



Virginia Chamber of Commerce Work-based Learning Spotlight

Company: Serco Inc.

Tell us about your company's internship/apprenticeship/returnship program(s).

The Serco Training and Experience Program, also known as STEP, is designed to provide early career talent tailored tools and resources to be successful and grow in a professional environment. STEP offers several initiatives in support of early career professionals at Serco including our 11-week Accredited Summer Internship Program. Serco interns join us across the US and Canada and gain meaningful hands-on work experience complimented by robust learning and development elements of their experience. STEP offers three internship tracks: Business, Technical, and Engineering representing critical talent pools across Serco's business. STEP underpins Serco business and people strategies by recruiting top talent and building a robust talent pipeline for early career professionals across the company. Serco's priority when hiring entry level talent is to source and place candidates from our intern pipeline prior to the initiation of an external search.

Serco's STEP internship program places significant emphasis on developing the future workforce through diverse learning and development opportunities and a focus on skill progression. First, STEP offers a three-tiered approach to learning and professional growth: "Learn", "Support", "Lead". As the program has been designed to offer robust and valuable hands-on work experience, students who participate are able to submit their time attending the program for college credit towards graduation.

- In the "Learn" tier, interns new to the Serco program attend weekly training sessions that teach the foundations of business and government contracting. Courses are taught by skilled leaders at Serco and provide a range of tactical business and soft skill topic areas such as finance, personality in the workplace, presentation skills, resume building, and many more. The "Learn" tier provides interns the strong foundation to better understand the work Serco does and helps create opportunity to learn more about themselves and how they can best support the work we perform for our customers.
- In the "Support" tier, 2nd summer returning interns are trained on Lean Six Sigma methodologies and tools to support an internal Yellow Belt candidate at Serco through the execution of a Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt project. This project exposure in the "Support" tier helps intern program participants gain tactical problem solving and business improvement training and to apply that knowledge to a real business challenge.
- In the "Lead" tier, 3rd summer returning interns take their Lean Six Sigma skills up a level to identify and lead one Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt project. This is a great opportunity to learn how to lead change in an organization and pursue their Serco Yellow Belt certification.

In addition to Serco's formal three-tiered learning approach designed to support the progression of skills and experience, STEP also incorporates an Executive Challenge project designed to introduce interns to a high-visibility challenge formulated by Serco's Executive Management Team. Serco Executives identify a challenge they are facing in their Business Unit or Corporate Function and cross-functional intern teams are aligned to a senior mentor to further define, research, and implement solutions to address the Executive challenges. At the end of the summer intern teams pull their work together on these projects and present to the entire Executive Team and Intern Manager body.

Another opportunity STEP offers as part of the intern experience is the Capstone. Interns develop and present Capstone Projects where they summarize accomplishments from the summer, lessons learned, and big takeaways to a panel that include members of Serco's Executive team. It is not uncommon for a graduated intern to receive a job offer once their Capstone is presented. The project and feedback generated is a great opportunity to make an impact on the Serco leadership team and give exposure to the intern talent pool.

What is something that is interesting or innovative about your internship/apprenticeship/returnship program that you would want colleges/high school students to know about?

The primary goal of Serco's internship program is to foster opportunities that equip our participants with the tools and skills necessary to join the workforce post-grad. Through our robust accredited learning and development sessions, to engagement and partnership with our executive team to solve real world business challenges, to a myriad of networking opportunities – Serco interns are prepared and supported. **Serco is immensely proud to share that 92% of those eligible for FT offers at the end of their internship received FT offers!**

Our program is accredited which means interns can receive college credit for their time at Serco. Most universities offer 3 credit hours for our internship.

Last but certainly not least, Serco's internship program was named to WayUp's Top 100 Internship Programs List in 2021 which was published by Forbes!

What kinds of work assignments are interns/apprentices responsible for at your company?

STEP offers three internship tracks: Business, Technical, and Engineering representing critical talent pools across Serco's business.

Interns in the Business track take on roles including but not limited to: Business Development & Strategy, Communications & Marketing, Contracts, Data Analytics, Environmental & Sustainability, Finance Analysis, HR, Process Improvement, and Recruiting.

Interns in the Technical track take on roles including but not limited to: Application Development, Cyber Security, IT Systems, Database Application, Desktop Support, Enterprise Applications, Information Security, Machine Learning/AI Technology, SharePoint Administration, and Software Quality Assurance.

Interns in the Engineering track take on roles including but not limited to: Electrical Engineering, General Engineering, Manufacturing Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Naval Architecture, Network Engineering, Software Engineering, and Quality Control Engineering.

If another company wanted to start an internship/apprenticeship/returnship program, what words of advice would you share with them?

Start with business needs. At Serco, we truly believe the success of our program is because we start each recruiting season assessing business needs across the company.

Identify:

1. Where will interns add value? This helps ensure interns will be given actual engaging work over the summer versus being given administrative small tasks and being left unchallenged and not engaged. All Serco interns are aligned to actual projects and initiatives. If their workload dies down during the summer, they are given cross-functional projects to keep them engaged and busy.

2. What teams are seeking to hire entry-level FT talent in the next year? Internship programs are a great pipeline for talent. Identifying if teams are seeking to hire an entry-level employee in the next year, you could seek to hire a May graduate or rising senior for their internship role as a means to pipeline their upcoming position.

3. Are there any mid-level employees ready for management roles and could benefit from a low-risk stretch assignment in managing an intern? An internship program can be a learning opportunity for both interns and managers. If you have people on your team who have been identified for a promotion into a management role, taking on the stretch assignment of managing an intern is a great first step to practice management styles and approaches towards their upcoming promotion.

Contact person (for those who want to reach out to you to talk about your program):

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