

# VOLUNTEER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM: Ongoing Reflection Workbook

Surname:		First Name:
Student ID:	Placement O	rganization:

The information on this form is being collected in accordance with the University of Windsor Act of 1962. The personal information collected herein will be used for the purpose of assessing your progress towards established learning outcomes of the Volunteer Internship Program.

If you have any questions about the collection of this personal information, please contact Karen Benzinger, Director of the Centre for Career Education either by telephone at (519) 253-3000 ext. 2591, by email at <a href="mailto:zinger@uwindsor.ca">zinger@uwindsor.ca</a> or by mail to University of Windsor, Centre for Career Education, 401 Sunset Avenue, Room 111 Dillon Hall, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4.

Every experience is a learning opportunity, but a key element required to truly digest an experience and maximize its potential for learning is reflecting on it. The *VIP: Ongoing Reflection Workbook* is a collection of worksheets and journal questions designed to help you reflect on your VIP experience, before, during, and after you've completed your 40+ hours.

Although you will submit it to the Centre for Career Education at the end of the program so that it can be checked for completion, you will receive it back with your certificate of completion. This is a tool designed to guide your reflection on your experience – this means there are no right or wrong answers. That said, as you are working through this tool, keep its purpose in mind and be as honest as possible.

Each term, 25 of these workbooks will be randomly selected for a qualitative review by the Applied Learning Coordinator to assess how well the Volunteer Internship Program is meeting the learning outcomes it supports. You will be notified if your workbook is selected.

Each activity and journal found in the following pages works toward one or more of the five learning outcomes established for the VIP program. As you may recall, the five learning outcomes are as follows:

- 1. VIP students will be able to compose an industry related resume and cover letter
- 2. VIP students will be able to articulate an understanding of the importance of community involvement
- 3. VIP students will be able to deliver a professional presentation
- 4. VIP students will be able to describe the discovery or confirmation of personal preferences that will contribute to planning their career path
- 5. VIP students will be able to articulate employability skills developed through the internship that can be transferred to multiple career options

The matrix below outlines which learning outcome(s) each activity and journal in this workbook supports:

Learning Outcome					
ORW Activity	1	2	3	4	5
Activity 1: Skill Inventory					•
Activity 2: Work Preferences Inventory				•	
Activity 3: First meeting with supervisor					•
Journal 1: Development Opportunities					•
Journal 2: First Day Observations					•
Activity 4: Learning Objectives				•	•
Journal 3: Ten Hours		•			•
Journal 4: Mid-point		•		•	•
Journal 5: Thirty Hours		•		•	•
Journal 6: Conclusion		•		•	•
Activity 5: Reflection on Skill Development and Employer Evaluation					•

# To be effective, different parts of the *VIP: Ongoing Reflection Workbook* should be completed in a specific order according to a given timeline:

#### Before you begin your placement hours...

- Activity 1: Skill Inventory
- Activity 2: Work Preferences Inventory
- Activity 3: First meeting with supervisor
- Journal 1: Development Opportunities

#### After your first day at your placement...

- Journal 2: First Day Observations
- Activity 4: Learning Objectives

#### After you've completed 10 hours...

Journal 3: Ten Hours

#### At the mid-point of your placement...

• Journal 4: Mid-point

#### After you've completed 30 hours...

• Journal 5: Thirty Hours

#### After you've finished your 40 hours...

- Journal 6: Conclusion
- Activity 5: Reflection on Skill Development and Employer Evaluation

# **Activity 1: Skill Inventory**

Before you begin your placement, it's important to think about the skills that you currently possess. This activity will guide you through the process of evaluating your current skill set, which will then enable you to determine which skills you want to develop during your VIP placement.

For each skill listed below, rank your current degree of competence. For the skills you have used, please also indicate whether you have developed this skill in an **academic** (in school) or **professional** (previous paid or volunteer work experience) setting.

		Current Deg	ree of Con	npetency	1	V	/here I de	veloped i	it
Skill	Never Used	Needs Improving	Average	Good	Excellent	In School	At Work	Both	Neither
Managing Coworker Relationships	Oseu		Average				Wolk		
Providing Service to Customers or Clients									
Coaching, Guiding or Tutoring Others									
Working in a Team									
Leading or Motivating Members of a									
Supervising Others and Delegating Tasks									
Effective Listening									
Understanding and Following Instructions									
Communicating Orally									
Public Speaking and Presenting									
Communicating in Writing									
Researching									
Interpreting Data									
Using Computer Software									
Assembling and Organizing Information									
Paying Attention to Detail									
Promoting or Selling (ideas or products)									
Troubleshooting and Problem Solving									
Creativity (artistic or design)									
Creativity (new ideas)									
Performing Administrative/Clerical Tasks									
Maintaining Accurate Records									
Planning and Scheduling									
Meeting Established Deadlines									
Coordinating Activities or Events									
Analyzing Situations or Data									
Performing Mathematical Computations									
Evaluating Choices and Making									
Adapting to Change Effectively									
Setting and Achieving Goals									
Self-Starting and Staying Motivated									
Additional skills you'd like to add									

# **Activity 2: Work Preferences Inventory**

If you asked 100 people to describe their ideal job, you'd likely get 100 different answers. Your VIP experience is an opportunity to explore a particular work environment and the tasks within it, and inevitably come to some conclusions about what you do and don't like.

Think about what an ideal job would be like for you. Before you commence your VIP hours, take a moment to rate the following items based on how important they would be to your ideal job. You will come back to this exercise later in the workbook to determine whether your VIP experience confirmed your choices or inspired you to think differently.

Workplace Preference	Not	Somewhat	Rating	Very	
	Important	Important	Important	Important	Essential
Salary/Income					
Independence					
Creativity					
Leadership					
Flexibility					
Challenge					
Autonomy					
Making a contribution					
Advancement					
Recognition					
Intellectual stimulation					
Variety in activities					
Consistency in activities					
Making decisions					
Helping others					
Being a part of a team					
Working under pressure					
Contact with others					
Traditional office environment					
Non-traditional workspace					
Additional preferences you'd li	ke to add				

#### **Activity 3: First Meeting with Your Supervisor**

Now that you know which position you've been matched with, you must contact your supervisor to make arrangements to begin. The activity below will guide you through this process and help you decide which questions you need to ask and what your next steps will be.

Refer to your placement letter for your supervisor's name and contact information. Your supervisor has already been sent your name and a copy of your resume and is waiting to hear from you! It is important that you contact him or her **as soon as possible**.

Before you make the initial phone call, you should **look at your schedule and decide when you will be available to volunteer.** It is likely that this is something your supervisor will want to discuss with you. Be sure to take into consideration how long it will take you to travel to and from the placement.

Use the chart below to **record your availability** to volunteer at your placement and be sure to communicate this to your supervisor:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

Even though you've read the job description for this volunteer placement and may already have some knowledge about the organization, you may still have several questions about what your role will be and what will be expected of you. **Use the space below to jot down some questions you don't want to forget to ask when you talk to your supervisor (we got you started).** As you are talking with your supervisor, you can use the other column to fill in the answers.

Questions	Answers
What will my start date be?	

Thinking back to the job description, are there any additional requirements you are aware of? Use the checklist below to indicate what you know you will need so you can discuss with your supervisor. Fill in any additional requirements that your supervisor brings up in your discussion with him or her.

Requirement		Will I ne	ed this?	Notes	Completed
Police Clearance		Yes □	No □		Yes □
Interview		Yes □	No □		Yes □
References		Yes □	No □		Yes □
Health Screening		Yes □	No □		Yes □
Other (	)	Yes □	No □		Yes □
Other (	)	Yes □	No □		Yes □

You are now ready to contact your supervisor - good luck!

# **Journal 1: Development Opportunities**

Review the ratings you gave yourself in *Activity 1: Skills Inventory*. Before you begin your placement, it's important to think about the skills that you want to develop and improve on. Considering the organization and position you've been matched with for your placement, write a journal reflecting on at least **three to five skills you hope to develop through your VIP experience**. Also consider the following when writing this journal:

- What types of activities or tasks would help you to develop this skill?
- Why are the skills you mentioned important to you and your development?
- How will acquiring or developing these skills help you in the future?

Ensuring that your Placement Supervisor is aware of which skills you want to develop is important for your success. You'll want to refer to this journal when you complete the <i>Activity</i> 3: <i>Learning Objectives</i> once you begin your placement.

#### **Journal 2: First Day Observations**

Now that you've met with your supervisor and visited your VIP work-site for the first time to start your placement, write a journal entry to reflect on your observations of your first day. Use the following questions to guide your thoughts.

- Who is the leader of the organization?
- What role does your supervisor play?
- Was there anything about your first day that was different than you expected? What was it?
- How did the people you will be working with welcome you?
- Who do you think will be the key people you will interact with throughout your placement?
- What are you most eager about learning in your placement?

Which challenges do you foresee being presented with:

#### **Activity 4: Learning Objectives**

Now that you have begun your placement hours, it is important to set some learning objectives for yourself. **Identify three key skills you'd like to acquire or develop** during your placement. You may choose to use the skills that you discussed in *Journal 1: Development Opportunities* or any others.

You'll also need to **identify how you plan to develop each.** Based on what you learned about your role from your supervisor, think about what types of tasks you are likely to perform and/or the people you are likely to interact with and how they will help you to develop your skills. This will become the basis for your action plan.

It is essential that you **discuss your objectives with your supervisor**. You may even find it helpful to discuss your ideas with him or her before committing them to paper. This activity is complete once you've discussed it with your supervisor and obtained their signature.

Learning Objective #1		
Skill to acquire or develop:		
Action Plan (Outline the tasks you will pe development of the skill names above):	rform or the activities you will be involv	ed in that will contribute to your
Learning Objective #2		
Skill to acquire or develop:		
Action Plan (Outline the tasks you will pe development of the skill names above):	rform or the activities you will be involv	ed in that will contribute to your
Learning Objective #3		
Skill to acquire or develop:		
Action Plan (Outline the tasks you will pe development of the skill names above):	rform or the activities you will be involv	ed in that will contribute to your
Supervisor Name (Print)	Signature	Date

#### **Journal 3: Ten Hours**

Now that you've spent at least ten hours at your placement and likely settled into your role within the organization, please reflect on the following questions:

- What tasks have you been assigned?
- So what have you learned about the people the organization serves?
- So what have you learned about the others that work or volunteer at the organization?
- What do you still want to learn in your placement before it ends? How can you accomplish this?

•	What challenges are you encountering? How will you overcome them?	

#### **Journal 4: Mid-point**

Now that you've spent at least twenty hours at your placement, it's a good time to check in on your progress towards meeting your learning objectives. It's also a good time to reflect on what you are learning about yourself. Please use the following questions to guide your journal:

- How does your role contribute to the goals (or mission) of the organization?
- Which of your learning objective for your VIP experience are you accomplishing?
- What will you do in the second half of your placement to ensure that you achieve all three of your learning objectives?
- What are you enjoying most about your placement? Least?
- Which parts of your work come naturally to you? Which are uncomfortable?
   What are you learning about yourself? How does it apply to other situations and environment.

•	What are you learning about yourself?	How does it apply to other situations and environments?

#### **Journal 5: Thirty-Hours**

Now that you've spent at least thirty hours at your placement, it's a good time to reflect on some particular incidents you've encountered during your VIP experience and what you've learned from them. Please use the following questions to guide your journal:

- What was the most positive thing that happened during your placement? What did you learn from it?
- What was most difficult situation you encountered? How did you overcome it? What can you learn from it?
- Have your feelings about the organization (or the work it does) changed as a result of your time with them? If so, how?
- If you could recommend one positive change to the leader of the organization, what would it be? Why?

•	organization volunteers?	ooes tr n, its	ne orga employ	nizatio ees,	on re and	the	n volun people	teers e it :	to ace serves	comp be	affec	neir g ted i	oals? If they	did	not	tne have

#### Journal 6: Conclusion

Now that you've completed your placement hours, it's time to reflect on how this experience affected you and how it might affect in the future decisions. Please use the following questions to guide your journal:

- Did you accomplish all three of your learning objectives? Why or why not?
- Look back at Activity 2: Work Preferences Inventory are all of your ratings still the same? Which ones have changed, if any? What role did your VIP experience play in confirming or changing your preferences?
  Has your VIP experience helped you to clarify or confirm any career goals? Please explain.
- How will your VIP experience benefit you in the next role you take on in an organization?

How likely is it that you will continue to volunteer with <b>your placement organization</b> , even after your VIP hours are completed?  I'm definitely going to keep volunteering I'll likely keep volunteering I'd like to, but I don't think I will right now It's unlikely that I will continue volunteering here I definitely will not continue to volunteer my time
Do you have immediate or future plans to continue volunteering your time with <b>other organizations or causes</b> , besides the one you were placed with for VIP?  Yes  No
If you answered "Yes" to the last question, which of the following best describes how much of your time you think you will devote to volunteer activities?  On average, less than one hour per month On average, more than one hour but less than four hours per month On average, one to two hours per week On average, more than two hours per week
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not important at all and 10 being extremely important, how important do you think the contributions of volunteers are to the ability of a community organization to meet its goals (circle one)?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Explain your answer:
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not important at all and 10 being extremely important, how important do you think volunteer experience is to your personal and professional growth (circle one)?  1
Explain your answer:

#### Activity 5: Reflection on Skill Development and Employer Evaluation

Go back Activity 1: Skill Inventory, and complete it again with different colour ink than the first time. Once you've completed this activity, please answer the questions below: Which skills had an improved degree of competency as a result of your VIP experience? List all that apply. Which one of the skills listed above improved the most? What tasks did you perform that utilized this skill? Were there any skills that you originally marked as "Never Used" that you were able to rate with a degree of competency when you revisited the exercise? If so, please list them. List any skills that you were able to list as developed "At Work" or at "Both" as a result of your VIP experience. Review a copy of the Employer Evaluation of the Student Intern that your supervisor completed. If your supervisor did not review this document with you, please visit the Centre for Career Education during drop-in hours to request a copy. Thinking about how your supervisor evaluated you, answer the following questions. In which categories did your supervisor give you highest rating? Does this surprise you? Why or why not? In which categories did your supervisor suggest you improve? Does this surprise you? Why or why not? Will you use the results of this evaluation to guide your future development? How? Overall, how did your VIP placement contribute to your skill development?

