Build Students to be an Effective Member of your Department

Develop their Strengths:
- Building new skills, learn new information, have them gather perspectives from various sources and be open to change.
- Build an awareness of their strengths and weaknesses. Everyone has strengths to leverage further, as well as development areas that need improvement.
- Specific or timely feedback on what they do well and what needs improvement is required to grow.
- Managers tend to ignore or minimize negative feedback when they are uncomfortable giving it – this helps no one.

Motivate:
- Students tend to be motivated to the extent that they feel that they have a say in the how to do the project and that their ideas are used.
- Give them work that is meaningful to them and to the organization.
- Be a manager who relates well to them and appreciates them.

Influence and Coach:
- Provide appropriate feedback, praise and constructive direction
- Utilize the appropriate level of support
- Set clear goals, priorities and objectives
- Mentor to appropriate degree
- Ensure they take personal responsibility for their work

Conflict Resolution:
- Recognize that there are 2 sides to every story
- State the problem—be open and honest
- Ask questions to get their view
- Listen without judgment or interruptions
- Focus on job-related incidents
- Paraphrase—give feedback
- Get agreement on the problem
- Explore options for solution and ask for a commitment
- Take action and follow up

Do’s and Don’ts of Giving Feedback:
- Don’t voice your criticism in front of others
- Do make only one complaint at a time
- Don’t demand the impossible
- Do make your suggestions in the form of questions
• Don’t use sarcasm
• Don’t use words like “always” and “never”
• Do have an open mind and be willing to listen to the other person’s reasons for their actions
• Do compliment them on improvements or successes

Advice to Managers and Coworkers of Younger Generations
• Give them enough to do and some freedom for how the work gets done. Don’t micromanage them.
• Challenge them with new projects that demand new skills. Provide plenty of skill-building opportunities, resume builders, transferable skills — remember, they are thinking ahead, career-wise, to the job after College. For some this may be their first working experience.
• Be accountable, available and responsive to your students’ needs.
• Forgive impatience. Younger people have always had less patience. Chalk it up to the energy of youth.
• Be a coworker until someone needs a boss. You don’t need to wield authority just to “remind them that you’re in charge”.
• Create a fun, flexible, relaxed work environment.
• Encourage everyone in the department to be a teacher so they can experience a wide variety of work — they will become more valuable to the department in the time of need.

Managing Student Workers:
• Be flexible in student schedules — school needs to come first
• Express high expectations that they will be responsible with their attendance
• Discuss issues as they arise, don’t wait until the end of the trimester
• Ask other offices that they have worked in if they had similar issues and how they resolved them.
• Never make assumptions — give clear expectations.
• Confidential work — create a form for them to sign and express verbally how important this is.
• Plan ahead for their projects so there isn’t a lot of down time and there is sufficient time to train them.
• Train on office equipment and filing techniques — don’t assume they know how to do this.
• Find out their style of learning — verbal, hands-on, written, etc.
• Have one person assigns duties for the students within the office so that they are not being given work from multiple people and then having worry about whose project to do first.
• Have students evaluate their experience with your office as well as having you evaluate their work.
• Be prepared to give verbal or written references after they graduate as you may be their only work experience. Focus on their strengths and be honest. Be careful not to be too critical as they are young and just learning office etiquette – you don’t want to jeopardize a potential job opportunity for them.
• Organizational obstacles: assisting in the identification and lessening/removal of structural, procedural, cultural, systemic obstacles within the company.
• Individual obstacles: providing perspective on specific personal obstacles that are impeding the effectiveness of employees (self-concept, style issues, self-defeating behaviors, annoying habits, etc.)
• Set the ground-rules of the office so they are clear on how to appropriately dress and act.
• Be sensitive and educated on their religious beliefs, customs and personality.