

## Dental Front Office HS Student Internships

### Tips for Working with Young Adults

THANK YOU for participating in our Dental Front Office High School Student Internship Program. In addition to raising awareness about careers in the dental profession (and possibly in your practice), you will be contributing in a profound way to the development of our community's future workforce. The primary value of paid high school internships to our students is not so much the work, but the first-hand experience they gain working with highly respected professionals in an actual work environment. Immersed in your practice, students gain knowledge of the dental profession and learn and practice 21st century work skills, such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving, which are transferable to any future job.

High school juniors and seniors (typically 16 to 18 years of age) can be fun, exciting, rewarding, and – at times – challenging to work with. Here are some suggestions for working successfully with youth.

**START SMALL:** Your intern may feel that the entry level tasks assigned to them are not the most interesting. However, those tasks are essential in helping a new office worker get their bearings. They help provide the confidence to take on more complex assignments such as answering phones and scheduling patient appointments. These include:

- Filing, photocopying, scanning
- Stocking shelves
- Taking inventory
- Coffee / lunch runs
- Local errands
- Greeting patients

### BE SPECIFIC – COMMUNICATE CLEARLY THROUGHOUT THE INTERNSHIP

- Provide guidance on expected conduct and office norms. These might address the following questions:
  - *Do you allow breaks and, if so, for how long?*
  - *Do you allow personal phone calls?*
  - *What is your dress code? Detail how you want them to appear when at work.*
  - *What is your preferred method of communication? If the intern has a last-minute emergency, how do you want them to let you know? Most young adults prefer texting, so be clear on what you prefer.*
  - *What is your office policy on electronic devices?*
- If the intern will be answering phones for you, take time to train and be very clear on proper processes.
- Use the training performance report weekly with your intern. Providing constructive feedback on their work will help them grow and learn throughout the internship.
- Supervising and training an intern can be facilitated with a few hours of education in power (soft) skills, such as communication, work ethics, etiquette, employability.



101 Twin Dolphin Drive, Redwood City, CA 94065

