Fostering Great Experiences for UX-Tasked Student Workers

Vacek, Rachel; Moran, Carrie; Chao, Zoe

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Zoe Chao @zoechao
User Experience Librarian, Penn State University

Carrie Moran @digitalcarrie
Head of User Services/User Experience Librarian, California State University San Marcos

Rachel Vacek @vacekrae
Head of Design and Discovery, University of Michigan
1.

THREE DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS
Penn State
CSU San Marcos
(and also the University of Central Florida)
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”)
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?

Zoe @zoechao
Carrie @digitalcarrie
Rachel @vacekrae