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ReWa has successfully transformed its internship program to address the challenges of a shrinking talent pool and an aging workforce. By partnering with local schools and making strategic changes to its internship culture, ReWa has seen a significant increase in applications, community involvement, and leadership morale.

The revamped program, known as Experience ReWa, focuses on using metrics and data management to target specific talent pools rather than casting a broad hiring net. This approach has resulted in cost-effective and time-efficient recruiting with impressive outcomes. The program promotes interns as future leaders within the organization, rather than just new hires, and includes a mentorship component that has positively impacted the organizational mindset.

Experience ReWa is available to enrolled college students who can work up to 29 hours per week for at least 10 weeks during the summer. The program aims to develop professional skills quickly, with the belief that every intern has the potential to become a future leader. Interns participate in bi-weekly roundtables to discuss their projects and build camaraderie. During the program, interns receive monthly performance reviews with their leaders to track their progress and to discuss opportunities for growth available at ReWa.

The program also includes professional development training in areas such as project management, professional communication, and networking. Interns conclude their summer with a final presentation day, showcasing their accomplishments to team members, executive leadership, and school representatives. Experience ReWa operates on a tiered model with three successive sessions. The first session focuses on learning about the selected department and the overall functions of an environmental utility. The second session involves building a continuous improvement proposal including relevant data. The third session is tailored to career readiness, including mock interviews and the creation of a professional portfolio.

Since the launch of Experience ReWa, the program has achieved an average retention rate of over 55% each year, with the highest retention rate reaching 67% in 2023. The program has become highly competitive, with over 50 applicants annually for few positions. Experience ReWa has proven to be a cost-effective and impactful method for recruiting highly talented individuals. The success of Experience ReWa is summarized by former intern, Samantha Acker: “I’ve been given a wealth of knowledge about this industry, and heaps of career advice from all levels at the company,” she said, “ReWa is the best environment I’ve worked in to date, and I consider them my second family.”