

6 Ways to Make Your Internship Successful

1. **Make the most of your internship**

Observe, take notes, ask questions, and write reflections throughout your experiences to process the learning.

Create and write learning objectives for yourself, even if they are not required.

2. **Make a good first impression**

If unsure of the dress code, dress business formal (see the Interview Attire section) until you know the expectations. Ask yourself what message your appearance is communicating.

Master your handshake and avoid using slang and language that is too casual.

3. **Learn workplace culture, email etiquette, and ethical behavior**

Complete your work without complaining.

Emails should communicate your thoughts and feelings formally, accurately and professionally.

Be a positive and supportive team member.

Be careful with work relationships and office romance – go no further than friendships and decide ahead of time if you want coworkers on your social media (you definitely want to connect with them on LinkedIn).

4. **Develop a relationship with your supervisor**

It's okay to ask for a written work description, resources/tools for information, organization policies, professional development opportunities and feedback.

Learn from your supervisor by observing their relationships with subordinates and supervisors, their agenda or priorities, expectations of you, office politics, and communication habits.

The better you understand your work supervisor, the better you will be able to work with him/her and help your supervisor effectively accomplish company goals.

5. **Network**

Practice informal networking with coworkers. Ask a question or two such as what they like and dislike about their job, how it compares to colleagues in other organizations and what their daily responsibilities are.

Keep in touch with the contacts you make at your internship by sharing updates at least once each semester.

6. **Make your transition to career smooth**

Ask colleagues and supervisors to provide recommendations for future jobs. Ask permission before using their contact information in your references. Continue to update your resume, LinkedIn profile, and portfolio (if applicable) to include your most recent internship, highlighting your accomplishments. Know that internships are one long job interview, *61.9 percent of 2015 graduates eligible for employment accepted an offer for a full-time position with their internship company.

*NACE 2016 Internship Survey