



# *Fashion Internship Program Design Toolkit*

A Guide to Building, Training and  
Retaining Without Chaos





# *How to Use This Toolkit*

This toolkit is designed to help fashion brands:

- Stop guessing
- Stop exploiting (often unintentionally)
- Stop rehiring endlessly

You are expected to:

- Customize the resource templates to your brand
- Assign a supervisor
- Review performance intentionally

This toolkit works only when implemented

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# *Module One*

## **Internship Program Foundation**

### **1.1 Purpose of Your Internship Program**

Before you bring in interns, define why. Choose your primary goal:

- ☐ Talent pipeline (future staff)
- ☐ Operational support
- ☐ Junior skill development
- ☐ Brand capacity building

Do not run internships without a purpose. That's how chaos starts.

### **1.2 Internship Duration Framework**

Recommended duration:

- 3 months – exposure & screening
- 6 months – skill development & conversion

Anything shorter rarely produces value for either party.

### **1.3 Internship Structure Overview**

Every internship program must answer:

- What will they learn?
- What will they produce?
- How will they be evaluated?

This toolkit answers all three. This is how to build structure into your internship program.

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# Module Two

## Role & Learning Design

### 2.1 Intern Role Definition Template

- Intern Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Intern Role Title: \_\_\_\_\_
- Department: \_\_\_\_\_
- Reports To: \_\_\_\_\_
- Primary Responsibilities (Daily / Weekly): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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- Tools Intern Must Learn: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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- Expected Output by Month 1 / 2 / 3:
  - Month 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Month 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Month 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you cannot fill this, you are not ready to take interns.

**2.2 Learning Goals Framework**

Each intern must have:

- 2–3 core skills, 1 support skill, 1 soft skill (communication, reporting, time management)

Example (Production Intern):

- Core: cutting accuracy, finishing, quality checks
- Support: inventory tracking
- Soft skill: reporting errors early

Intern Core Skills: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Intern Support Skills: \_\_\_\_\_

Intern Soft Skills: \_\_\_\_\_



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# *Module Three*

## **Onboarding & Supervision System**

### **3.1 First-Week Onboarding Checklist**

Every intern must receive:

- ☐ Brand overview
- ☐ Role expectations
- ☐ Tools & SOPs
- ☐ Work schedule
- ☐ Supervisor assignment

Interns without onboarding will underperform. Always.

### **3.2 Supervisor Responsibility Framework**

Supervisor must:

- Assign weekly tasks
- Review output
- Give feedback (weekly or bi-weekly)
- Report progress

Interns fail faster under unclear supervision.



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# Module Four

## Role & Learning Design

### 4.1 Weekly Deliverables Template

- Week: \_\_\_\_\_
- Tasks Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Expected Output: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Actual Output: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Notes / Feedback: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Interns should be productive within 30–60 days if structure exists.

### 4.2 Productivity Rule

Interns are not learners only. They are junior contributors in training.  
If interns only observe after 30 days, redesign the program.



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# Module Five

## Performance Review & Evaluation

### 5.1 Mid-Program Evaluation (Month 1–2)

Score intern on:

- Skill growth (1–5) \_\_\_\_\_
- Task completion (1–5) \_\_\_\_\_
- Communication (1–5) \_\_\_\_\_
- Reliability (1–5) \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Areas for Improvement: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Feedback must be documented, not emotional.**

### 5.2 End-of-Program Decision Framework

Choose ONE:

- ☐ Convert to staff
- ☐ Extend internship
- ☐ Refer externally
- ☐ Release

**No limbo. Limbo kills morale and productivity.**

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# *Module Six*

## **Role & Learning Design**

### **6.1 Conversion Criteria**

Interns qualify for staff roles if they:

- Meet output expectations
- Require minimal supervision
- Align with brand culture

**Conversion should never be emotional. It should be earned.**

### **6.2 Junior Staff Transition Plan**

Before conversion:

- Confirm role & pay
- Update responsibilities
- Provide new KPIs



# *Module Seven*

## **Common Mistakes to Avoid**

- ❌ Using interns as errand runners
- ❌ No learning structure
- ❌ No feedback
- ❌ No supervisor
- ❌ No exit decision

**These are the reasons internships fail.**

This toolkit works best when paired with:

- Obsidian Advisory Africa – hiring systems & workforce structuring
- The Bridge Institute - trained talent pipelines, internship-ready candidates.

**You don't have to build alone anymore.**



# *Conclusion*

You built your brand through struggle. Your interns don't have to.

The fashion brands that will win in the next 5 years are not the loudest — they are the most structured.

Questions?

✉ [Obsidianadvisoryafrica@gmail.com](mailto:Obsidianadvisoryafrica@gmail.com)  
📷 [obsidianadvisoryhq](https://www.instagram.com/obsidianadvisoryhq)