

Appendix J: Considering DIY Candidates

Chances are good that you've had individuals approach your library in the past with the interest of securing an internship – only it wasn't in response to one of your recruitment efforts. For example, perhaps they happened to be on your website and think it could use a tune-up, so they have approached you to see if you'll take them on as an intern to do so. What do you do in these situations?

Don't panic. Instead, just add two preliminary steps to the screening and selection process described in Chapter 5:

1. Ask them to craft a detailed outline for the internship position they have in mind:
 - a. What would the goals be?
 - b. What kind of timeline do they have in mind?
 - c. What resources would they need?
2. Take a look at the outline and assess it much as you would your own internal wish list of potential internship tasks and projects:
 - a. Is this project or role something you need? Something the library could benefit from?
 - b. Run it by relevant staff. For example, if the position is to update the library website, does the Director of Technology agree that it makes sense? Do they have time to manage this intern?

If the answer to the questions in #2 above is "yes," then you may have the makings of a good internship on your hands. If the answer is no, however:

- Be sure to communicate your gratitude to them for sharing their idea with the library.
- Let them know that you would like to keep them in mind for a future internship on this topic should it become a priority.
- In the meantime, they are welcome to apply for any of the existing internship (or volunteer) opportunities that have already been created; they might also pitch their idea to your library's volunteer coordinator as an independent volunteer project.

The goal here is to not succumb to the desire to create something for everyone who comes in with an idea or a desire to help. Instead, put the responsibility for making the case for the internship project or role back on them and, should it seem like a good fit for your library, then have them go through the same screening, interviewing, and matching process that you'll conduct for all of your other candidates. If a mutually beneficial fit is not the outcome, you can always help direct them to other organizational partners to ensure that they are supported in finding opportunities to serve that best suit their skills and interests. ●

About this book

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