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INTERNSHIP SUCCESS TIPS



Informational Guide

Key Items to Remember

Your internship is like an extended interview: The initial interview isn't the only time you should want to impress your employer! Your behavior and performance are consistently noted, just like during a regular employee's probation period (which is usually the first six months of employment). Conduct yourself professionally throughout your internship as you would during a traditional interview.

Time management: Arriving on time and prepared is only the beginning. You'll also have to manage your workload. Organization is key to prioritizing your tasks and timeline, so find a system that works for you – use a planner, lists, etc. Would you prefer a hard copy or electronic system? Your supervisor should also have a system (either formal or informal) of regularly checking in. Perhaps it's a weekly meeting or debriefs of your work upon completion. This will help you stay on track. If you think you might not be able to meet a deadline, do not wait until the last minute to communicate this to your supervisor. Keep your supervisor informed!

Understand the task: Before beginning a task or project, make sure you understand the instructions. Listen carefully and jot down notes so you don't forget important details. If you're unclear, repeat back the instructions. This gives your supervisor an opportunity to clarify so that you know what is expected.

Enthusiasm: Tackle every project – big and small – with a can-do attitude. It is not uncommon for interns to start out with easier tasks or smaller projects. Demonstrating your capability and a positive attitude will result in increasingly challenging projects!

Ask and offer: Interns are not expected to be experts; they are expected to have questions! Asking thoughtful questions shows that you are genuinely interested. As a newcomer, you bring a fresh perspective, so your input is also valuable. Offering relevant ideas and solutions demonstrates problem solving and creativity.

Feedback is your friend: Feedback is *critical* to learning and growing as a professional. In fact, asking for feedback shows your supervisor that you are willing to learn and improve. Listen carefully to the feedback you receive from your supervisor and coworkers, and use it to your advantage. Consider how you might improve or do things differently. Chances are, the next time you encounter a similar task, you'll feel more confident and will do even better for having received the previous feedback!

There is no such thing as nothing to do: If you complete your work ahead of schedule, ask for more. If you feel shy about asking, remember that your supervisor will appreciate that you are proactive and are willing to take on more. If your supervisor is unavailable for the time being, review and revise your current work, ask other employees if they need assistance, or initiate a new productive task to fill in the time gap. For example, examine a current process and consider recommendations for improvement, or conduct internet research to inform an upcoming project or get a better understanding of relevant industry information (competitors, professional associations, etc.) The point is, use "down time" to develop your knowledge and value as an intern.

Connect with the people around you: Get to know your coworkers. Ask questions about their roles in the organization. Discuss what excites you about your internship. Genuine connections will propel your learning and make your overall experience more enjoyable.

You get what you put in. The overall value of the internship results from the effort you put into it. Your work ethic and attitude will affect your experience. Learn how your work affects the work of other individuals and/or departments. Learn as much as you can about your department, the organization, and the industry. Diligence, enthusiasm and initiative will lead to more challenging projects. In turn, you'll achieve a greater sense of accomplishment when your internship has come to an end.

The internship ends, but the impact stays with you: An internship is a temporary experience, but it has a lasting impact: you learn so much about your own interests and capabilities; you gain industry insights and experience in a real-world context; you make connections and grow professionally; you position yourself for future success.

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Etiquette, Do's and Don'ts

Representation

Students are expected to represent themselves and Bryant University positively and professionally throughout the internship experience, in alignment with the Amica Center mission and the Bryant Student Code of Conduct (https://my.bryant.edu/resources/files/student_handbook_2018-19.pdf). Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to: harassment, theft, drug and alcohol use, misuse of company equipment, products, services, software, etc.

Use of Office Devices

- Assume that all activity and correspondence is public:
 - Do not use company computers, copy/fax machines, etc. for non work-related activities.
 - It is within your employer's rights to monitor your activity.
- Don't take personal calls on your phone.
- Don't use your personal phone for texts, music, etc.

Email

- Only use your employer email address for work related correspondence.
- Email subject lines should be concise and directly related to the content of the email
- Use a professional opening. Dear Ms. Smith, Good morning, Greetings, etc.
- Do not use slang or "text lingo"
- Respond to email within 24 hours
- Check for spelling and grammar
- Use and easy to read fonts (like Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri)
- Don't access your personal email while on the job.

Phone

- Answer all calls in a clear and pleasant manner.
- Do not try to multitask while you're on the phone. The caller should have your full attention.
- Keep a pen and paper close by the phone in case you need to take a message.
- If you're not sure how to answer a question, either ask the caller if you can please put them on hold while you find out, or take down the person's name and number and let them know that someone will call back shortly.

Calling out sick, Tardiness and Timesheet Documentation

If you MUST call out or arrive late, DO NOT text or email your supervisor to communicate this (unless your supervisor has specifically instructed you to do so). The acceptable and appropriate protocol is to pick up the phone and call. It should go without saying that tardiness and sick days are to be used for legitimate reasons only. Supervisors are required to track absences. You are also expected to accurately record your arrival and leave times. It is fraudulent to misrepresent these on your timesheets.

Cell Phone Usage

Keep your cell phone on silent mode and in your pocket or purse. If you cannot resist the urge to check it on work time, leave it in your car, dorm room, etc. Even if the organization does not have a strict cell phone policy, it is unprofessional and distracting. Personal cell phone usage while on the clock is considered stealing from the company.

Office gossip

Do not participate in conversations that could get you in trouble or damage someone else's reputation. A good rule of thumb is to ask yourself if you would have this conversation in front of the person in question. If the answer is 'no,' remove yourself from the conversation. Gossiping can also damage your own reputation.

Company Functions

While you are typically not obligated to attend functions outside of work hours, try to make time for these. It's an opportunity to get to know your coworkers and to show that you're part of the team. It can also be a chance to network with other groups and managers that you don't regularly interact with.

Attire

Dress code varies by organization. If you don't formally learn dress code expectations (through orientation, a welcome packet, etc.), ask your supervisor or someone in Human Resources if you are unclear. Always avoid unprofessional clothing items, like ripped jeans, low-cut shirts and short skirts. A good rule to follow is if you're unsure if a particular outfit is appropriate for your internship – wear something that you know is considered business attire.

Concluding your internship: Leave a Lasting Impression!

Your internship is ending, but this is not the end! This is an *opportunity* to express your appreciation for how the experience helped you grow professionally. Below are tips to help you leave a positive, lasting impression.

Written Thank You

Towards the end of your internship, email your co-workers and your supervisors to thank them for their support in your great internship experience. **Hint:** Consider hand-written thank you cards instead of email! This is more personal and demonstrates your appreciation to a greater extent.

Verbal Thank You

In addition to sending thank you emails or cards, spend your last few days thanking your supervisors and colleagues verbally. Leave your colleagues on a humble, thankful note, and give them a genuine goodbye, keeping the relationship open for your network.

References/Recommendation Letters

Ask your supervisor and/or colleagues to be a reference for you. You may also ask one of your supervisors who you worked closely with to write a recommendation letter for you (be sure to give them at least two weeks to complete this request).

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LinkedIn Connections

Make sure your LinkedIn profile is updated and request to connect with your supervisors, colleagues, and anyone else you networked with during your internship. Ask your supervisor to write a brief recommendation quote for your LinkedIn profile.

Keep in Touch

Inform your references about outcomes of your job search and applications, whether you got the job or not. Thank them for agreeing to be a reference for you and remain in touch with them on a regular basis.

Personal Reflection and Next Steps

Your internship is a powerful career development tool! Learn about yourself through an honest evaluation of your experience. Then, leverage that information to help you determine how this experience might shape your next career development move. Jot down what comes to mind when you consider the following:

- What skills did you develop during your internship? Why are they important?
- Is there anything you wish you had done better?
- What projects and tasks did you enjoy the most (and least)?
- If you had more time at your internship, what is a project you would like to complete?
- Was it a good organizational fit for you? Why or why not?
- Did this experience confirm or change your thoughts about your career path?
- Did you get what you hoped to from this experience? If not, what was missing?

Add the Internship to your Résumé

Highlight the skills you developed during your internship! It's a good idea to meet with an Amica Center Career Coach, who can help you craft your résumé.

Let the Amica Center Know!

We want to hear about your internship experience! Call, email or stop by the office to chat about your experience with an Internship Coordinator. If you completed the internship for academic credit, please complete the online assessment in your Academic Internship Enrollment form in Banner.

Questions? Reach out! Amica Center Internship Contacts:

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