

5 reasons hiring an intern can help your business

The current economic climate means that all organisations, but especially SMEs (small medium enterprises) are constantly facing uncertainty and operational challenges. "Small businesses unfortunately do not always have the same level of support, data and insights that their larger counterparts do and therefore it is often difficult for them to operate and survive during these times," says Jake Willis, CEO and founder of Lulaway.



Coupled with the economic uncertainty, is the youth unemployment crisis in South Africa. With over 50% of our youth being unemployed we are in dire need of solutions. Willis says that all companies, big and small, as well as government are obligated to work together to overcome this. As with many countries, and as expressed by our country's President, the growth of the South African economy will be sustained by small businesses.

So, what can SMEs do?

Willis says that all businesses, but especially small businesses can gain significantly from hiring interns. There are many available government programmes that fund interns, such as Youth Employment Service (YES). Not only will the business benefit, but the on-the-job experience for a young potential employee, is invaluable. With Lulaway having placed over 7,500 funded interns in businesses, Willis describes the below five reasons as to why hiring an intern can benefit a small business:

1. Expand operations quickly

Expanding business operations can seem impossible when faced with the obstacles of hiring and recruiting new staff. Hiring interns gives a business the opportunity to grow quickly as the additional human resources are there, enabling the business to be profitable and creating long-term employment opportunities.

2. Build a talent pool

Great employees are critical to the growth of any business. Having a pool of interns employed within your company means that when positions open up, the interns are potential candidates. They are familiar with the business's trends, goals and structure and are known by the employer and employees, unlike a new unknown hire.

3. Test-drive the talent

In a small business, every new hire is a big and tentative decision. Unfortunately, a thorough interview of a candidate cannot provide certainty of their performance. This only becomes evident once they start working and, as such, is a

major deterrence for many small businesses. A solution is to hire an intern – this is the most effective way to evaluate a candidate's potential as a full-time employee. The employer can ascertain their skills and work ethic firsthand, and then make an informed decision about hiring the individual full-time.

4. Increase productivity

Running a small business often means that most of the operational requirements are the responsibility of the business owner and the small team of employees. An intern could take over many operational and more menial tasks and in so doing free up time for the business owner and other team members to focus on more strategic and profitable outcomes.

5. Test out new positions

Creating new positions in a small business can be nerve-wracking and stressful as the success and necessity for the position has not been proven. An intern is an ideal solution to determine whether the new role will be valuable and worthy of a full-time employee in the long-term and enables the business owner to make an informed strategic decision regarding resource allocation.

Willis concludes, "Hiring interns is not only a smart move, especially in today's tough competitive environment, but will also play an integral role in the fight against youth unemployment."

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>