

MENTORSHIP

University of Prince Edward Island
Employer Toolkit



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69%

More than half of managers report that they are uncomfortable communicating with their employees in general.



Source: *Two-Thirds of Managers Are Uncomfortable Communicating with Employees*, Harvard Business Review, 2016.

BEFORE THE STUDENT BEGINS

- ✓ Finalize/create an onboarding checklist
- ✓ Inform other employees about the student(s) and what they will be working on
- ✓ Prepare all documentation in accessible formats including policy, procedure, emergency, contracts, information sheets, etc.
- ✓ Ensure that any previously discussed accommodations are in place to meet the student's needs

THE FIRST WEEK

- ✓ Provide the student(s) with orientation in a suitable format (e.g. written, verbal, braille)
- ✓ Complete all documentation and orientations, including health and safety
- ✓ Give an orientation of the workplace and where things are located
- ✓ Introduce the student(s) to other employees and identify their go-to supervisor



WITHIN THE FIRST MONTH

- ✓ Check in with the student(s) and their UPEI supervisor to see how things are going
- ✓ Confirm that the student has everything they need to be able to work effectively (e.g. clear instructions, accommodations)
- ✓ Gather feedback from co-workers to be more informed about how to best support the student



TIPS FOR EXPECTATION SETTING

Discuss

how and when the student should communicate with you

Explain

communications preferences in your workplace (e.g. phone vs. email, etc.)

Create

frequent and varied communication opportunities



Highlight

which communication styles are effective in different situations

Help

students to understand differences tones for different audiences

Provide

regular feedback about tasks and projects

WORKING WITH STUDENTS REMOTELY

Working remotely is more common than ever before.

We recommend all student supervisors check out the tips available through Cooperative Education and Work Integrated Learning Canada for working at home, onboarding, and remotely supervising students:

[CEWIL Canada Resource Hub](#)

Other resources include FRNB's [checklist for onboarding students remotely](#)



Advice on managing remotely from Keir Pollard, Founder & Managing Partner of SpryPoint 2020 UPEI Co-op Employer of the Year

“How do you manage a student remotely? Exactly the same way you manage everyone else.”

“Set expectations very clearly. If it’s important, it’s written in the job offer, it’s written in the onboarding, it’s written on employment agreement.”

“Tackle a problem the first time it happens. And if it happens again, tackle it with vigor.”

“If you onboard a co-op student and it goes poorly, write down what you did well, what you didn’t do well, and what you can do better next time. And then you’ve got a piece of paper that you can follow and revisit in four months when you get a new co-op student.”

TIPS FOR RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE

Healthy workplace relationships can lead to great conversations. But it's important to choose your language carefully and centre student need - especially when responding to student disclosures.

Use the “Do’s & Don’ts” on the next page to confidently discuss workplace needs and supports.



DISCLOSURE DO'S & DON'TS

Respect

the validity of what is shared, and avoid asking for more information out of curiosity (remember: they are not there to educate you)

Work Together

to identify barriers and guide the implementation of potential solutions



Reassure

in clear and direct language that the disclosure will not negatively impact the student's employment

Model Inclusion

through your words, tone, and actions - leave frustration at the door

DOING A SYSTEMS CHECK

When encountering challenges, ask yourself:

- Am I aware** of the learning goals of the student?
- Have these changed** over the work experience?
- Are there any** topics or skills that I think the student can improve upon?
- Am I providing** my mentee with ongoing constructive feedback?
- Am I approachable** and available to the student?
- Does the student** feel valued and safe in the work environment?
- What is the next level** of learning opportunities I can provide to challenge my student?
- Is the student being challenged** with a variety of tasks and increasing responsibilities over the work experience?

SOURCES

A Practical Guide to Work Integrated Learning, Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario, 2016.

Employee Orientation & Onboarding Checklist, Accessible Employers.

Responding to Disclosures of Disability, Mental Health and/or Chronic Illness, McGill University, 2020.

Two-Thirds of Managers Are Uncomfortable Communicating with Employees, Harvard Business Review, 2016.

Thanks!

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This toolkit is a living document under continuous review. We welcome feedback to help us improve information and resources. Complete our feedback form [here](#).



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