully review job description so they understand their key job duties

2) Review knowledge and skills which are critical for successful performance of job duties. This is the “what.”

- **Knowledge.** *Is the body of information applied directly to the performance of a job or task.*

  Examples:
  - Basic accounting procedures
  - Mac computer systems
  - Graphics design software QuarkXpress, Photoshop and Illustrator
  - Guidelines for using PowerPoint as part of a presentation
  - Student financial aid policies, programs and procedures

- **Skill.** *The proficiency of manual, verbal, or mental manipulation of data or things. Skills are not typically mastered right away. You learn them and then practice to increase them.*

  Examples:
  - Being able to create Microsoft Excel spreadsheets or format documents using Microsoft Word
  - Create poster brochures and promotional materials for student organizations
  - Listening effectively to customer needs and requirements
  - Deal courteously and effectively with high-level office visitors, telephone callers and customers.

- **Examples of Job Duties**
B. Share Behavioral Expectations

Notes
B. Share Behavioral Expectations

Three different types of behavioral expectations

1) Professional
- Many student employees have never had jobs or worked in a “professional” capacity before.
- Need to explain differences between their college experience and work experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequent, quick and concrete feedback (grades, etc.)</td>
<td>Infrequent and less precise feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual effort</td>
<td>Team effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly structured curriculum and programs with lots of direction</td>
<td>Highly unstructured environment and tasks with little direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of performance level (“A,” “B,” etc.)</td>
<td>“A” level work always required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal control over time, classes, interests</td>
<td>Need to respond to others’ directions and interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on personal development and growth</td>
<td>Focus on getting results for the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>Bosses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) Management
- Management expectations provide students guidance on what’s needed to be successful working in the college, department, or unit.
- Don’t go into the same level of detail with student employees as you would with non-student employees.
- Examples of management expectations unique to each college, department, or unit may include:
  - Dress code
  - Computer usage
  - Attendance expectations
  - Ability to manage conflict with co-workers
  - Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with all employees in the department
B. Share Behavioral Expectations

3) Job Specific

Example of Graphic Designer – Entry Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Graphic design software QuarkXpress, Photoshop and Illustrator</td>
<td>• Create posters, brochures, and promotional materials for student organizations</td>
<td>• Accept instruction &amp; constructive criticism from supervisor on design of promotional materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mac computer systems</td>
<td>• Listening effectively to customer needs and requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understanding of basic graphic design principles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“On a daily basis you’ll need to use your knowledge of QuarkXPress Desktop publishing software to produce professional looking posters and brochures. To produce the best looking designs you will need to be open to constructive criticism and design suggestions from me.”
Example of Student Employee Expectations

http://www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/career/campus_employment/dwnldfrms/stu_emp_expectations.pdf

CUSTOMER SERVICE
When addressing the public, whether on the phone or in person, it is of utmost importance to be friendly, kind, and helpful. As a student employee, you are an extremely valuable ambassador for the University. It is critical that all customers (students, prospective students and families, staff, faculty or off campus constituents) are treated with respect and grace.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE
A neat and clean appearance is always required as a student employee. You may come to work dressed as you dress for class. Specific clothing requirements should be discussed with your supervisor. Various departments may require different rules based on your interaction with the public and the type of work that is performed. In general, student employees should not wear the following: tight leggings or spandex, tank or crop tops, tattered or ripped clothing, or sweat pants. Shoes should be worn at all times. Sweatshirts and t-shirts are allowed, however, please be sure any messages on them are in line with the mission of Carnegie Mellon University.

TELEPHONE USE AND PERSONAL VISITORS
Receiving or making personal phone calls while you are working is not acceptable except in the case of an emergency. When meeting friends or family at the work place, please arrange to meet them in the lobby or outside of the work area. Most departments have limited space and are open to the public, so it can be very distracting to other staff members if personal discussions are taking place.

All visiting (on the phone or in person) must take place during scheduled breaks or lunch periods. This also applies to student employees visiting with each other within the confines of an office. Please use professional judgement in determining the appropriateness of talking with other student employees during work time. There may be times when visiting with other employees is appropriate. See your supervisor for additional guidance.

COMPUTER USE
Many students may receive e-mail messages that are directly related to their work. While it is appropriate to read and respond to work-related e-mail, it is not appropriate to read or respond to personal e-mail at any time while at work. It is also not appropriate to surf the Internet or use the computer for any personal use. Examples of inappropriate use of computer equipment/pace include such things as writing school papers, studying reading or sending personal e-mails or searching the Internet.

WORK EXPECTATIONS
Your department may have specific work spaces set aside for student employees or you may be sharing space and equipment with other staff members. In either case, it is important to be considerate of others. Keep your work area clean and presentable. Do not leave food or beverages in your area and clean up after yourself by making sure trash is in the garbage and recyclable items are in the proper bins. You will want to discuss specific expectations with your supervisor.
Tips for Setting Expectations


Lessons from the video:

- Step 1 –

- Step 2 -

- Step 3 -

- Step 4 -

“"I got a blank memo too. Management must have added another unwritten rule."
C. Communicate Performance Standards

- Performance standards provide employee with specific performance measures for each major job duty

- It’s unrealistic to expect student workers to perform at the same level as non-student employee on job duties, on routine basis. Here’s why:
  - They work less hours
  - Typically have less experience
  - Don’t get as much opportunity to gain knowledge, or build skills
  - May not be as motivated because the work is often not in their chosen field of study

- However, this should not stop you from setting performance standards on the most common job duties.
  - Student employees want to do good work
  - They often see standards as a challenge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Duties Examples</th>
<th>Examples of Performance Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graphic Designer – Entry Level</strong></td>
<td><strong>Produce three 8 1/2 X 11 flyers in each four hour work shift</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Use knowledge of QuarkXPress Desktop Publishing software to produce professional looking posters and brochures</em></td>
<td><strong>Documents are thoroughly proofed for accuracy and content before final copies are printed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Clearly follow instructions on Work Order</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principal Office and Administrative Specialist</strong></td>
<td><strong>Open office promptly at 8:00 a.m.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Serve as first contact for office, including answering phone and e-mail inquiries from staff, students, and vendors.</em></td>
<td><strong>Answer phone with a friendly tone and courteous demeanor</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Returns e-mails and voicemail messages within two “business” days</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Training Exercise

1. What was most frustrating about the experience?

2. What kind of instructions are most useful?

3. How could you, as a supervisor, ensure that employees understand the assignment and have the training necessary to complete?
1) **Use the best employees**
   - Have student employees in your area, who have done job duties before, do training or
   - Use subject matter experts to do training

2) **Develop a training plan/checklist, and schedule, to make sure they have knowledge and skills needed to perform their job duties satisfactorily**

3) **Set expectation that student employees need to ask questions about information that isn’t clear or hasn’t been explained**
   a) New students may be shy or uncomfortable admitting their uncertainties.
   b) Stress the importance of being sure the task is done correctly and the value of knowing how to do it in the future.

4) **Use *Tell, Show, Do, Review* approach to train processes, procedures, or tasks**
   a) **Tell** them what they will be doing and why
   b) **Show** them how to do it
   c) Have them **Do** the work under supervision of subject matter expert (SME)
   d) Have them **Review** (explain it to SME) to prove they can do it

5) **Check and monitor training progress frequently and give feedback**
Other Training Factors to Consider

- **General Office Knowledge and Skills.** May need to explain basic office procedures. This includes:
  - Phone system
  - University e-mail system
  - Sending and receiving campus mail
  - Office equipment such as photocopiers, fax machines, etc.
  - Appropriate cash handling procedures

- **Job Specific Knowledge and Skills.**
  - Each position has unique tasks. In addition to team/unit’s own procedures training, use existing University resources to provide training. For example, computer skills, accounting procedures, etc.

- **Customer Service Skills.**
  - Many student employees provide direct service to clients – current students, prospective students, and University staff – it is important they represent University well.
  - Consider sending student employees to the University’s Service Improvement Program classes ([www.umn.edu/ohr/service](http://www.umn.edu/ohr/service)).
  - May need to set specific standards for appropriate service behaviors.

- **Relationship Skills.**
  - Students need to develop interpersonal skills necessary for success at work.
  - Supervisors and coworkers can teach these skills by example. Students can also attend training courses in areas such as:
    - Communication skills
    - Listening skills
    - Dealing with difficult behavior
    - Managing conflict

- **Teamwork Skills.**
  - Student may need coaching on how to build effective work relationships.
  - They aren’t used to functioning as part of an interdependent work team, and need help understanding how their job relates to the work of others in the unit.
  - They may need help understanding the differences between work relationships and friendships.

- **Manager/Employee Relationship Skills.**
  - They may need your help in understanding supervisory relationship.
  - You might need to clarify issues such as level of independent responsibility they have, kind of reporting you expect, and resources you can provide to help them succeed.
The Student Development Outcomes (SDO’s)
Student employment is one avenue for students to obtain structured learning experiences. The student employment experience contributes to personal growth and development, leads to attainment of new skills, and provides work experience that can be used in the job search process. The Student Development Outcomes (SDO’s) are intended to define a common vision across campus regarding the types of skills and characteristics we expect of our graduates. Student Development Outcomes have been integrated into various programs and activities across campus, like student jobs, to help students reflect upon their experiences through the framework of the SDOs. Student Development Outcomes include the following behaviors:

- Responsibility and accountability
- Independence and interdependence
- Goal orientation
- Self awareness
- Resilience
- Appreciation of differences
- Tolerance of ambiguity

Selected areas such as Student Unions & Activities, Housing and Residential Life, and Disability Services have made progress in the past couple of years incorporating SDO’s as important tools to manage student employees. Student Development Outcomes have been incorporated into job descriptions, performance reviews, supervisory training, and feedback sessions.
Providing Coaching and Feedback

Steps in Performance Management
Effective performance management includes a series of related steps described in the model below. For full time employees, units typically have official performance management plans which include annual performance appraisals and methods for recognition of outstanding work.

Supervisory relationships with student employees are often informal and may not include official milestones. Therefore, it’s important to have mechanisms in place to be sure student employees are getting the information they need about their work performance. When designing a student position, review the steps below and make sure they are incorporated into the management strategy.

Performance Management Model

- Communicate expectations & performance standards
- Provide proper training and coaching
- Monitor performance
- Give feedback
- Evaluate performance
- Develop a plan for the future
Coaching for Improvement

All employees like to be told when they are doing a good job. While they may not appreciate it at the time, it’s also important for employees to know as soon as possible when and how things need to be corrected. The following model works well for coaching student employees on areas of improvement.

- **Review standards and expectations.** Go back to the materials used when orienting the student employee. Review the expectations and performance standards with the student. You may want to consider the following questions: Has the job changed? Have the expectations been revised? Are there areas that are unclear?

- **Give specific examples of unacceptable performance.** Tell the employee specifically what went wrong and why it was a problem. Ask for their understanding about the situation. Make sure you have a mutual understanding about the problem, its causes, and its implications.

- **Use effective communication skills.** It’s important to present the information in a way that invites discussion. You might want to discuss a specific problem situation and ways it could have been handled differently. Listen carefully to what they have to say about the problem. They may have understood the assignment differently than was intended, or may have interpreted circumstances in a way that led to unexpected results. Student employees may have a limited amount of experience with the supervisor-subordinate relationship, and it’s important that you present the problem in a way that avoids labeling the student as a bad employee or inadequate performer.

- **Make an action plan for correcting the problem.** Discuss specific ways in which the employee’s behavior needs to change. Mutually agree on a plan for improvement and a timeline for follow-up. Be sure the employee understands that you value his/her contribution and are willing to help resolve the situation.

- **Monitor the problem and provide feedback.** Follow up with specific observations and feedback. Agree on a timeline for reviewing performance improvements. If the problem persists, continue coaching or move into progressive discipline as necessary. If the problem is improving, provide specific descriptions of desirable changes and encourage the employee to continue making improvement.
Scheduling Student Employees

• **Understand scheduling challenges.** Scheduling is often most complex elements of supervising student employees. Challenges include:
  - Class schedules, and therefore work schedules, change each semester
  - Limited availability during final exams or other times of heavy coursework
  - Last-minute schedule changes due to demands of school or other life activities
  - Unavailability during break times
  - Desire to work more hours during break times

• **Identify the level of flexibility.** Recognize scheduling requires attention and planning. For each position, identify level of flexibility possible in scheduling.
  - Are there some elements that must be done on particular day/particular time?
  - Is it necessary they are available for long periods of time in office at least part of every day?
  - Are there seasonal variations in workload?

**IMPORTANT:** If the job scheduling requirements are very specific, some students may not be able to perform in this position. Make these conditions clear as part of the job interview and orientation process.

**Negotiate a schedule**

• **Once you’ve identified your needs, communicate them very clearly**
  - If there are time-specific or day-specific tasks, (for example, delivering weekend production runs every Monday morning or answering phones over lunch hour) make sure employee understands importance of keeping to schedule.
  - Communicate your expectations about meeting schedule and evaluate student’s performance accordingly.

• **When greater flexibility is possible, discuss the scheduling with the student and agree on a mutually acceptable schedule for each semester.**
  - In most cases it’s best to have a specific agreement about when the student will be working.
  - “Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 1:00-4:00” is much more effective than “approximately nine hours per week at the student’s discretion.”

• **At the beginning of each semester, revisit the schedule and evaluate the student’s needs and the unit’s workload.**
  - Many supervisors find it effective to have a one or two week test period before they “lock in” schedule for e semester.
  - After that point, student employees are expected to be at work during the agreed-upon times, unless prior arrangements have been made with the supervisor.
Ten Ways to Decrease Motivation in Student Employees

1) Tell student employees exactly how to do each task and hover until it’s done.

2) Provide only the minimal amount of training. Discourage any efforts to gain new skills or learn more about the unit’s work.

3) Discount their commitment to school. Express no interest in their schoolwork or educational activities. Make comments about “when they get out into the real world.”

4) Tell them that they’re only student employees and don’t need to know what’s going on in the department.

5) Don’t point out when they’ve done something well. Point out, loudly and in public, every error.

6) Roll your eyes whenever they ask questions. Mutter “how dumb can you be” under your breath.

7) Express no interest in their opinions or suggestions about how to do the job.

8) Set unreasonable expectations, don’t communicate the expectations clearly, and then get upset when they aren’t met.

9) Invite them to staff meetings, but pretend they’re not there during discussions.

10) Say the work hours are flexible, but be crabby whenever they ask for time off to study.
Case Studies

Case Study #1. You hired Dawn, a 19 year old undergraduate student employee, during the middle of Fall semester to perform entry level clerical work. Dawn works 15 hours per week, typically Monday through Friday, 1:30-4:30. However, you’ve agreed that her hours are somewhat flexible as long as you are aware of when she will be working. When she was hired, you told Dawn that she would be expected to work her scheduled hours each week and that time off during breaks and finals would be kept to a minimum since she is responsible for providing coverage for phone and in-person reception during part of her shift.

As the semester went on, Dawn asked for time off to study for midterms and finals as well as during the holiday break. Some of these requests involved minimal notice and you had to scramble to find last-minute coverage of her shift. You approved the time off and have noticed that she continues to ask for time off to study during Spring Semester as well. She has also called in sick a few times during the past few weeks.

How do you handle this situation?

Case Study #2. You have a student employee, John, who is responsible for assisting with the creation and maintenance of the web pages for your department, the College of Liberal Arts Advising Office. Student files are housed in this office. These files contain confidential information – course registrations, course grades, and other personal information. These files are located in close proximity to John’s workspace. One day, you see John looking at some student files he had pulled. You’re not aware of a job-related reason for John to be viewing the files.

How do you handle this situation?
Case Study #3. Christina has been working in your office as a student employee for two years. She performs a wide variety of functions including typing documents, filing, copying and processing payroll documents. She has been a valuable employee – always arriving to work on time, going above and beyond what is expected of her, taking on additional duties. She always has a positive attitude.

She has her own workspace equipped with a computer and a phone. Christina is able to work independently and complete her projects with minimal supervision. However, you have noticed that she is frequently on personal phone calls chatting with friends, surfing the Internet for non-work related reasons and having her friends stop by to visit her. She does all of her work on time with few mistakes, but her constant personal interruptions have caused tension among the rest of the staff.

How do you handle this situation?

Case Study #4. You hired Bill, a 23 year old graduate student, to be a student computer assistant. His job is to help you with data entry into an Access database and put presentations together using Power Point software. You hired Bill through a competitive student search process. He has never had a job before. During his interview, Bill appeared to have the most knowledge of and experience with PowerPoint and Access software. As you continue to give him assignments to complete, you notice that Bill makes many mistakes and the presentations he has put together using Power Point are not those of a skilled user. You believe he may have misrepresented his skills during the interview.

How do you handle this situation?
Case Study #5. You have hired Cassandra to staff the front desk reception area for the Office of Student Finance. Cassandra is a senior this year and will be graduating at the end of Spring Semester. In this position, Cassandra comes in contact with students, staff and faculty. Her responsibility is to greet the visitors and instruct them to complete one of two forms and/or direct them to a seat while she pages the appropriate staff member to assist them.

Often times, the visitors ask Cassandra a wide variety of questions not dealing with Financial Aid issues. Cassandra feels very confident in helping the visitors with their questions given that she’s been at the University a long time and “knows her way around.” You have heard her on a number of occasions giving wrong information and instructing people to go to the wrong places for the information they wish to receive.

How do you handle this situation?
Action Planning

Take your time now to address these questions. Then, use your responses to guide you and your manager through a follow-up conversation about this class. This is your opportunity to share with him/her what you learned, and how you will apply it. Be sure to seek their help in growing your skills and applying what you have learned.

1. What did you learn? How will this impact your ability as a supervisor?

2. How will you incorporate this learning into the way you work?

3. What differences in behavior should your manager look for, reinforce and coach?

4. What assistance, coaching or follow-up, do you need from your immediate supervisor?
Web Resources

Books


*Supervisor Savvy: How to Retain & Develop Entry-Level Workers*, LaVerne L. Ludden and Tom Capozzoli, JIST Works, Inc., Indianapolis, IN, 2000
### Managing Millenials

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<tr>
<th>Title &amp; Type of Resource</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Millennials are Coming!</td>
<td>This is a twelve minute segment from the May 28, 2008 edition of 60 Minutes which highlights what Millennial expect in the workplace</td>
<td>Online video clip of 60 minute segment. <a href="http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch?id=3486473n">http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch?id=3486473n</a></td>
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<td>The Trophy Kids Go to Work</td>
<td>Ron Alsop, a contributing editor to the Wall street Journal, describes the workplace attitudes of the millennials and employers’ efforts to manage these demanding rookies.</td>
<td>Online edition of Wall Street Journal article. <a href="http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122455219391652725.html">http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122455219391652725.html</a></td>
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### Managing Student Workers (General)

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### Managing Student Information Technology (IT) Workers

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<td>Building a Community of Student Employees:</td>
<td>EDUCAUSE is a nonprofit association whose mission is to advance higher education by promoting the intelligent use of information technology. This article proposes that students IT workers need to become full partipcant in the IT community to yield optimal results.</td>
<td>Online edition of Educause <a href="http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly">http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly</a> MagazineVolum/BuildingaCommunityofStudentEmp/157362</td>
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<tr>
<td>They Are Employees, After All</td>
<td>This Educause article proposes the that student workers need to be treated the same as any other university employee and that doing so is a win-win situation for students and the administration</td>
<td><a href="http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly">http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly</a> MagazineVolum/TheyemAreemEmployeesAfterAll/157286</td>
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### Bibliography – Basic Management Skills
## Rewarding and Recognizing Employees

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| **The 1001 Rewards & Recognition Fieldbook: The Complete Guide** Book | Beginning with the basics of motivation, including the decline of traditional incentives and the | **Publisher:** Workman Publishing  
**Author:** Bob Nelson |