Fostering Great Experiences for UX-Tasked Student Workers

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1. THREE DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS
Penn State
CSU San Marcos

(and also the University of Central Florida)
Michigan
2. FOSTERING SUCCESS
Create the right environment
Building partnerships

★ Value their voices
★ Make use of their networks and experience as a student
★ Invite them to the table
How do we make the experience meaningful?
Create meaningful work

★ Let them make important decisions

★ Offer flexible schedules so they can incorporate their work into their already busy schedules

★ Give them options in the type of work they do - don’t give them grunt work
Create meaningful work

★ Provide real projects with challenges to be solved
★ Consider longer projects so they develop a sense of ownership
★ Let them fail once in a while - it’s how we learn best
★ Overcoming tough challenges can bring immense joy
How do we support our student workers?
Top motivation
★ Earning money
★ Gaining work experience
★ Developing skills
★ Building a resume

Survey responses
★ Positive feelings
★ No correlation to their majors
★ Not beyond “a token line on a resume”


Training begins with supervisors’ intentions.

Provide support (besides paycheck)

★ Clear expectations
★ Ongoing encouragement and engagement
★ Work experience
★ Applicable skills
★ Research opportunities
★ Emotional support
★ Diversity (“representation matters”)

[Image of a person giving a presentation]
3.
OVERCOMING CHALLENGES
Sometimes things don’t go as planned.

★ Investment of your time
★ High turnover
★ Interest in work
★ Lacking soft skills
4. BENEFITS FOR STUDENT WORKERS
They will graduate...

★ Workplace skills
★ To put on a resume
★ Gain confidence
★ Learn about a different career path
★ Ongoing mentorship
★ Connections in the field
5.
BENEFITS FOR LIBRARIES
Their voice and perspective

★ Both users and service providers
★ Tips for recruitment and retention
★ Genuine responses from testers, peer-to-peer interaction
★ Reducing other students’ “library anxiety”
★ Their energy and personality
Examples

★ Photo elicitation
★ Cognitive mapping
“[B]y understanding their contribution to the success of their student workers, [libraries] may be better equipped to communicate their overall value to the university community.”

Thanks!

Any questions?

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