

INTERNSHIP SURVIVAL TIPS

Before Your Internship Begins

- If you have not already shifted to presenting yourself as a professional, now is the time. Your e-mail address and voice mail message should be created with this in mind. In addition, your social networking tools should reflect the fact that you have transitioned into the professional world.
- Learn all you can about the organization. In addition to becoming very familiar with organizations website, research the organization online, Google, Facebook and LinkedIn.
- Make sure you are clear about your supervisor's expectations in regard to hours, start/end date, and dress.
 - It is a good idea to develop a learning contract that specifies the parameters of the internship. This document should be filled out by the Intern, the Internship Supervisor and if you are taking a credit bearing internship, your Faculty Internship Advisor should also fill it out. This document can be provided by your faculty internship advisor. Career Services also has a sample that can be adapted by the parties involved.

On The Job

- Show up on time. Tardiness is not a quality employers look for in potential hires.
- Take only the specified break-time for lunch or coffee and always return on time.
- Avoid missing work. If you must be absent, request permission from your supervisor in advance in person and confirm it via e-mail.
- Dress for success. Take cues from your co-workers and dress appropriately.
- Turn off your cell phone.
- Use the computer for work related activities only.
- Understand that some general office work is part of the job.
- Introduce new ideas gradually and avoid trying to change too much too soon. Be careful not to be critical of current practices.
- Gradually ask for more responsibility and actively look for things to do. This initiative will prepare you for positions in the future.
- Build a good relationship with your boss
 - Learn to manage up. Do not expect your supervisor to do all the work to define and manage your working relationship
 - Communicate and keep your supervisor in the loop
 - Understand your bosses agenda, preferences, and perspective
 - Know your supervisor's strengths and weaknesses
 - Do not complain about your supervisor's weaknesses, try to help
 - Provide suggestions and solutions to problems
- Learn about your industry
 - Join professional organizations
 - Read industry publications
 - Subscribe to online newsletters

- Network in the office and keep in touch online! It is important to establish contacts with people who are doing what you think you would like to do. These people are valuable resources. They may also be able to help you in future career opportunities or lead you to other contacts. Connect with co-workers on LinkedIn.com and Facebook.
- If there are other interns in the office, strive to develop relationships with them, this can be a great support system. Avoid becoming too cliquish with the other interns.

Maintain Records (Even if your internship experience seems unforgettable, you may need to refresh your memory.)

- Log in with a daily journal. Create a list of your daily tasks and chart your feelings about your work. Which tasks did you like the most? Which seemed the least interesting? Reviewing the list later can help you make future career decisions.
- Record your projects. Describe the purpose and guidelines of each project and your particular contribution.
- Keep a professional souvenir. Ask your supervisor if you can keep a copy of any projects you work on - brochures, reports, etc. These can be a great addition to a portfolio useful when you are looking for a job.
- Keep in touch and keep a record of your performance. Ask for copies of any performance reviews. At the end of your internship, ask for a letter of reference.

When It Is Over

- Now that your internship is over, what is the next step? Reflection is a great place to start. Review your journal think back on your best and worst day. Maybe you learned what you want to do when you graduate. Maybe you learned what you do not want to do.
- Ask yourself the following questions:
 - What were your goals before the internship? Did you accomplish them?
 - What did you accomplish above and beyond your established goals?
 - What did you fail to accomplish?
 - What new skills, equipment, or office technology did you master?
 - What was the most important thing you learned from this experience?
 - How would you describe the corporate culture?
 - What did you notice about different supervision styles?
 - What did you learn about running a meeting?
 - What did you observe about different styles of decision making?
 - The answers to these questions will help you describe your internship, your key responsibilities, and your accomplishments. These will all be helpful when writing your résumé and cover letters and will prepare you for discussing your experience during future interviews