

# Provide Constructive Feedback on Student Performance

Great coaching gives interns insights into themselves and informs their career journey. It is also a key ingredient in delivering experiential learning and supporting the success of interns on the job.

## Coaching and Feedback

Early in career employees respond best to coaches who:

- Are authentic and transparent.
- Provide timely feedback and are accessible.
- Ask questions rather than presenting all the answers.
- Get to know them as individuals and customize their coaching to their intrinsic motivators.

Encourage people managers to get to know the interns and consider the following intrinsic motivators:

- Create challenge for those that like to accomplish a stretch goal.
- Offer opportunities to increase knowledge for those always curious to learn more.
- Appeal to the need for control over self and environment.
- Give those that gain satisfaction from working with and helping others, lots of opportunities for cooperation.
- Offer recognition from peers or leaders.

## What makes a great coaching conversation?

During onboarding, prepare your interns by letting them know that they'll be receiving regular coaching and feedback. Let them know that the purpose of coaching is to help them develop. You can also let them know who they can turn to when they need support.

When delivering feedback:

- Make it descriptive and specific, avoiding assumptions.
- Ensure the timing is right.
- Demonstrate curiosity and ask questions.
- Focus on the future and behaviour that can be changed.

Encourage on the fly coaching balanced with formalized monthly or weekly check-ins. Regular check-ins ensure not too much time elapses and interns are getting periodic feedback on their day to day work as well as personal and professional development.



## Performance Assessment

Performance feedback is essential and should be provided on a regular basis. Well-articulated expectations and clear, consistent criteria for assessment will help the intern understand how they're doing and where they need to improve.

Performance feedback that balances both what was accomplished (e.g. tasks and deliverables) with how it was accomplished (e.g. capabilities like communication and time management) will maximize the impact of the feedback.

Focus on the specifics of performance, but also encourage self-reflection. What is the intern learning about themselves, their likes and dislikes, and their strengths through the work experience?

Don't wait for a scheduled review to start providing performance feedback: begin on day one. Many internships are only a couple of months; if you wait to provide feedback your intern will miss out on valuable feedback and you'll miss out on the benefit of improved performance.



## WHAT WE DID

Each Career Launch Associate benefits from many hours of coaching and mentorship throughout the year.

Associates compliment progress reviews with periodic blogs to encourage self reflection and embed learning.

- Career Launch Manager meets with intern monthly for development coaching conversation.
- Local Manager provides regular coaching on day to day work and completes progress review at end of rotation.
- Every Associate is assigned a mentor from NextGen, an Employee Resource Group.
- Use progress review templates to assess competencies and results.



**3**

dedicated  
coaches



**30**

hours of  
structured  
mentorship



**4**

progress  
reviews



Excerpt from the [RBC Launching Careers Playbook – A Guide to Creating Internships](#). To download the full guide, please visit the [I Create Internship](#) module on [www.rbc.com/launchingcareers](http://www.rbc.com/launchingcareers).