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## **Pathway in Enterprise Systems Engineering (PENS)**

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## **Internships: Proxym-IT Model**

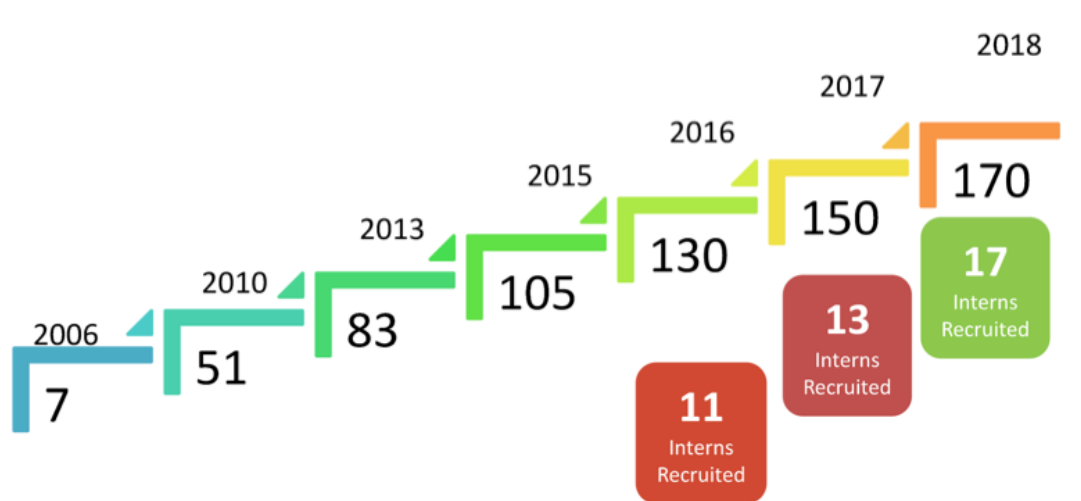
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Since its inception, Proxym-IT gave internship a central position in its hiring process. A lot of efforts have been spent in order to attract the best students. Recently Proxym-IT have been pioneer in establishing an unprecedented program of apprenticeship (dual education). In this report, we describe the internship and apprenticeship hiring and management.

### Internships:

Internship is the main hiring channel for Proxym with a focus on graduation project internships and a hiring rate exceeding 60%. During recent years, at least 30 students were enrolled annually.

Graduation projects offer multiple advantages. They last between 4 and 6 months allowing us to perform an in-depth evaluation of the intern and explore new technological trends and/or technologies planned for upcoming use in production.



Interns are treated as future employees and carefully crafted training program is dedicated to them during the internship. This training is led by “Proxym-U”, Proxym-IT’s internal corporate university that covers soft as well as technical skills (communication, project management & lifecycle, DevOps, development best practices, etc.).

The high expectation on the interns and the high investment in them puts a high requirement on the skills and the mindset of the trainees. We expect autonomy,

thinkers, do-ers and geek attitude. We are thankfully surrounded, in Sousse area, by world-class standard engineering schools and talents. Nevertheless, students aiming at being retained for an internship, have to pass through a meticulous recruitment process with 3 interviews (2 technical, 1 HR).

Each intern is assigned a supervisor among Proxym-IT's employees. The first step in every project is requirement gathering and formalization. Once agreed on the requirement, effective development starts. At least two intermediate presentations are held in front of a large audience to present progress, assess the intern's efforts and prepare the final defense.

In recent years, the competition for fresh talents is increasing and becoming international. Proxym-IT is actively present in University events (of pre-selected schools) for Internship hiring and social branding.

### **Apprenticeships:**

This competition is targeting at larger scale proficient developers, making the retention and hiring of senior developers one of the main challenges in Proxym. To tackle this problem, Proxym initiated an unprecedented (in Tunisia) dual education program. 20 students have been recruited with a bachelor degree (3 years of studies). They have been offered a scholarship for attending an engineering school while being apprentices in the company with adjusted working hours. On the counterpart, apprentices are required to stay with the company one additional year after their studies.

In conjunction with academic courses, apprentices followed a 3 months initial training program in "Proxym-U" in order to fill the gap of required skills and introduce them to Proxym-IT specific technologies and methodologies. At the end of this training, apprentices were allocated to R&D and customer projects.

This apprenticeship program, allows us to tailor the academic courses to our need. Moreover, as turnover is one of the main risks on projects, this program allows Proxym-IT to minimize this risk. It also gives us the opportunity to confidently invest in R&D.

This apprenticeship program was established with a unique private engineering school. This is explained by the absence of legal framework in the Tunisian legislation for such practice and the impossibility of delegation to a private company (such as Proxym-IT) the process of selecting the attendees of Engineering-degree program of the public sector.

### **Conclusion**

In Proxym-IT a meticulous selection is held to recruit interns. These interns have to go through a tough interview process. In return, they are treated as future employees and are expected to behave accordingly. A significant effort is spent in social branding in major academic events. This offers us visibility and attractiveness allowing us to recruit highly talented students.

In addition internships, we lately established a apprenticeship program not only offers tailored academic courses but also allowing us to tackle high turnover rates.

Indeed, apprenticeship students make commitment to remain within Proxym-IT during all the duration of the apprenticeship in exchange of Proxym-IT paying the financial cost of their education within the private partner engineering school.