



# TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

## The Purpose of an Internship

An internship is any field experience or formal program that provides practical experience for students and beginners in an occupation or profession. Most internships are work experience internships in which the student or worker can receive on-the-job training in a field. Although employment isn't guaranteed at the end of an internship, internships can be a way for employers to train and evaluate future employees.

**An internship can be:** paid or unpaid; for course credit or no credit\*; and part-time or full-time.

*\*Ashford University does not currently offer any courses for online students for internship credit. Campus students may see Career Services for assistance.*

## TIPS FOR STUDENTS

- Market yourself effectively. Create a resume that features relevant skills and accomplishments. Have someone you respect provide feedback.
- Sit down with your supervisor to map out goals early in your internship. Then, always recheck your supervisor's expectations and goals.
- Be responsible for meeting deadlines on time. Even better, under promise and over deliver. It's better to say that a project will take a week and deliver it in one day. Prioritize goals with your supervisor, and if necessary reach fewer goals but exceed expectations each time.
- Network with other interns and professionals during the internship to build up your network.
- Record your work accomplishments. Collect documents, marketing material you helped write, or design, photos, and correspondence such as letters of reference. Or create an online portfolio, a personal website, or DVD/CD to showcase work.
- Be flexible – you may have to do some “grunt” work; that's the trade-off to gain the skills and experience you're seeking in a field. But make sure there is a balance between doing “grunt” work and pre-professional responsibilities.
- Ask for a letter of recommendation from your intern supervisor and from colleagues with whom you've worked.
- If you are working and going to school, develop an internship schedule with your supervisor that will be beneficial to you and to the company. Consider alternate schedule options such as staying more hours per day, and coming fewer days, or fewer hours a day over a longer period of time.
- Assess company values and standards. Pay attention to company behaviors, including dress and language. Analyze your supervisor's leadership style. Companies hire people who fit in, so make sure you do your research into the company culture.

## TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS

- Know what's important to potential interns. Is it a match for their major and career goals? What is the timeframe, duration, and location of the program? How is the program structured in terms of hours and days per week?
- Provide meaningful work that meets the student's specific needs. Remember, an intern's primary objective is to learn both the business in general and to learn specific skills.
- Consider compensation. The reality is that not all students can afford to work for free. Even a stipend will be appreciated to cover mileage and gas costs. Please consult the [US Department of Labor](#) for internship requirements regarding wages.
- Invite interns to meetings and other activities - as participants or observers when appropriate. This invitation will engage interns as part of the team which will more likely lead to better company reviews to their peers or better chance they'll accept a job offer.
- Make sure there is someone always available to answer questions. At the very least, assign an interim task, and let them know when their supervisor will return.
- Give clear and specific feedback. Set-up structured evaluations that are scheduled regularly and include both praise and critique.
- Have an appealing environment – physically and personally. Provide a dedicated workspace for interns, and treat interns with the same respect as any permanent employee.
- Be honest about what the student can expect from the internship from the beginning. Misrepresenting the number of expected hours or the ratio of meaningful to mindless work can cause a program to develop a negative reputation. Interns who can make important contributions to a company look for quality internships.

Source: <http://www.internships.com/employer/resources/setup/10-internship-characteristics-that-attract-exceptional-interns>



# TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

## STUDENT GOALS

### Goal One:

Objective:

Objective:

### Goal Two:

Objective:

Objective:

### Goal Three:

Objective:

Objective:

## EMPLOYER GOALS

### Goal One:

Objective:

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