



# EXPLORING THE INTERN EXPERIENCE

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JULY 2024

## OBJECTIVE & PROJECT DETAILS

Our goal is to give our clients unbiased information and data which offer actionable solutions which allow them to evaluate and enhance their programs. The primary objective of this study was to explore interns' experiences within a variety of intern programs and go beyond simple surface-level insights and provide a more in-depth look at these types of programs. Our purpose was to gather comprehensive qualitative feedback from interns throughout multiple industries and policy offerings to give you insights directly from the interns' perspective. Our study was not just about collecting feedback but unraveling multiple dimensions of the overall intern experience. Embarking on a user-research interview project, we crafted specific objectives to guide our exploration.

### Understanding Intern Experiences

We collected feedback by using one-on-one user-research interviews and surveys. We aimed to understand initial expectations upon joining the program and how they evolved over time. We explored the motivations that fueled their commitment to the internship, while working to learn what factors inspired them to actively participate and invest in their professional journey.

Most importantly, our approach included a sincere desire to acknowledge the challenges and areas that warranted improvement. By fostering an open dialogue with anonymity to their employer, we encouraged interns to candidly share any obstacles they encountered regarding project dynamics, communication channels, or overall support. The open dialogue allowed us to identify specific pain points and paved the way for constructive feedback to form the foundation for possible future enhancements.

### Evaluate the Role of Relocation Support

In conducting a comprehensive assessment, our exploration centered on understanding the effectiveness of the assistance provided by internal stakeholders and the Relocation Management Company (RMC) in shaping interns' experiences. We scrutinized the logistical aspects and the broader factors of how relocation support contributed to interns' comfort, integration into new environments, and overall satisfaction with the internship. We strove to better understand the interaction with the internal global mobility team/intern support team and the RMC (Odyssey) to identify improvements and ensure both work together to provide interns with a holistic, supportive, and professionally enriching journey.

### Identify Key Insights and Recommendations

Through an analysis of the feedback, we looked at data to identify commonalities across each company, overall program trends, and targeted areas for improvement. Our focus extended to relocation support, recognizing its significance in shaping the overall intern experience. The findings from the feedback not only shed light on existing challenges but highlighted actionable recommendations to address some of the pain points.

Our focus extended to relocation support, recognizing its significance in shaping the overall intern experience. These insights allowed us to create strategic suggestions rooted in practical insights, offering a roadmap for refining the support systems currently in place. Whether streamlining processes, enhancing communication channels, or introducing tailored resources, we aim to cultivate a seamless and enriching experience during their relocation and throughout their internship. We know this critically contributes to the overall success of the program for both the intern and the company.

## SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

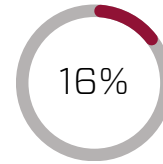
**4** CLIENTS

**345**

TOTAL INTERNS INVITED



12 ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED



16%

OVERALL RESPONSE RATE

**42**

RESPONDED TO SURVEY

## MAIN TAKEAWAYS

### Overall

- Ensure intern policy updates and benefit clarifications help facilitate a better experience.
- Consider grossing up the lump sum rather than withholding taxes to combat the negative perception of a reduced amount. To keep costs neutral, reduce the lump sum amount to reflect the net amount interns receive.
- Add round trip travel if it's not provided currently.
- Interns don't always have access to funds. Ensure quick payments by implementing a working fund or authorizing with RMC sooner.

### Pain Points

- Insufficient lump sum / stipend amounts less taxes to cover necessary housing needs.
- Finding affordable housing can be incredibly difficult in high cost of living areas.
- Finding safe areas and neighborhoods can be challenging given costs.
- Lack of transportation support/guidance.
- Timing of the lump sum/stipend payment.
- Tracking expenses.

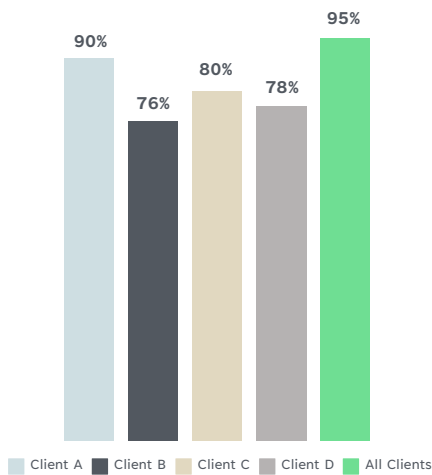
### Intern Suggestions

- Having a Facebook (or similar) group for current/previous interns to seek advice on where to live and to help establish a cohort culture.
- Clearly communicating what interns will need transportation arrangements (when applicable).
- Housing closer to office locations.
- Ensuring interns are aware that the lump sum is received less taxes.
- Having an app for expense reimbursement.
- Providing safety and neighborhood information.

## AGGREGATED COMPARISON OF BENEFITS

### Benefit Satisfaction

The impact of benefits on the intern experience is a critical factor in today's competitive intern market. Providing interns with a comprehensive relocation program directly affects their perceived view of the company where they are interning. The first area of focus was understanding how the benefits received influenced the overall internship experience. A substantial 95% of interns across all companies surveyed expressed high satisfaction with the benefits of their relocation packages. This high level of contentment suggests that companies are successfully meeting interns' initial and overall expectations regarding relocation support.



SOME INTERNS SAY:

**“It showed their dedication to employees, definitely showed me how much they care about me.”**

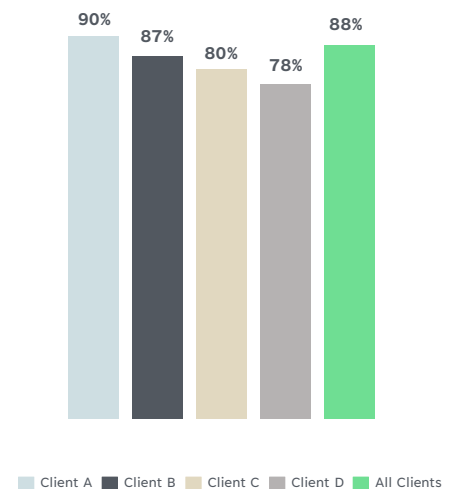
**“Positive impact. They cared that I have a good place to stay can afford a place to stay. They care for people no matter what their family salary that they can afford to work here.”**



### Impact of Benefits Offered

For these interns, knowing they had benefits at their disposal played a pivotal role in accepting the internship offer. A noteworthy 88% of interns indicated that the benefits significantly influenced their decision to accept the internship. A comprehensive benefits package can help attract and secure top talent, since financial assistance may be necessary for some individuals who want to accept the position. Several interns mentioned that they felt the company had their best interest in mind by providing benefits.

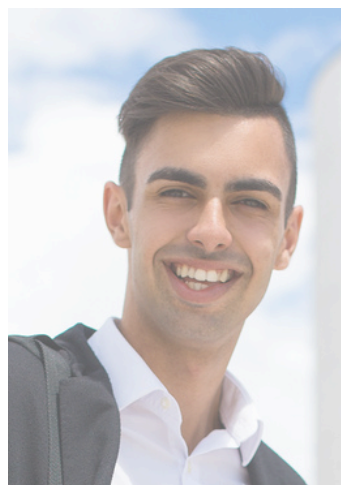
RELOCATION BENEFITS IMPACTFULNESS ON ACCEPTING INTERNSHIP



SOME INTERNS SAY:

**“[The benefits offered] made going to work much easier and making the decision to accept internship as well.”**

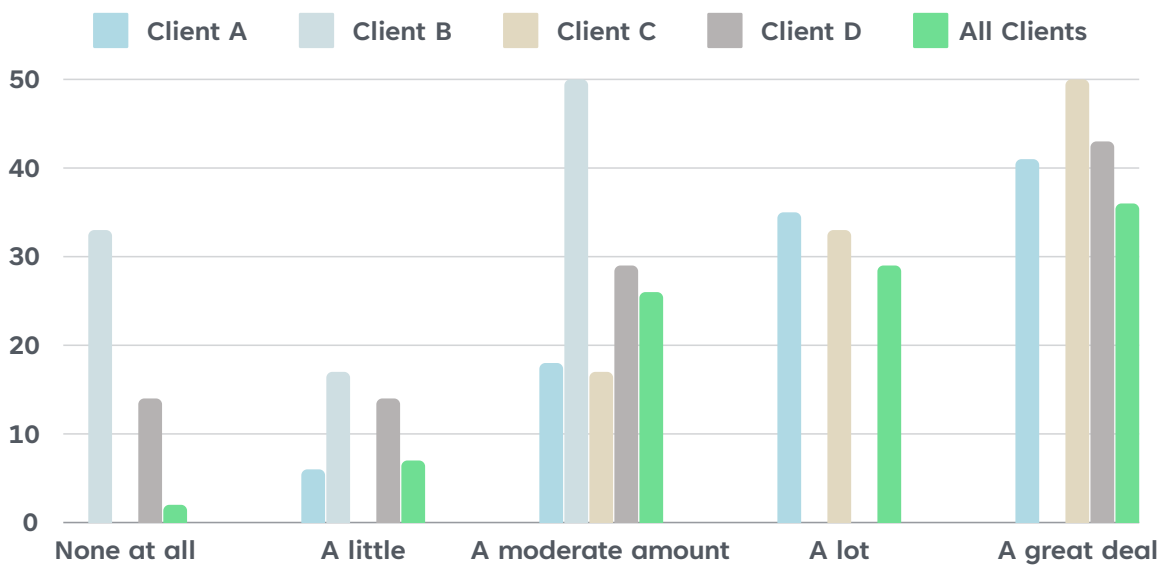
**“It is good. Even the benefits as stated were generous. They take care of their interns and if you do not feel taken care of, talk to someone and they will take care of you.”**



### Level of Support Given During Relocation

These figures highlight interns' varying experiences in terms of the support they receive, with many expressing a high level of satisfaction. However, this also provides insights on improving communication and responsiveness from all parties interacting with the intern during their internship. When asking the interns about the level of support they received, it is essential to note that we asked specifically about the support of their internal team as well as their RMC (Odyssey) consultant, for the entirety of their internship (interview to final reimbursement). Across all companies, 36% of interns reported receiving an excellent level of support that included a decent amount of time to accept and understand their benefits and utilize them. Another 26% reported a moderate level of support, with the pain point of having already found a place to live by the time they received all appropriate information. The timing of both having a place to stay and when the resources are provided to the interns for housing, could improve overall across all companies. As a solution, several interns shared the same thought: a social media platform they could utilize as a resource for the relocation process from those who have been through the same process previously.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT\* GIVEN DURING RELOCATION

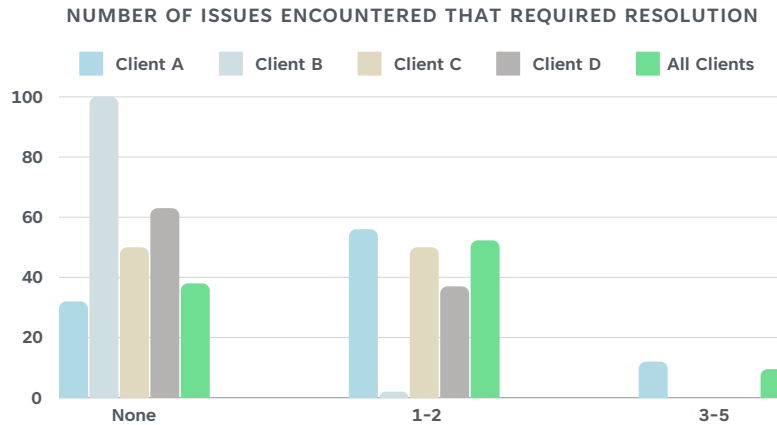


\*SUPPORT= INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FROM INTERNAL INTERN SUPPORT TEAM AND THE ODYSSEY CONSULTANT



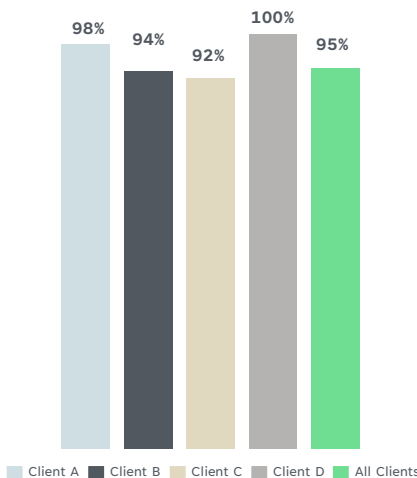
### Number of Issues Encountered Through Duration of Internship

Across the companies surveyed, 52% reported facing only 1-2 issues during their internship. Based on this feedback, their experience was well planned, with only a limited number of challenges or difficulties that needed further resolution. Additionally, a significant portion (38% of interns) reported facing no issues at all during their internship. Overall, these findings suggest that a substantial portion of interns had a positive and trouble-free experience during their internships. The low percentage of interns facing multiple issues indicates effective management of internship programs and timely communications, contributing to a favorable environment for the interns.



### Likelihood of Applying for a Full-Time Positioning with the Company

A substantial number of the interns surveyed, 95%, expressed their intent to apply for a full-time position following their internship. This overwhelmingly positive response indicates high satisfaction and eagerness amongst interns to transition from their internship roles to a more permanent position within the organization. Offering a comprehensive internship relocation package can be an attractive benefit that contributes to interns' positive outlook and willingness to consider a long-term commitment to the organization. The data suggests that interns felt adequately supported throughout their internship which includes guidance, mentorship, and resources provided by the company. This positive support system fosters a sense of belonging and professional development, influencing interns to envision a future with the organization. Lastly, the overall execution of the internship program played a pivotal role in shaping interns' perceptions. The effectiveness and quality of the internship program, from the structure of tasks to the learning opportunities provided, left a positive impression. This positive experience during the internship contributes to interns' confidence in pursuing a full-time position within the organization.



SOME INTERNS SAY:

**“I really love [it here], and I would like to come back and work here when I graduate.”**

**“I would totally want to work here!”**

**“I plan to visit their booth at the career fair and hit my supervisor up before I graduate.”**



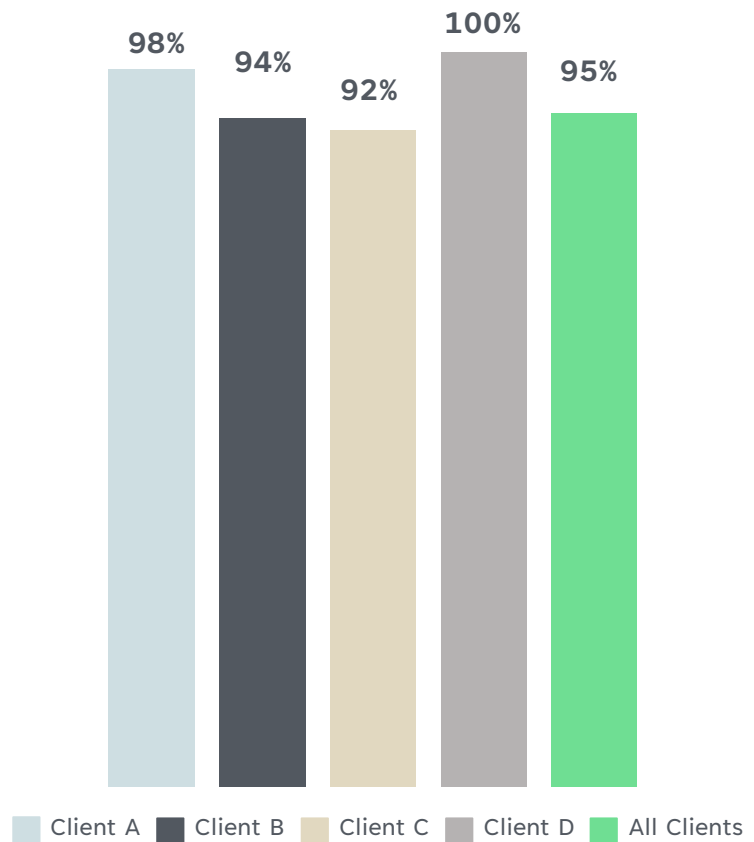


### Overall Intern Experience Satisfaction

Upon completion of the interviews, it is apparent that the sentiment among interns is overwhelmingly positive, with 93% expressing overall satisfaction with their internship experience. This high level of satisfaction suggests that the interns as a collective group, found their internship experiences fulfilling, rewarding, and beneficial. The positive sentiment is likely due to various factors, such as effective mentorship, engaging tasks, a supportive work environment, or opportunities for skill development.

The positive feedback from interns is not just a marginal majority but highlights a consensus among the interns that they felt overall the support and benefits provided an exceptional experience.

This sentiment is likely to contribute positively to the reputation of the internship program and the hosting organization, highlighting its ability to provide a meaningful and gratifying experience for those participating.



## MOST COMMON INTERN BENEFITS ACROSS ALL COMPANIES

### Housing Stipend

Average for 3 months:

**\$3,845 TO \$6,078 (NET)**

### Round Trip Travel (Airfare or Mileage)

Average amount spent on final move:

**\$1,032 (GROSSED UP)**



## OVERALL INTERN EXPERIENCE TRENDS



### TREND:

Awareness around Tax Deductions from Stipends

### CONSIDERATION:

Communication upfront about tax deductions to manage your intern's expectations and alleviate financial burdens.

Interns eager to embark on their professional journeys often encounter an unexpected hurdle—tax deductions from their stipends. Among all interns surveyed, this trend signifies a gap in communication between companies and interns, leading to financial strain and a negative impact on the overall internship experience. The consideration proposed involves a transparent and upfront communication strategy. By ensuring interns are fully aware of potential tax deductions before the commencement of their internships, companies can manage expectations and foster a more favorable financial experience.



### TREND:

Optimizing Temporary Lodging Allocation

### CONSIDERATION:

Reallocate Temporary Lodging funds to other sources to better assist interns in finding suitable housing. Establish a dedicated online community for interns to uncover alternative housing options and ease the transition.

The ability and likelihood of the interns surveyed to have housing arrangements in place before their move highlights the need to re-evaluate the allocation of Temporary Lodging (TL) funds to alternate resources. Instead of maintaining a traditional approach, companies can reallocate TL funds to areas that better cater to interns' needs. Establishing a dedicated online community, such as a Facebook or LinkedIn group provides a platform for interns to collaborate, find roommates, and navigate housing challenges effectively. This approach optimizes resource allocation and enhances the sense of community among interns.

## OVERALL INTERN EXPERIENCE TRENDS



### TREND:

Transportation Considerations. Ensuring interns have access to reliable (personal or public) transportation to work.

### CONSIDERATION:

Offering a transportation option by providing a choice between a reduced housing stipend plus a transportation allowance or a housing stipend only can help interns with their preferred situation.

A significant trend identified in internship programs revolves around the lack of reliable transportation options for interns, leading to challenges in their daily commute. The recommendation involves providing flexibility in benefit packages. Companies can offer interns a choice between a reduced housing stipend with a transportation allowance or a housing stipend alone. This strategic approach provides flexibility and caters to different needs.



### TREND:

Critical Benefits Surrounding Round-trip and En Route Travel.

### CONSIDERATION:

Offer choices between mileage and airfare. Consider including taxi/Uber fares for airport transfers. Including meals and lodging en route enhances the experience but is not necessarily required.

Recognizing the critical nature of round-trip travel, companies must tailor their offerings to meet interns' preferences. Providing choices between mileage reimbursement and airfare without capping mileage and airfare amounts, allows interns to make decisions that align with their circumstances. Additionally, including reimbursement for airport transfers acknowledges the importance of a less stressful travel experience. While feedback suggests that meals and lodging en route enhance the overall internship experience, it is not typically expected.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

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The data paints a picture of how a well-managed internship program that successfully addresses the needs of its participants leads to a high level of satisfaction and greater likeliness to attract the intern to a permanent position. High satisfaction with benefits, significant influence on decision-making, varying, but positive levels of support, minimal issues encountered, and positive perceptions of Odyssey consultant responsiveness, collectively contribute to an overall satisfaction rate of 93%. These findings suggest that the internship programs attract top talent through the benefits and effectively support interns throughout their internships, fostering a positive and rewarding experience.

Adding the 1:1 interview element to this study proved invaluable in its ability to uncover the true and candid sentiment of the participating interns across multiple companies and programs. The feedback, conclusions and results are universal in general to intern programs and therefore can provide insight and guidance applicable to most companies' intern programs.

You can engage with Odyssey further to get more details on our findings and evaluate the goals and effectiveness of your program, or help you create one.

## ABOUT ODYSSEY

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Odyssey Relocation designs and implements completely customized mobility solutions that align with your needs and deliver overwhelmingly positive results. Our unwavering commitment to service excellence comes to life in the perfect balance of personal service and innovative technology. Odyssey has offices in Mission Viejo and London. Learn more at [www.Odysseyrelo.com](http://www.Odysseyrelo.com).

