

Joys and Challenges of Supervising in Ministry



Office of Social
Justice and Respect
Life

Archdiocese of
Santa Fe

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.
Oh, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. AMEN.



Goals

- Facilitate discussion and share ideas about the benefits and challenges of interns
- Share best practices: recruiting and screening potential interns, supervision, developing job descriptions and work plans, mentoring, evaluation, dealing with yearly turn-over, and celebrating contributions of interns.

Where do I start?

- What is an internship or practicum? Part time (or full time) temporary, usually with a set start and end date. Often for professional degrees (Social Work, Counseling, Pastoral Ministry, Master in Divinity) but does not necessarily need to be a student.
- CCHD and CRS have program opportunities for paid interns
- Unpaid vs paid



Where do I start?

- Have clear goals in mind for position. Clarity benefits both you and the intern.
- Theology and ministry students and social work programs have practicums. Develop relationships with those schools.
- What is your background? Perhaps you have a degree that can supervise practicum students like social workers.

Steps of process



- Develop a job description for position
- Apply for funding
- Advertising for position
- Screening and Interviewing
- Choosing candidate, securing agreements
- Orientation
- Formation
- Ongoing supervision
- Leave-taking

Getting Word Out: Advertising

- Send announcement within (Arch)Diocesan offices. Sometimes friends and family are interested.
- Work through Human Resource office.
- Send out an email to your office's emailing list.
- Social Media posts
- Write article or job announcement for (Arch)Diocesan newspaper or newsletter.
- Send flyer and short blurb to church bulletin editors (both email and snail mail).
- Send to local community colleges and other colleges/universities (make sure to target Social Work and Theology/Religion departments).

Getting Word Out: Advertising

- Send info to college/university career centers
- Send to college campus ministries
- Send to pastors
- Send flyer to Catholic Charities/Diocese depending on which organization your office is in
- Send flyer/e-mail to all Social Concerns groups
- Send flyer to local retreat centers
- Word of Mouth/Invitation: Invite people you know to apply!

Screening/Interviewing

- Be sure to interview in person. Get a feel of how they interact.
- Give them information they can take home about the office and its mission, and the specific role of the intern in the office.
- Can you be flexible with the job description to allow for specific talents/gifts/interests of the intern?
- Asking WHAT and HOW questions helps to draw out their response rather than YES/NO questions.
- Check and call references, even the people you know—very important, don't skip it!

Agreements

- Once internship is offered, get a commitment from them and send their info to HR
- Have them talk to previous intern if that is possible.
- If there is a lag time between time of acceptance and time of start, be sure to discuss with intern and make plan for some reading/meeting/contact during that time.

Orientation (national and local)

- National/Regional orientations: arranged through the granting organization (CCHD/CRS). Usually are required.
- Meet with intern immediately following National/Regional orientations to hear what they have learned and help them integrate the information for local use.

Local Orientation

- Don't skip local orientation, it is just as important as any employee's orientation. They deserve it!
- Orientation check list to include practical things like visiting HR, policies, employment information, dress code, office work flow, details like keys, email, mileage, how to get reimbursed, time sheets, appropriate abuse awareness/VIRTUS training, other (Arch)Diocesan policies, emergency procedures, etc.
- Provide adequate work space/phone/computer. Treat them as a professional!
- Help them feel welcome and at home. Take time with this...will help later!
- Develop work plan that has a monthly (or weekly) plan of action. Helps both you as supervisor and the intern.

Local Orientation

- Develop a reading/formation plan to help them learn the issues and develop skills. Include USCCB and local documents like *Communities of Salt and Light*, Racism pastoral, etc.
- Importance of having intern reflect on and write down their personal and professional goals, and how those goals interface with your office goals
- Introduce them to colleagues in ministry. Informational interviews with appropriate (Arch)Diocesan staff are helpful.
- Also might include meeting with outside groups (like community groups or CCHD funded groups) that your intern will be working with.

Opportunities for Formation (before or during internship):

- University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF) has intro courses in summer on CST and Global Poverty
- Local formation opportunities: Schools of ministry, University courses, catechist formation, etc.
- Reading List/web site list
- USCCB web resources
- Catholic Social Ministry Gathering
- Social Action Summer Institute

During the year

- Weekly supervision: Formal or informal, set up times when you can meet. Busy schedules can take over: communication about work expectations helps. If intern with a social work school or other group, those contacts can also consult and problem solve.
- Importance of Theological Reflection moments to reflect on their experience in light of the Gospel and Catholic social teaching. Many models of TR, Act, Reflect, Transform, See-Judge-Act, etc. Allows for them to recognize the work of the Spirit in their ministry.
- Seek out and welcome moments they can add creativity, ideas, input to your work.
- Look for ways intern can leave a “legacy” for your office.

Leave-taking

- Take time to look back and celebrate learnings, both highs and lows, areas of growth
- Evaluation process: written is helpful. Both supervisor and intern contributes to evaluation and have conversation about it.
- Invite them to stay involved in some way, through CCHD committee, CRS team or other parts of your ministry.
- Invite them to teach a class, lead a workshop or to continue the work begun in your office.
- Help them recognize where they have grown, “toot your own horn!”
- Recognition of contributions, affirmation of gifts
- CELEBRATE, CELEBRATE!

Dealing with Challenges

- Limits of time (supervisors and interns)
- Scope of work: They (or you) want to do more than job allows
- Supervising older, more mature candidates
- Length of internship (brief, lots of turn over)
- Can't always lead to full time employment

Challenges

Scenarios:

1. Overload: SW intern who wanted to quit b/c she was full time at another job
 2. Some younger candidates may not have the same work ethic
 3. Supervising mature candidates who may not want to be supervised.
 4. No show.
 5. Other? Your stories/challenges with interns?
- Creative ideas on how to work with those challenges?

Joys

- Added energy to the office, new questions, new ideas
- Added outreach: I've called on former interns to make presentations, serve on the CCHD or CRS committees, etc.
- Creativity
- Formation of SJ ministers
- Forms a network of people who know the office and its work
- Moments of Generativity

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