



## Prepare for Your Internship

*Once you have secured an internship position, begin preparing for your new opportunity*

Having a clear outlook before starting your internship will increase your success and minimize stress. Now is a great time to begin brainstorming potential projects you want to engage in and skills you desire to build. Visualize what you would like to do after you're done with school. Ask yourself these questions:

- What experience and skills do I need to improve or develop in order to be successful in my chosen career?
- How can I apply what I am learning in class to my internship experience?
- What are some common duties and responsibilities related to my career that I can do during my internship?
- Where would I like to get my foot in the door, to expand my network for future career options? Other than my supervisor, who else can I network with?

Always keep in mind your overall career and life goals; this will help to guide your plan.

### **REQUIRED PAPERWORK?**

Be sure to connect with your internship supervisor to determine if any HR, security, personnel, training, background clearance, etc, paperwork is required before your start day. If you have to complete a formal hiring/selection process, don't forget to bring identification documents.

### **DISCUSS SCHEDULING**

Before your start date, ensure you know when you are expected to arrive and when you are scheduled to leave. If you have to sign in and out to record your time, make sure you have that information before your first day. Also, create a schedule reflective of your weekly hours, and the duration of your internship.

### **LEARN THE INDUSTRY**

Research the company more. Find out what recommendations or feedback you can offer to strengthen your value to your supervisor. Be graceful and professional about how you deliver this information to your supervisor. What you recommend could potentially be a self-initiated project. Be ready to utilize your skills to execute the project.

### **SUGGESTED ACTIONS:**

- Meet with your internship supervisor at least once before your start date to discuss what you should be prepared for upon arrival for your first day (dress code, parking, hours, door passes/codes, etc.)
- Request a copy of your position description to prepare yourself for the work ahead of you.
- (Required) Brainstorm learning objectives/activities for your internship experience, further develop with your supervisor. Once both parties agree on learning outcomes, finalize document.
- Request an agenda for your first day/week to get you acclimated to your new work and environment.
- Review and familiarize yourself with the company/organization webpage.
- Take a personality or interest assessment to equip you with self-knowledge. Make an appointment with a Career Advisor in Clark College Career Services by calling 360.992.2902.
- If you need professional clothes, check in with Career Services for Clothing Closet event dates.



## Actively Participate in Your Internship

### FOCUS ON LEARNING

- Keep an open mind - explore all options and experiences presented to you.
- Look for the learning opportunities in every task.
- Participate in challenging assignments if possible.
- Take notes when being shown things you need to remember.
- Use it as a time to learn what you want to do for your future career.
- Keep track of your hours using a Log of Hours

### TAKE INITIATIVE

- Always be busy. Always ask if there is more/anything to do.
- Always take initiative and go above/beyond the job expectations.
- Actively seek out feedback and direction from your mentor or supervisor.
- Make the necessary push to stand out amongst your peers; this is the most effective way to get noticed and hired on directly by the company.

### FULLY ENGAGE

- Make sure you have a work plan and specific goals so you can stay focused and add value.
- Be passionate and excited about the opportunity. Disengagement can result in negative experiences for everyone.
- Give it your all for the full extent of the internship. Even if you realize part way through that you're not interested in doing this as a career, still show up and do everything you can to impress. The relationships you build with coworkers and supervisor during your internship can be used to help when you DO find something you love.

### ASK QUESTIONS

- Take every opportunity to ask questions!
- Ask questions when you don't understand something.
- Asking questions means you are eager to learn and that is what we like to see out of our interns.

### SEE THE BIG PICTURE

- Realize that an internship for most companies is an extended interview. While you're not necessarily monitored every second of every day, people are watching and making note of both the positive and potentially negative aspects interns' time.
- Treat the position as a job – it's a great time to show your skills and value, often resulting in much more significant roles and responsibilities being offered to you. This will result in a more productive, interesting, and rewarding experience, and will increase your odds of getting a full time job offer.

### BE PROFESSIONAL

- If you are applying for a professional organization then you must be professional at all times.
- Professionalism and punctuality are important regardless of company or discipline.
- Demonstrate your commitment to your work ethic.

Adapted from the University of Washington

## Develop Career Readiness Competencies

Employers expect Clark College graduates to be *career ready* - meaning students know how to leverage their *knowledge, skills and abilities* in the job search process and on the job.



**Critical Thinking/Problem Solving:** Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.



**Oral/Written Communications:** Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.



**Teamwork/Collaboration:** Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict.



**Digital Technology:** Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.



**Leadership:** Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.



**Professionalism/Work Ethic:** Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from their mistakes.



**Career Management:** Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.



**Global/Intercultural Fluency:** Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences.

Adapted from NACE: National Association of Colleges and Employers



## WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAM

Career Services, PUB 002 | 360.992.2391 | [Internships@clark.edu](mailto:Internships@clark.edu)

### Conclude Your Internship

#### SUBMIT YOUR DOCUMENTS

- Submit your Co-op Log of Hours
- Submit your Co-op Employer Evaluation
- Submit your Co-op Student Evaluation
- Submit your Co-op Academic Assignment(s)

#### FINISH WHAT YOU STARTED

- Wrap up your projects/tasks/duties before your last day of work.
- Provide a report of your completed projects and recommendations for next steps.
- Share completed work with your supervisor and record work in a shared databases for future access.

#### UPDATE YOUR MARKETING TOOLS

- Since you have successfully completed your internship, and have hopefully gained new skills and experience. Add your new experience and skills to your resume, LinkedIn profile and cover letter.
- If you need support in updating/revising your resume, visit Career Services in PUB002 or call 360.992.2902 to make an appointment.

#### EXPRESS YOUR APPRECIATION

- Write a thank you card. A thank you card can help you make a lasting impression and be more memorable. (other forms of communication may be: email, letter, social media post – tag company)
  - Address card to your supervisor, and even to others who were influential during your internship experience.
  - Detail your major projects, the work you successfully completed, the impacts you made during your internship.
  - Express gratitude for being afforded a work-based learning experience.
  - Share with your supervisor the skills you've cultivated
  - Share what you enjoyed most about your time, their supervision, and the working environment.

#### STAY CONNECTED

- Some interns are offered positions after their internship. Supervisors are investing time, energy and sometimes funds into your experience, some may want to see a return on that investment. Some students are being groomed for part-time, seasonal or full time positions. Stay connect with your supervisor if you are interested in working there in the future.
- Once your resume and cover letter is updated, provide a copy to your supervisor before you end your internship. They could consider you for employment, or pass your materials along to someone they know who is hiring.
- Request to connect with your supervisor and colleagues on LinkedIn
- Request mentorship
- Ask for a letter of recommendation
- Ask if supervisor would serve as professional reference for future employment