



How to make the most of your internship

If you have the good fortune to land an internship, it's your responsibility to make the most of the opportunity and position yourself for future success. With a little preparation, you can do just that. Here are 5 tips to help you have a great internship.

1. Keep a journal

- When someone asks you, "What did you do at your internship?", you want to be prepared with a solid answer. Over the course of your internship, which can last over 10 weeks, it's easy to forget your major tasks and accomplishments. So, keep a journal and record all relevant details of projects and assignments. You should write in the journal at least once a week to keep details fresh in your mind. If possible, set aside time every Friday afternoon to keep your journal up to date.
- These notes will be vital when updating your resume and answering interview questions for your next internship or your first full-time job.

2. Network as much as possible

- Treat your internship experience as an opportunity to build your network and learn how to talk with professionals. When possible, go to lunch with colleagues, your manager, and potential mentors.
- Many companies will host networking events for their interns. Make a point to attend these to sharpen your conversational skills. If possible, obtain and review a list of attendees ahead of time to prepare appropriate questions.

3. If you're not busy, ask for work

- A common complaint among interns is they didn't feel they were busy enough during their work term. If you find yourself in this situation, don't expect your manager to be a mind-reader!
- If you don't feel sufficiently challenged, make the time to ask your supervisor for more work. Of course, you must demonstrate that you're keeping up with your current workload before asking for more!

4. Don't panic if you don't love the work

- Occasionally, interns will find that their summer assignment, and, consequently, their college major, aren't what they expected. If you find yourself in that situation, do not panic!
- Use the internship as a learning experience. Take the time to understand why you don't enjoy the work as much as you thought. Meet with trusted mentors who can help you deepen your understanding of the situation. Explore alternative career paths in your major. Perhaps this internship isn't representative of the work you can and will do after college.



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Don't panic if you don't love the work, *continued*

- Some college students find that it's best to change majors or add a minor if their field of study simply isn't a fit. If that describes you, meet with your college's academic advisor as soon as possible to make a plan in order to (hopefully) graduate on time.
- Bottom line: an internship is always a learning experience.

5. Act like you've been there before

- An intern can make a statement simply by acting professionally. Here are a few tips that will help significantly:
 - *Dress the part*: follow your company's dress code, of course, and wear clothes that are professional and make a statement. Wear clothes that fit you well and project an image of professionalism at all times.
 - *Bring a notebook or laptop to all meetings*: always take notes during a meeting to track key decisions and your action items.
 - *Show up 2 to 3 minutes early for meetings*: people will notice you for all the wrong reasons if you're late. Give yourself a couple minutes of cushion and arrive early.
 - *If someone gives you an extra assignment, always say yes*: if someone trusts you enough to give you extra work, do everything in your power to validate his or her trust. Take the assignment and watch your reputation rise.

If you would like to learn more about how to increase your chances of landing your dream job or hiring game-changing talent into your organization, contact us at clarkharvey@arrowheadtalentsolutions.com or 330.316.0867.



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