



MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR INTERNSHIP

You're in! You've been selected for an internship. Now, the important part: making the most of the experience. Here are a few tips:

An internship represents an exciting opportunity to learn, gain professional experience and explore potential career paths. How you approach this opportunity will impact its value. Like so many things in life, you get out what you put in!



Meet as many people as you can

Each person you meet during your internship represents a chance to learn. Make an effort to meet people and ask questions. Learn expectations and protocols at the firm, tips on completing tasks, personal career paths, insights on the field—be a sponge.

Bonus: you're expanding your network!

Set expectations and goals early

Early in your internship, be sure to sit down with your supervisor to understand your role and expectations. Take notes for reference later, and ask for feedback periodically. It's also a good idea to set personal goals. What would you like to accomplish and learn during your time there?

Watch, listen and learn

Aside from completing tasks you're given, it's important to be in learning mode. Listen. Ask questions. Observe how people work. How they conduct themselves in meetings, how they react and address challenges, even how they speak on the phone—everything you see and hear is an opportunity to learn.

Take initiative

As an intern, you might have a long list of projects or tasks—or you might find yourself with little to do or limited supervision. If you finish a task and are looking for the next one, let your supervisor know. Think proactively about what you can do to contribute and offer ideas. Seek out learning opportunities. Ask if there is anyone else you can assist.

Stay organized

Staying organized is key to productivity and job performance. Always keep your space neat and orderly, especially before you leave for the day. Take notes in all meetings, not just to aid your learning process, but also to stay on top of tasks and deadlines.

Keep a project/task list

Having a list of your projects and tasks completed/to do, updated daily, is useful for time management. It's also helpful in keeping your supervisor current on progress and, later, useful for reference as you update your resume.

Be professional

How you conduct yourself is as important as what you accomplish. Dress professionally, consistent with the standards of the office. Do what it takes, including working late, to meet your deadlines. No matter how hectic the pace, stay calm. If you feel overwhelmed, ask for help prioritizing.

Of course, remember the basic courtesies—saying “excuse me” before asking a working person a question, “please” and “thank you.”

Ask for feedback

It can be intimidating to ask for feedback on your performance, but the act of initiating a conversation about your progress demonstrates to your boss that you want to grow and build your skills. This feedback might take the form of scheduling a time to check-in with your supervisor about where you're doing well and where you might make improvements. Or you might incorporate it as part of your regular conversations. Either way, your primary goal is to learn and improve!

Stay connected

Just because your internship has ended, that doesn't mean you can't stay connected to peers, supervisors, and other staff who you have built a relationship with. Connecting on LinkedIn is the easiest way to maintain the network you have built! Stay in touch by following or commenting on their posts or sharing an article with them. As you progress in your degree or career, keep them updated with a short and sweet email, thanking them for being a part of your success. You can even offer to help connect your employer with future interns!

Reflect on your experience

Reflecting on your internship experience will help you identify the skills you have acquired, locate what you have learned about your own interests and values, connect your experience to your academic pathway, and how you have grown personally or professionally. Take time to write down the biggest projects you played a role in, and start to identify how these achievements might map into your resume, cover letter, or interview answers. In general, it's useful to make a list of the next 2–3 steps you might take to move closer to your professional goals.