



Students as Developing Professionals

The majority of students will start a new job with a positive attitude, an aptitude to learn, or even some technical skills, but they are still developing as professionals and individuals. For many students, college is a big time of transition in their lives. They are learning autonomy, discovering their personal and professional identities, and developing purpose and integrity. This document provides some tips on how you can support their professional and personal growth by understanding where they are in their development process.

Understand Where They Are Coming From

- Some students may have little experience working in an office environment, but have learned those skills in other ways. Look for ways their past experience can relate to their current position and help them make those connections.
- Students are often energetic and ready to learn new skills. Use students' energy to everyone's benefit by making sure they have an appropriate workload and the training they need to be productive.
- Your student employees have to balance school, extracurricular activities, friends, family, and a multitude of other important life events - but they still want to work with you, too! Be understanding of times when they may need to work less such as during finals and school breaks.

Support Skill Development Here and Now

- Focus on transferable skills. Explain what parts of a task are specific to your office versus what parts they may encounter in future jobs.
- Work on professionalism skills that will help your student employee succeed wherever they go. Things like communication, setting expectations, and overall professional conduct are skills that will benefit your student employees throughout their lives.
- Ask your student employee what type of skills they are interested in learning. You may be able to find a special task or project that will help them develop a new skill.
- Don't overschedule your student employees. Students are strongly suggested to not work more than 20 hours per week

Help Them Get Where They Are Going

- Ask how you can support your student employee in pursuing their goals. Offer to be a reference or write a recommendation letter when they apply for jobs or graduate school.
- Encourage your student to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the [Center for Career Services](#), such as meeting with a Career Coach to explore and be supported in their professional journey.

More Resources

[Quick Base: 8 Ways to Successfully Onboard Young Workers](#)

[EAB: 4 ways to help work-study students succeed after graduation](#)

[Why College Students Should Work - But Only 12 Hours a Week](#)