

Making the Most of Student Employment: Revising Onboarding, Evaluation, and Student Projects

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Revising Student Worker Evaluations

Problem: Work duties not connected to evaluation items. No set criteria for scoring. Indirect supervision means supervisors don't always see what students do.

What are evaluation best practices?

- Rating scales reduce bias
- Connecting evaluation standards to work duties clarifies expectations and makes evaluation easier
- Comments sections help employees better understand what they did well and how they can improve

How can we connect student work to careers?

AACU Essential Learning Outcomes	NACE Job Outlook Survey	Student Worker Evaluation Categories
Inquiry & Analysis	Problem-Solving Skills	Analytical Skills
Written & Oral Communication	Communication Skills (written & verbal)	Communication
Teamwork & Problem Solving	Ability to Work in a Team	Team Work
Ethical Reasoning & Action		Honesty & Integrity
	Strong Work Ethic	Work Ethic
	Detail-Oriented	Detail-Oriented
	Computer Skills	Technology
	Interpersonal Skills	Customer Service / Attitude
	Organizational Ability	Time Management

Association of American Colleges & Universities. "Essential Learning Outcomes." <https://www.aacu.org/leap/essential-learning-outcomes>
National Association of Colleges and Employers. "Job Outlook 2018." <http://www.nacweb.org/about-us/press/2017/the-key-attributes-employers-look-for-in-students-resumes/>

How should we rate the categories?

- Listed specific criteria for each category
- Rated each category 1-5 based on criteria
- Included comments section for each category

How should we implement the new system?

- Obtained feedback from coworkers & students
- Initial pilot that didn't impact raises

Conclusion: New format was a success and helped students connect work skills to potential employers.

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Revamping Student Worker Onboarding

Problem: Onboarding consisted of a brief information checklist of policies and procedures the supervisor went through. Training crammed into one or two shifts.

What are onboarding best practices?

- **Start with vision/mission** – larger context gives daily work meaning
- **Give them a tour** – connect what they do to what other people do
- **Hear one, show one, do one** – explain something, show them something, have them do something
- **Review** – reviewing improves memory retention, understanding, and addresses questions

What does the new onboarding look like?

- Four, two-hour training sessions
- Tour of the main library, dean and staff introductions, explanation of how roles fit together
- Later sessions review earlier learning points
- Use Student Handbook to answer questions



What's going well?

- Library dean recognizes student workers
- Training less overwhelming
- Students retain more

What could still improve?

- Identify and follow up on weak areas
- Establish semester review for returning students
- Incorporate peer instruction at certain points

Conclusion: New system takes more time, but helps students succeed and find fulfillment in their work.

Adding Semester-Long Student Projects

Problem: Students have down time, but can't go far from the checkout desk for long in case patrons need assistance

Solution: Students choose semester long projects based on their interests and abilities that benefit the library.

What projects might be appropriate?

- Research paper on topic related to libraries
- Series of Facebook posts
- Posters advertising library resources
- Tutorial on using media rooms
- Proposal for improving library services

Teaching Students Project Management

- Deadlines for proposal, outline, resources needed, etc.

Example Projects

- Paper on how libraries are using virtual reality
- Posters highlighting library resources for specific architecture classes posted in architecture studios
- Scanning instructions using graphics
- Series of Facebook posts highlighting new books

Conclusion: The projects gave students a sense of ownership in contributing to the library and provided project management experience. We added a draft due date as some projects needed revisions.