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HELLO REAL WORLD! For the Employer Quarterly February 2006

Hello!

Since this is the first ever installment, please provide comments on what you like and what you'd like to see in the next issues.

February/March is about the time when companies and students do their annual courting for summer internships and fall co-ops. Offers may have been extended and accepted already for that leave-term position or something more permanent, and preparations are being made for the arrival of a fresh pair of eyes.

However, do beware: if you are committed to retaining this talent, please provide this energetic student or recent graduate a warm welcoming and a well-thought out assignment. **The work need not be meaningful, but the experience better be meaningful!**

For those concerned that it takes two to tango, please know that I encourage students to take measures for a smooth transition into work. Parts 3 and 4 of HELLO REAL WORLD! <www.hellorealworld.com> will get students ready for work with tips on dialoguing with their boss and a discussion of real world surprises.

To help you do your part**, here's the difference between meaningful work and a meaningful experience** from Part 1 of HELLO REAL WORLD! <www.hellorealworld.com>

"What I mean by meaningful work is an assignment or multiple assignments that has impact on the business, is not tedious, and is well structured but allows some room for the intern to be creative or make decisions. The ideal project also would span across several disciplines or internal departments, which would give the intern an opportunity to interact with other individuals at your firm.

"A meaningful experience in spite of a less than meaningful work assignment may involve several opportunities to conduct informational interviews with colleagues, to visit other facilities, tour a manufacturing facility or call center, or to attend training, special events, or panels on various topics. Whether the project assigned fits the bill or not, be sure that you explain to your employee the significance of his or her project to the business. If an intern or co-op feels that his or her time is wasted, that reflects poorly on the company." (HRW, p 6)

For more tips and perspective on how to get the most out of interns, please refer to Reality Intern blog: http://shirlsintern.blogspot.com/2006/02/blurb-on-getting-most-out-of-interns.html.

Best wishes!
Jengyee Liang

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