

AVENUE

Avenue is a boutique manufacturer which makes a range of garments for many New Zealand designers, brands and retailers. Steven Greer shares his experience and views on taking on interns for their work experience.

Why did you decide to take on an intern?

- You've got to invest in people, if you want people with the right skills, that's why we take on interns. I've worked with the tertiary education industry now for a while and had 4-5 interns over that time. I like to help out where I can and give back a little. I'm always interested in people who have a passion for something and I like to open a door for them if I can.

What was the best thing about this Internship for you?

- I guess it would be teaching the interns new skills and seeing them follow through with them. And knowing that we are exposing them to a side of the industry they might not see otherwise.

What surprised you about the Internship?

How little the interns understand about the wider textile / production side of the industry. It was satisfying to give them exposure to a range of skills and experiences that they wouldn't necessarily otherwise see. For example, we gave them the chance to use specialist machinery such as the blind hemmer and the button sewer on actual production runs.

What positive benefits have come about because of the Internship?

- It's satisfying to watch the intern adapt to a new skill and take it on with aplomb. It has also opened our intern's eyes to the different roles we have here and helped them see where they might fit, something they don't get to do otherwise. We have an ex-intern working for us now that's been here for 3 years. Once she finished her studies we offered her a role, because we were able to see what she was capable of and if she was a good fit for our team.

What advice would you give to other businesses thinking about offering an Internship?

- Give it a go! Have confidence in the fact that there are some very intelligent and creative people out there, and not be too hesitant or closed to the idea. Find a way that works for your business. For our most recent internship, the intern came in every Tuesday for a full day, for the period of internship. This worked well for us from a planning perspective, as we could get work set up without it being too disruptive, or the intern running out of work to do.

