

Does Your Company Need A Few Good Workers?

“**H**ire an intern? I don't have time to show some young person how our business works so that they can get their college credit. We're all too busy putting the fires out here every day.”

“Hire an intern? We certainly could use another person to take care of that project we keep putting off. It would be nice to get a fresh perspective. Maybe we would even bring the person on full-time in the future as we look to expand.”

I'm not going to try and tell you that interns are the answer for every company. It is safe to say, however, that the enlightened approach of the business leader in scenario two is far more productive than the first option – burying one's head in the sand and lamenting your problems instead of pursuing creative solutions.

Why am I writing about this at this time? Because the Indiana Chamber is the new home of the Indiana INTERNnet program. Originally a product of Chamber-led research (see the story on Page 28), Indiana INTERNnet has successfully matched employers with students since its introduction in 2001. Now, the focus is on taking the effort statewide. The Indiana Chamber intends to do just that.

Colleges and universities across the state are emphasizing experiential learning experiences (several examples are included in our story on Page 20). Today's interns are bright, enthusiastic and innovative. They are ready to come in and contribute – not take up space in the corner cubicle.

Many Indiana businesses, large and small, need to take advantage of this program. Not just to introduce these students to Indiana employment opportunities in the hope that more will remain in the state after graduation. That's an additional benefit. Companies should become involved with Indiana INTERNnet to give themselves additional resources in today's competitive business climate.

Pam Norman is the new executive director of Indiana INTERNnet. I encourage you to contact her at (317) 264-6862 and learn more about the program at www.indianaintern.net.



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