

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has established the Freight Transportation Industry Internship (FTII) as a new element of its Freight Professional Development (FPD) Program.

The intent of the FTII is to enable the public and private sectors to better understand the world in which the other operates. This will result in better communications among the freight transportation stakeholders and improving transportation decision making.



Post Internship: Sharing Lessons Learned

Lessons from each FTII experience should be shared by the individual participant with others in the public agency and host industry.

- Exit discussion
 - Where and when this is held, who attends, and what is covered should be a joint decision of the participant and the industry sponsor
 - Focus on opportunities for collaboration and partnership in the future
 - What are the best ways to engage the private sector as partners
 - What works and what doesn't
 - Benefits of private sector participants engaging in public sector transportation planning
 - A discussion of the understanding gained by the intern through the internship experience and how it will make a difference in their agency's decision making
 - Balancing public and private sector benefits.
- Presentations
 - Presentations, discussion groups, or brief reports to others in their agency and other stakeholders in their state and region
- Reverse Internships
 - Public sector agencies could also offer private sector individuals an opportunity to participate in an internship in their public sector agency. This will allow private sector participants to learn more about public agencies and organizations that are responsible for transportation decision making.

Internship Example

Internship experiences should not be limited to one private sector industry. The following example shows how the FTII program could work.

An individual who handles freight transportation issues for the State of Washington could develop an FTII that would cover up to 8 weeks over a period of a year. During that time the intern would arrange to spend time with:

- A railroad in the state
- A port authority
- A drayage company that serves the ports
- A regional trucking firm that picks up and delivers products within the Puget Sound region
- A regional chain that picks up and delivers products within the Puget Sound region
- A 3PL that coordinates logistics services to the region
- A warehousing/distribution center
- An assembly plant.

Understanding how each of these private sector entities functions and the issues associated with transportation faced by each of them can enlighten the public sector transportation decision making



FHWA Freight Transportation Industry Internship

For additional information contact:
freightfeedback@dot.gov

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Office of Freight Management and Operations
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Phone : 202-366-0408
Fax: 202-366-3225
Web site: www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight

March 2011
FHWA-HOP-11-011



Overview

The FTII is intended as a self-initiated learning experience with information and technical support provided by the FHWA Office of Freight Management and Operations. The volunteer program will function within a State Department of Transportation (State DOT), Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), regional or local agency, FHWA field (Divisions and Resource Center) and headquarters offices, or, ultimately, a private sector entity. The Internship is not intended to require funding, tuition, or travel costs. It does, however, require an investment of time by both the public and private sector participants. The focus of this brochure is on the public sector internship within a private company or organization, but the reverse could also occur. FHWA can provide assistance when requested.

The internship experience will:

- Enable public sector participants to improve their knowledge of local freight transportation needs, challenges, and factors that influence private sector decision making
- Build networks and create lines of communication between the public and private sector
- Create an environment of continuous awareness on changing issues
- Enable private sector personnel to better understand the transportation project decision-making process.

Target Audience and Participants

The target audience for the FTII is leadership and staff from public sector agencies as described above. With assistance from the FHWA Office of Freight Management and Operations, the public sector agency/organization would work to identify private sector hosts within their jurisdiction.



Private sector hosts might be national, regional, or local businesses and might include, but are not limited to:

- Shippers and receivers: manufacturers of durable goods and perishables, mining and forestry, retail/wholesale
- Carriers: trucking companies, railroads, air freight carriers, steamship or barge lines
- Terminal/facility operators: airports and marine ports, intermodal facilities, and other private terminals
- Third-party logistic (3PL) suppliers
- Services-oriented organizations: health care facilities and universities, hotels, entertainment and recreation facilities
- Warehousing/distribution centers

Benefits

The benefit of the FTII is the public sector “intern” spending time with the private sector company to gain a comprehensive understanding of:

- Transportation issues that shippers and carriers face on a routine basis
- Transportation needs and requirements of a company
- How government transportation decisions impact industry productivity and efficiency
- The potential for specific projects to provide the best return on investment to the regional/local economy
- How to be an effective freight transportation advocate/champion.

These internships can also help to provide private sector participants with a better understanding of:

- The state and local government transportation decision-making process and decision criteria
- The role that private industry can play in the government transportation decision-making process

- How improved communications, partnerships, and coordination between the private and public sectors can lead to better transportation decisions (that they can benefit from)
- Why the private sector should stay engaged with the public sector decision makers.

Setting Up the Internship

The intern, working together with his or her supervisor, would identify private sector hosts, preferably within the local jurisdiction. The intern would make initial contact and arrange internships with the prospective private sector host that could last for a day or two or up to a week or more. FHWA's Office of Freight Management and Operations has received very positive reactions to the concept of the FTII from several national industries, and is available to assist in finding hosts.

Funding and Costs

This program is intended to be locally and regionally based with no travel expenses or tuition. It is dependent on the willingness of: (1) public agencies to set time aside for staff to complete the internships, and (2) the private sector to host interns (and vice versa).

Features to Look for in Identifying a Meaningful Internship Opportunity

- Variety
 - Size of company/industry
 - Type of company/industry
 - Volume and value of goods shipped
 - Market reach (local, regional, national, and global)
- Diversity of role in the supply chain
 - Raw materials provider
 - Parts/component provider
 - Manufacturer
 - Carrier (all modes)
 - 3PL
 - Warehousing/distribution
 - Receivers (stores, hospitals, etc.)

Help in Identifying the Internship Host Company

The following can be of assistance in selecting and contacting potential hosts:

- Contact the Chamber of Commerce to discuss local businesses.
- Gather some basic information on the host industry prior to making contact with the sponsor, which will help in understanding the nature of the business and to decide which activities would provide the greatest learning experience during the internship.
- If there isn't a known individual to contact with the private sector host, consider reaching out through their company's public affairs or government affairs officer or contacting an individual in one of the roles described in the text box at the far right.
- During the initial contact, explain the FTII program, its goals, and the benefits to the host company.
- Discuss dates, experiences, and the potential schedule upfront. Follow up with a letter or e-mail confirming the specifics of the internship and thanking the industry representative in advance.

INTERNSHIP SCHEDULE

Through an open dialogue with each host industry, the focus of the internship and the amount of time to spend would be agreed upon. For example:

DAY 1

- Hold an entrance interview or pre-meeting with host industry management. The purpose is to understand their critical transportation concerns, their major transportation-related problems, and issues from their perspective.
- Begin with a general tour of the facility. This will help gain an understanding of the overall operation and how each of the assignments supports the entire operation.

DURING INTERNSHIP

- A day could be spent in the cab of a truck on routine deliveries throughout the region. Be sure to address any potential liability issues or necessary liability releases beforehand.
- A day could be spent working in the office that schedules materials and product arrivals and shipments.
- Take time to understand the issues faced by each of those private sector activities and how the public sector transportation assets integrate with these functions.

LAST DAY OF INTERNSHIP

- Hold an exit discussion.

POST INTERNSHIP

- Send the host industry representative a follow-up letter of thanks.
- Share experiences with others in the agency and other stakeholders in the region.
- Continue the line of communication created from the FTII. The communication should enable both parties to identify solutions more effectively and efficiently.



Meetings, Assignments, and Interviews to Request During the Internship

During the Internship, it is important to talk with a broad base of staff and management within the sponsoring firm. It is important to select individuals based on their responsibilities and not just on their titles. For example, staff in finance and accounting, sales and marketing, real estate, and manufacturing may provide an understanding about how private sector transportation decisions are made. Individuals to look for include, but are not limited to:

- **Vice President, Global Customer Service and Logistics**—Responsibilities include global customer collaboration, standards development, inventory management, demand and sales and operations planning deployment, and logistics network strategy development.

- **Vice President, Supply Chain Management**—Ordinarily found in large corporations and less often in small- and medium-sized companies. Leads the development and implementation of supply chain strategy to support enterprise goals. Develops capabilities and supply chain initiatives to support supply chain performance over a multi-year horizon, and is responsible for supply chain processes, infrastructure, and enablers. Monitors core supply chain performance, including delivering against product- and service-level agreements and cost objectives with accountability for financial, service, and quality metrics in the supply chain. Position's scope may be worldwide or regional (e.g., North America).

- **Manager/Director of Transportation**—Directs the effectiveness of private, third-party, and contract carriage systems. Manages staff and operations to assure timely and cost-efficient transportation of all incoming and outgoing shipments. Plans and assures adequate equipment for storage, loading, and delivery of goods. Responsible for scheduling, routing, budget administration, freight bill presentation, and contract negotiations. Works with international carriers and freight forwarders to streamline the flow of goods across international borders and through customs.

- **Logistics Manager (International)**—Works closely with manufacturing, marketing, and purchasing to create timely, cost-effective import/export supply chains. Responsible for handling the technical details of international transportation—multiple modes, complex documentation, and varying customs regulations, developing distribution strategies, and building relationships with logistics intermediaries. Serves as a troubleshooter, dealing with problems inherent in moving freight long distances and holding inventory in multiple global locations.

- **Supply Chain Software Manager**—Manages components of distribution technology including warehouse operations systems, electronic communication and order-taking systems, and support systems. Designs analytical tools to increase and measure productivity. Develops decision support systems to analyze and optimize logistics and transportation systems.

- **Director of Operations**—Leads the Distribution Center activities for Inbound, Outbound, and Shipping Departments to meet/exceed customer service-level requirements. The Director is responsible for accurate and timely processing of merchandise throughout the facility and documentation of product flow for all serviced divisions. It is responsible for running a cost-effective operation staying within budgetary guidelines.

- **Warehouse Operations Manager**—Directs the efficient and cost-effective operation of commercial or industrial distribution center(s) or warehousing facilities. Manages inbound activities related to the receipt and storage of goods, inventory management, and claims. Oversees outbound activities related to order-filling, stock replenishment, and shipping. Responsible for budgeting, customer service, and facility and equipment operation. Administers overall inventory management, productivity, accuracy, and loss prevention programs.

- **Fleet Manager**—Sometimes referred to as directors of fleet operations or administrators of corporate fleets. Responsibilities generally include the development of fleet administration standards and vehicle operating policies; preparation of annual budgets and periodic reports on operating costs; purchase or lease of vehicles and equipment; and control over maintenance, repair, replacement, and disposal of vehicles.

- **Purchasing Manager**—Directs the buying activities for a company, government agency, or organization. Responsible for identifying global sources of materials, selecting suppliers, arranging contracts, and managing relationships. Provides analysis to increase levels of service at reduced costs.

- **Demand Planner**—A highly visible supply chain role that will oversee the Division Demand Planning (forecasting and inventory) requirements process. This is a hands-on position responsible for developing and executing a Demand Plan and inventory plans that will enable the Division to meet sales and service objectives. Collaboration with other members of the supply chain, sales, marketing, and customer support teams is paramount to achieve these sales and service objectives.

- **Analyst**—A supply chain analyst uses analytical and quantitative methods to understand, predict, and enhance supply chain processes. Responsible for assembling data, analyzing performance, identifying problems, and developing recommendations that support supply chain management planning and operations. A transportation analyst's duties revolve around the performance of carriers and private fleets, while a logistics analyst is responsible for a broad range of activities. Employed by manufacturers, retailers, logistics services providers, and other supply chain members.

- **Fulfillment Supervisor**—Responsible for the direction of hourly associates in the proper receiving, storage, and shipping of products. Responsible for meeting or exceeding established productivity, labor, and quality objectives.

- **Customer Service Manager**—Plans and directs activities of customer service teams to meet the needs of customers and support company operations. Develops procedures, establishes standards, and administers activities to assure accurate order entry, efficient shipment tracking, and timely delivery of products to customers. Also is responsible for effective response to customer requests, problems, and special needs, which can extend to a global client base. Works closely with marketing and sales, logistics, and transportation departments to reduce order cycle times and improve fill rates while controlling the cost of serving customers.

- **Dispatcher/Dispatch Manager**—Provides direct management of drivers and equipment utilized in the fulfillment of customer needs. Develops compliance to company standards through the direction of fleet assets in the execution of their assigned tasks. May function in management of city delivery and pick-up operations or over the road operations between facilities, terminals, or shipper and consignee pairing.