

August, 1997

Boise State University Computer Lab Assistants

Introduction

Computer Lab Assistants are hired from the general student body, and have varying degrees of computer skills and areas of software expertise. While some training will be provided by the lab manager, much of the training and experience will be gained while on the job.

The primary duty of the lab assistants is to help students with their software and computer usage questions. These questions will range from simple questions like how do I check my Email, to difficult technical questions. Additional duties of the lab assistant consist of providing basic maintenance for the printers and computers, including, but not limited to adding paper & replacing toner cartridges on printers, cleaning computer screens & tables, signing students into the lab, and checking out documentation to the users.

Prospective lab assistants should have excellent communications ability and “people skills.” Previous work in a customer service environment is helpful, but not required. Good general computer skills are important, particularly experience with word processors. Internet experience would be helpful as well.

Student Computer Lab Tasks

Morning Shifts:

Front Desk Area

Clean and prepare front desk area.
Have new sign-in sheets prepared.
Clean up desk area.
Clean up bookshelf area.

Prepare computers

Confirm all computers powered up and running. Note non-working machines in maintenance log.
Confirm computer logged onto correct printer.
Confirm Printer trays on all three printers are fully loaded with paper.
Confirm no error messages on printers.
Make sure floor area is clean.
Make sure computer desks are clean.
Make sure trash has been emptied. If not, empty trash.
Check supply of handouts. Notify manager when more needed.

Evening shifts:

General cleaning

Make sure room is clean & organized.
Pick up scraps from floor.
Pick up around computer desks.
Straighten out chairs.
Note any problems with machine on maintenance log.
Turn out lights.
Make sure all three doors are locked.

General duties, all shifts:

The primary mission of the computer lab is to supply computing resources to students for use with their classwork, and the primary responsibility of the lab assistants is to help the students use the computing resources most effectively. Lab assistants should give the students as much assistance as they need, without actually doing their assignments for them.

1. Stay alert to the needs of the students.

- a) Circulate around the lab as much as possible to maintain visibility.
- b) Monitor students for non-academic usage of computers (games, recreational web surfing, etc.)
Ask them politely to let someone else use the computer if others are waiting.
- c) Check printers for errors, and low paper & toner levels. Add paper & toner if necessary .
- d) Offer assistance as necessary to students. If you are unable to answer their questions, refer them to another assistant, the lab manager, or their professor.
- e) Be courteous and professional to users at all times. What is easy and routine for you may be daunting for inexperienced and new users.

2. Stay alert to the front counter.

- a) Sign each student in, and verify by their ID card that they are a current student.
- b) Check out documentation as needed to users. Hold their BSU ID card or drivers license until they return the checked out materials.
- c) Answer questions about lab usage.
- d) Show students where handouts are. If supplies are low, tell, or leave note for lab manager.

3. Maintain lab and equipment.

- a) If problem occurs (software or hardware), fix the problem if possible. If unable to repair, fill out maintenance log, entering machine number, time & date, and a description of the problem.
- b) Keep manuals and documentation orderly and in good repair.
- c) If machine becomes inoperable, note problem on status board (and maintenance log).
- d) Do not allow students to load or download shareware applications. We are only licensed to run legal copies of software applications.
- e) When off duty, please do not distract on-duty lab assistants.

4. Use of dead-time.

- a) Lab assistants are not to play computer games, study, or read novels while on duty. If found doing any of these activities, Lab Assistants may be dismissed immediately from the job.
- b) If all computers and printers are clean, serviced, and in good working order, the floors are free of waste paper, the desks are clean and orderly, the front desk area is straightened out, and students have no questions, Lab Assistants should explore and learn more about software installed on lab computers. Mac users should explore Windows machines and vice-versa. Work with Word, Excel, Access, Internet Applications, etc. Keep learning. The more you know, the better prepared you will be to help a student user.

I have read and understand what is expected of me in the Computer Lab Assistant position.

Name (Printed)

Signature

Date