

FIVE TIPS FOR MAKING THE MOST OF AN INTERNSHIP

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Landing an internship and showing up to work isn't enough to get the most from an internship! What you do during the internship and following your internship can make it even more meaningful than just gaining work experience.

Internships are an ideal way for young professionals to decipher what they truly want to do upon graduation and also build tools for future success.

Obviously gaining work experience and the opportunity to work on business projects provides invaluable learning and experience that can be taken into future career opportunities.

However, internships can be equally valuable in building a professional network, career/skill development, personal growth, and solidifying a career for the future. It is these peripheral aspects that students don't take advantage of during their internship that can be an internship's biggest asset. Here are five easy things that can make an internship invaluable.

1. Make a good first impression

It is amazing how a first impression follows a person around — within a job, company and even an industry. Be sure that your first impression is a positive one.

Whether it is choosing acceptable attire or interacting with colleagues, a professional approach is the best. For advice from employers on things to avoid, check out the article "Start Your Job on the Right Foot" on page 26. Remember, you don't get another chance to make a great first impression.

2. Network

Take the opportunity to get to know a lot of people within the organization. Consider spending

time over a meal or social activity with someone other than your direct supervisor or another intern.

Making multiple connections within an organization allows you to explore other aspects of the business; make new friends; and develop important networking connections that could be helpful in exploring future career opportunities.

3. Ask questions

Outside of the job, what are things you could learn about from the professional group of individuals around you? Ask about professional development opportunities and what others have found most valuable throughout their career.

Learn what professional blogs/books or newsletters co-workers read and what organizations they belong to.

Learn about your co-workers/peers/mentors on a personal level through asking questions, such as what they like about their job and the career path they took to get to their current position. These responses are things to potentially emulate to help advance your career.

4. Embrace your surroundings

This is especially true for students interning in a new location. Out-of-the-workplace learning is a big component to being a successful and well-rounded professional.

Taking advantage of new surroundings, new things and new people are great ways to expand — even if it is as simple as trying a new kind of food or exploring a



new hobby. Get out and take an adventure.

5. Keep in touch

The contacts made during your internship can be a huge resource for your professional success down the road.

Be sure that you have collected contact information for all of the people you've connected with.

Send thank you notes to those that have taught you something new, been a positive influence, or helped you during your internship.

Communicate with your manager once you are back to school and find yourself applying something you learned during your internship to your education.

Don't be afraid to ask your employer about future opportunities for either internships or full-time jobs if you are interested.

Be prepared that they may not know at this time, but ask if you can keep in touch throughout the year regarding potential openings.

Internships are an excellent way to gain meaningful work experience. However, there is so much more to be gained from an internship. It is the extra effort that you put towards reaping the benefits from the experience that makes all of the difference!