



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

**Campus Service
Cooperative**

One team, many campuses

Luoma Action Learning Project Executive Summary: The Campus Service Cooperative Student Internship and Development Program

Team Members:

Dan Elliott, Minnesota State University, Mankato
Melissa Leimbek, North Hennepin Community College
Brady Prenzlów, North Hennepin Community College
Erin Daly, Normandale Community College

Original Executive Sponsors:

Colin Dougherty, former Managing Director, Campus Service Cooperative
Sue Appelquist, Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources

Original Team Advisors:

Jason Cavallo, former Campus Service Cooperative Lead Project Manager
Anne Taylor, IBM
Steve Frantz, System Director for Disability & Student Life
Deb Kerkeart, State University Management Officer

The Team's Charge

When the team received its assignment, it was unclear whether the charge was to develop an internship program for the Campus Service Cooperative (CSC) or create a standardized internship process that could be used across MnSCU sites. When the team met with the project sponsors, it was informed that its task was to create an internship program for the CSC. However, it ultimately ended up doing some of both.

Taking Action

First, the team conducted research. It investigated good practices in creating and delivering an internship experience; internship programs at a sampling of MnSCU colleges and universities; the practices in place in MnSCU career development offices; compensation, legal, and contractual issues; credit versus non-credit, and paid versus unpaid options; and posting and promotion options.

Comment [N1]: Added language under "What the Team Learned" section

Next, the team worked with the CSC to develop a pilot internship program, in which two interns would be hired to perform business analysis or communication functions, and the CSC successfully recruited the interns through contacts on its leadership committee. About two months into the internships, the team interviewed the interns about their experiences up to that point. Based on the intern's responses, the team added and fleshed out some of its recommendations.

As the pilot internship program progressed, the team worked with two IBM consultants at the CSC to develop a comprehensive set of guidelines for successfully conducting an internship with a MnSCU student intern. This document outlines suggested processes for every facet of the internship experience: creating the internship position description; promoting the position and recruiting candidates; selecting, on-boarding, supervising the intern; and successfully concluding the internship. These guidelines can be used by any MnSCU site for certain types of MnSCU student internships.

Learning Highlights

The team learned that:

- It is important to have a project charter to maintain project boundaries.
- Successful internship experiences should not be undertaken without a clear commitment on the part of those who will be involved to adhere to the good practices that are outlined in the guidelines created by the team.
- Finding good internship candidates is almost certainly the most challenging aspect of the process.
- An engaged intern supervisor is critical to a successful internship experience.
- It is important to ask for help when it is needed.
- The DiSC framework can be extremely helpful to a team in understanding how its members like to work.
- The reflective inquiry in which teams engage as a part of the action learning model – while awkward feeling at first – can be quite effective at helping team members become effective at asking questions of each other and allowing time for consideration and thoughtful answers.