Getting the Most Out of Your Internship

Are you earning credit for your internship? If so, remember...

- **Check your WINGS account early in the semester to verify your internship credit registration.** Career Services staff can only register you for your credit after your internship has been approved by your faculty internship advisor and department chair.

- **Work Progress Reports** – Work Progress Report Surveys are available in Handshake in the form of a survey. You are required to submit two reports.
  - **Click on “Career Center/Surveys”.** The screen that comes up will show you all the surveys that have been sent to you and whether or not you have taken them.
  - Your internship faculty advisor will automatically receive a copy of each report you submit.
  - Some questions on the Work Progress Report survey will ask you to use the STAR method, which is a behavior-based format. Please see description below or click on the “Career Center/Resources” in your Handshake account.
  - Questions are based on NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers) competencies that employers look for in new hires.
  - Each survey asks the same questions and is used by student interns across all academic disciplines. Some interns’ experiences may provide more exposure to a given type of situation than other interns’ experiences. The purpose of the questions asked on the work progress reports is to help students reflect on their experiences. Many employers ask behavior based questions during interviews; “Tell me about a time when...” or “Give me an example of...”. By closely reflecting on their experiences, our hope is to help students be better prepared for future interviews.
  - **DUE DATES: March 15th and May 10th**

- **Employer Evaluations** – your internship supervisor will receive an email notice from Handshake with a link to your online evaluation. Your internship faculty advisor will receive a copy of these evaluations.
  - **If your site supervisor changes** from the name you entered on your “Request an Experience” survey in Handshake, you must notify the Internship Coordinator no later than one week prior to the date the evaluation email is scheduled to be sent.
  - Evaluations will be emailed to supervisors on the dates indicated below. It is strongly recommended that you check with your supervisor on the day evaluations are sent to be sure they received the evaluation email as many of these emails go to supervisors’ Spam or Junk folders.
    - **Mid-Term: sent March 8th (due March 15th)**
    - **Final: sent May 3rd (due May 10th)**

**Student Evaluation of Internship** – You will receive an email notice from Handshake with a link to an online evaluation of your internship. Your feedback ensures that we can continue to offer quality internship opportunities to students. This feedback will be viewed by your faculty internship advisor and Career Services staff.

  - **Sent: May 3rd (due May 10th)**
STAR METHOD

These reports will be sent to your faculty internship advisor to determine your grades for your internship. You will be asked a series of questions identifying skills and competencies you are developing at your internship. With some questions, you will be asked to complete the questions in a behavior-based format using the STAR method. This will require you to provide an example:

- **S** – Situation (set the scene, describe the situation)
- **T** – Task (specifics of what you needed to accomplish)
- **A** – Action (what you did, skills/behaviors used)
- **R** – Result (explain what happened and what you learned)

**Example Question:** "I am witnessing and/or increasing my understanding of effective leadership skills"

- **Situation:** As a government relations intern at Memorial Hospital, I learned that I was the first and only intern the department had ever had, and they decided they wanted to create a formal internship program.
- **Task:** In order to successfully launch this program, my supervisor asked me to create and administer a training curriculum for the new, incoming interns.
- **Action:** To complete this task, first, I outlined all the procedures the new interns would need to learn about like HIPAA standards, how to operate the 10-line phone system, and how to use the health record index and storage system. Next, I created a three-day training agenda covering these topics. Finally, I facilitated it to four new interns.
- **Results:** The training was a huge success. On a survey completed after the training, all four interns rated the program a 10 out of 10 in the areas of usefulness and creativity. In addition, each intern rated my communication and leadership styles as "Excellent." I learned that the importance of developing good communication skills with my supervisor early in my internship. Through conversations and observation, I learned that good supervisors trust and equip their team members with the tools to make them successful. This is important to me as I am about to enter the job market. I had not considered the importance of not only wanting a great job but also a good leader.

If you have questions regarding these requirements, please contact the appropriate staff member listed on the Career Services website.

**The Importance of Communication…** If any issues or concerns arise during your internship, please discuss them with your supervisor as soon as possible. If the issues are not resolved, contact a staff member in Career Services. Concerns may include:

- Inadequate orientation or training at the beginning of the internship
- Duties are not relevant or challenging
- Problems with supervision
- A personal issue that will impact your attendance or performance on your internship
Professionalism on the Job… The transition from the world of higher education to your first career position can be dramatic. Here are suggestions to help your transition:

Discuss your work schedule with your supervisor.
• Discuss an agreed upon daily schedule, days off and starting and ending dates. Remember the organization’s work calendar is not the same as the University calendar. For example, don’t assume you will have time off for Spring Break.

Adhere to the organization’s policies.
• Always maintain confidentiality; in a health or human services organization it may be patient/client confidentiality. In business, it may be records or new product development.
• Know and follow the policies on email, telephone and office equipment usage.
• If an employer has a required dress code in place, it is essential to abide by it. The dress code may be in written form or it may be informal. Always ask about a dress code if you are uncertain.

Communicate with your supervisor and ask questions.
• If you don’t know your supervisor’s expectations, you’ll never meet them. In turn, an employer may not realize what you have accomplished if you don’t tell them. Remember your supervisor will be your most important future work reference.
• Supervisors will encourage and expect you to ask questions. Asking questions will ease your transition into the organization’s culture and structure and will also help to develop your understanding of the job responsibilities. Be respectful of the time of others and ask if they have time to answer your question or if they prefer to meet later.

Seek out additional responsibilities and maintain a positive attitude.
• In most organizations a strong work ethic and positive attitude will be recognized and rewarded.
• Look for opportunities for personal and professional development.
• When presenting a problem to a supervisor or co-worker, always try to present a solution as well.

Seek out a mentor.
• Your mentor may be your supervisor or another employee. Share with your mentor what you’ve learned, what you would like to learn, your career goals, your mistakes and your successes. Seek career advice and feedback on your professional development.

Be loyal.
• You are a public relations ambassador for both your organization and your university.

Enjoy your experience. Let us know if you have questions or concerns.

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