



## **Guide to a Successful Internship**

Congratulations on earning an internship! Bottom Line is excited to see you continue to develop your skills and gain valuable perspective through your internship experience. Did you know?

- 66% of college grads struggle to launch their careers most often due to lack of direction, applied experience and soft skills that match employer needs
- 73% of employers surveyed believe students would be increasingly prepared for careers after college if required to participate in a significant applied learning project
- 85% of all jobs are filled via networking underscoring the importance of building your network to land jobs

Developing career related experiences while you are in college is a very smart investment in your future employability. There are numerous ways an internship can help you prepare for success after college.

### **What Can I Get out of an Internship?**

- Gain clarity into what you may want to do and not do in the future
- Develop career relevant skills from hands-on experience. These will be valuable additions to your resume. When it comes time to search for a job post-graduation, employers want to see that you have applicable experience
- Build your network of professionals who can serve as valuable resources to you as you explore your interests and later may want to have them serve as references for you in your job search post-graduation
- Consideration for future employment: an internship can lead to a full time job opportunity post-graduation
- Build confidence: More familiarity and experience results in increased confidence to take on new challenges

This guide is intended to serve as a reference to support your success while on internship. We recommend that you take time to review it and keep it close at hand as it will likely answer many questions you have during your internship experience.

As always, we encourage you to ask questions, communicate, and utilize your resources at and beyond Bottom Line.

**We are rooting for you and you will always have our support.**

Sincerely,

*Bottom Line*

## Table of Contents

---

What is an Internship?.....	Page 4
<b>Keys for Success on Internship</b>	
Be Accountable .....	Page 4
Approach All Tasks with a Positive and Eager Mindset .....	Page 4
Follow Common Workplace Expectations .....	Page 4
Network.....	Page 5
Build a Relationship with your Supervisor.....	Page 6
Guidelines for Giving and Receiving Feedback .....	Page 7
Set up Strong Organizational Systems .....	Page 8
Manage Up .....	Page 8
Take Initiative .....	Page 9
Email Communication Best Practices .....	Page 10
Common Problems and Solutions on Internship .....	Page 12
<b>Managing your Career</b>	
Internship Key Ingredients for Success – Reflection Guide .....	Page 16
8 Key Skills to Get Hired and Associated Reflection .....	Page 18
Develop the Skills Employers Are Looking For .....	Page 19
Work and Management Style Reflection.....	Page 22
Supervisor Evaluation Form.....	Page 25
Internship Checklists for Midway and End of Internship Reflection.....	Page 27
Experiences to Date Reflection.....	Page 29

## **What is an Internship?**

Internships provide real world experience to those looking to explore or gain the relevant knowledge and skills required to enter into a particular career field. Internships are relatively short-term in nature with the primary focus of getting some on-the-job training and taking what's learned in the classroom and applying it to the real world. Interns generally have a supervisor who assigns specific tasks and evaluates the intern's overall work. Internships are an excellent way to begin building important connections that are invaluable in developing and maintaining a strong professional network in the future.

## **Keys for Success on Internship**

Bottom Line has outlined key attributes, behaviors and practices that can help set you up for success on an internship. You may notice that coworkers don't always role model these behaviors- that is not a reason to lower the bar for yourself! Keep in mind that as an intern you don't yet have the proven track record of others and it never hurts to do more to stand out in a professional manner versus less.

### **1) Be accountable**

- Arrive to work on time. On time means a few minutes early so you can settle in and actually begin working at the beginning of your shift. On rare occasions, unexpected challenges may occur that make this difficult. Life happens. If this is the case, communicate with your supervisor early. Don't wait until you're already late. See *Common Internship Problems and Solutions* for sample language.
- Adhere to the agreed upon break schedule
- Complete tasks by their deadline. If it's your first time tackling a task, try to build in buffer time in case it takes you longer than you anticipate and/or questions come up that require reaching out for help in which case the timeline could risk getting extended.
- Communicate (well in advance) if you anticipate challenges in meeting deadlines
- Follow up on things you've committed to (e.g. attending a scheduled meeting, sharing notes after a meeting, etc.)

### **2) Approach all tasks with a positive and eager mindset**

- As an intern, you may have to do some tasks that you find less exciting, like making photocopies or entering lots of data. It is important to complete all work assignments with the same level of enthusiasm and professionalism. Consider, what is the message you're conveying to those around you if you approach a task with disinterest vs. interest? What might it say about you to have a positive attitude about even the mundane tasks you're assigned?
- When you are invited to something- go! When you are in a meeting, look interested and take notes.
- Don't engage in negative talk with others even if they've instigated it (avoid talk about coworkers, how annoying a task or customer is, etc.)

### **3) Follow common workplace expectations**

- Be aware of dress code norms (if anything consider dressing more professionally than those around you than more casually). Reflect on the reputation/brand/way you want individuals to think about you when someone says your name. What images/feelings do you want to come to mind? How can your attire choice support that image?
- Understand and follow norms for when/where to take lunch
- Clarify expectations regarding use of headphones. Sometimes this is common in office settings if you need to tune out background noise and really focus but there are appropriate ways to do this (e.g. music shouldn't be audible to others, no one needs to hear you singing, discrete earbuds vs your large beat headphones are better used.) In general, if you can go without headphones, that makes you more approachable and more likely to engage in conversation with others or overhear conversation that can contribute to your learning
- Observe and understand how coworkers communicate with one another. Some offices use an instant messaging software (Skype, Slack, etc.) to ask each other quick questions, others stop by each other's desk for questions or wait until you have a scheduled weekly meeting. When in doubt, don't hesitate to ask a question – when doing so, it's always recommended to begin with "do you have a minute for a quick question?" This gives the person the opportunity to let you know they may need a few minutes if they are in the middle of something that requires concentration.
- When in doubt about an office policy, ask!
- An internship is like a 3 month interview- you have the opportunity to potentially earn a job there in the future (or earn a reference somewhere else you decide may be a better fit). Either way, it is in your best interest to stand out. Don't wear jeans, use unprofessional language, talk about going out to the club, or take a longer lunch just because you notice some employees do that. When you are new, it takes time to build credibility and prove yourself - it's best to treat every day like it's an interview.

### **4) Network**

- Shake hands and introduce yourself to everyone you can! Be open with your teammates, listen, and ask questions about their responsibilities, career paths, connection to their department/company's mission, etc.
- Try to get to know everyone on the team over the time of your internship and learn about what they do. You never know when someone else in the company is doing something that might interest you later down the line. You may not want to work for this company after your internship, but you will definitely want to get a recommendation from them. The better job you do and the more familiar your supervisor and other employees are with your personality and your work, the stronger the recommendation.

## 5) Build a relationship with your supervisor

- Set clear expectations: understand their vision for success and how you can be most helpful
  - Communication: understand their communication style and preferences, how to communicate if ever late or absent, who/how best to approach when have questions, frequency of check in meetings
  - If your supervisor doesn't set a meeting with you, ask for time to meet. See *Common Internship Problems and Solutions* for sample language.
  - Ask for feedback from your supervisor to make sure you are on the right track
  - Understand your own goals for your internship and what you would like to learn. Share these with your supervisor and ask if there are opportunities to get involved in these areas
- 
- **Sample questions to ask your supervisor during one of your first meetings:**
    - **Logistical Expectations:**
      - What time would you like me to arrive daily?
      - How do people on your team typically schedule lunch and breaks? Is there a specific time I should eat or go on break?
      - What is the dress code?
      - Are there other office norms I should be aware of?
    - **Communication Norms:**
      - Do you have a preferred mode of communication if I have questions or updates (phone, email, text and/or in-person)?
      - If you are off-site or busy, is there another person with whom I should check in if I have questions?
      - Could we schedule a weekly or bi-weekly 1-to-1 where I could seek feedback from you and discuss the work I'm doing?
    - **Job Details:**
      - What does success in this role look like?
      - What do you envision as my main responsibilities on the internship?
      - What do you think a typical day will look like for me?
      - How would you describe the culture of the team? Company?
    - **Other Questions:**
      - Are there other people who you'd suggest I speak with to gain a better understanding of my role on our team?
      - Are there specific skills/technologies that I could practice to better improve my role?
      - Are there resources I can review to help build my skills in these core areas?

▪ **Guidelines for Giving and Receiving Feedback:**

- **When giving feedback**

- Be balanced – share a strength and an area for growth.
- Be specific – give an example of a time that someone demonstrated that particular strength and growth area. What was the situation/context, what behaviors did you observe, and what was the impact of the action(s)?

**Situation-Behaviour-Impact (SBI)**

Situation	Behaviour	Impact
<i>Describe the situation where the observed behaviour occurred. The more specific about the where and when, the better</i>	<i>Describe the behaviour you saw take place; if it helps think of describing it as playing back a video</i>	<i>Share with the person the impact of the behaviour on you and/or others; explain your internal experience to the person</i>



- Avoid the use of “but” or “however” when transitioning from a strength to a growth area- this takes away from the strength. Instead use and.
- An example of feedback I may give to my manager: “I really appreciate how accessible and responsive you have been to me on my internship. Whenever I send an email to you with a question, I always get a response the same day and that shows me that you are committed to ensuring I have what I need to get my work done. As a growth area, I’d appreciate it if we could have more regular feedback conversations. I am about half way through the internship and not sure how you perceive my work to be. It would be helpful for me to schedule some time so that you can share your perspective on things that may be going well and areas I may have to improve.”

- **When receiving feedback**

- Listen, take notes.
- Be receptive, not defensive. It’s normal to have a variety of feelings when receiving positive and constructive feedback. What you choose to do next when you receive feedback is the key. Through feedback, we are presented with choices we did not previously have. You can decide to:
  - Accept the feedback as valid, and act on it.
  - Accept the feedback as valid, and choose not to act on it.
  - Accept the feedback as invalid, and do nothing with it
  - Accept the feedback without judgement, and find out more.

Say thank you after someone gives your feedback. If you don't understand the feedback, it's okay to ask clarifying questions but refrain from sounding defensive. Sometimes it's best to say thank you, take time to think about it and later follow up if that's needed.

- Use it for your growth: refer back to notes on the feedback you receive and look for specific actions you can take to both build on your strengths and gain further practice in your growth areas.

## **6) Set up strong organizational systems**

- Get familiar with the email/phone/other communication system used at the office and make sure you are checking it regularly. Standard practice in most businesses is to respond to email within 24-48 hours.
- Make sure to check and keep your calendar up to date (most companies use Outlook). It's good practice to check your calendar at the start and end of each day to both know where you need to be when and to prepare for meetings, events and deadlines you may have coming up.
- Email flagging and folder tool: Outlook has some helpful organizational tools to help you keep your email organized. This includes folders to file old emails away that you don't need to reply to but want to keep for reference and a flagging function to keep track of emails you still need to respond to. YouTube and the internet have lots of resources to teach you how to use these tools- this could be an appropriate thing to look into if you ever have downtime on internship (as long as you've asked your manager and they've approved it)
- Take notes during all meetings and keep to-do lists of tasks and deadlines.
- Learn about data storage processes—if your organization keeps files in central locations, take note and observe and maintain records in accordance with policy.
- Use a notebook to take notes AND follow up and reference those notes. This shows you are eager to learn.
- Keep up to date to do lists of tasks and deadlines
- Keep your work space neat so that your work is organized and out of the way when you are not around.

## **7) Manage up**

- Bring agendas to your meetings with your manager. A sample agenda might look something like this:

*1:1 - Name & Name*

*Date*

*Topics for this week*

*[can be added by either employee or manager]*

- *topic 1*
- *topic 2*
- *etc.*

*Project Status & Administrative Updates*

- *project status 1*
- *project status 2*
- *etc.*

*Questions*

- *if applicable*

*Action Items*

- *track any actions identified*

- Send updates to your manager when you've finished projects or to inform them of your status
- If you anticipate challenges completing a certain task/meeting a deadline, communicate in advance of the deadline
- Communicate when you have downtime
- Be proactive- if you anticipate downtime could come up again in the future, ask for examples of things you could be doing during this downtime
- Start a list of all of the projects you have worked on so that you can discuss your progress with your supervisor. It will also help you remember everything you've worked on to update your resume, add to a portfolio, or talk about in a future interview. Ask if you can keep examples of projects you have worked on for a portfolio. Remember that some of this information will be confidential, so always get approval before taking any copies of work with you.

## **8) Take Initiative**

- Ask for resources/reading materials (company's intranet, employee handbook, team goals, etc.) that will help you better understand the company and your team's culture and goals. This will also help with any downtime you may experience.
- Document what you are learning- this will reinforce your learning and could end up serving as a handbook/resource guide for a future intern.
- Observe something that could potentially be done more efficiently and have an idea of a way to address it? Share the idea with your supervisor and see if that is something they would like help with.
- When you notice a colleague very busy or stressed out and you have time in the day, offer to help (as long as your manager has approved this as okay!)

- If you have any free time in the day and/or you can plan in advance, arrange to shadow a colleague to learn about a new task.
- When you don't know how to do something, Google it or look it up in any available reference guides, etc. If you are stuck after referencing your notes and trying, ask your supervisor, a coworker, HR, or other relevant resource!
- Make good use of your downtime. Ask your supervisor for example things you can do or work on if there is downtime. If they don't have ideas, you could identify and suggest some to offer for their approval. Examples include:
  - Create a handbook/resource guide using your notes for a future intern
  - Offer to help a colleague
  - Do internet research on a topic related to a skill you are building on internship
  - Do internet research to learn more about Outlook (if that's what you use on internship) and learn about some of the helpful email organization and calendaring features

## 9) Email communication best practices

- Email is the most commonly used form of communication in most offices and there is a widely used protocol for how effective emails are written. You may learn that your office is more informal and doesn't follow all of these norms but it never hurts to be more rather than less professional. Here are some guidelines to keep in mind when writing emails:
  - Subject line: summarizes purpose of email (e.g. notes from 6/25 meeting, agenda for tomorrow's check-in)
  - Greeting: address the person by name (first name is fine) and start off with a greeting like "Hi" or "Hello". If you have not met them in person, start off with an intro of who you are and how you are connected
  - Body of email:
    - Be brief: get to the point quickly. If the content requires back and forth conversation, you're better off requesting a meeting in the email than trying to engage in back and forth dialogue
    - Be complete: write emails in formal Business English (the use of English vocabulary and skills needed to communicate within a global business environment) - avoid incomplete sentences, abbreviations and emojis
    - Be smart: spellcheck and proof-read your emails before sending
    - Be aware of tone: ask yourself "is this appropriate? Could this be misinterpreted or misunderstood?" Email is not the place to share difficult feedback or something that someone could take personally or interpret as defensive on your part. Curious to learn more? Check out [Why Email Starts Fights](#)
  - Format: Format like a letter:

Hi Santiago,

It was a pleasure meeting you today during the networking event. I am very interested in learning about your role as a program designer and wanted to see if you'd be available and willing to meet for 30 minutes in the next couple of weeks to share more about your career path and experiences. If so, please let me know what dates/times would be most convenient for you and I can work around your schedule.  
Thanks in advance or considering.

Have a great day,

Mariela

- Avoid all caps and multiple exclamation points. This can be interpreted as shouting or overly excited
- Use bold and underlining sparingly, it's appropriate to highlight a deadline or key date- but using too much of it can feel aggressive
- Use bullet points and/or spaces in between paragraphs to help get your point across
- Closing
  - Use a professional and neutral closing (Thank you, Best, Have a nice day, Be well, Take Care). Be aware of how email communication with religious, political, etc. undertones may be perceived by others who hold different identities. For example, consider how closings with religious undertones, e.g. "Have a blessed day" may be perceived by an individual who identifies as secular.
  - Use a professional signature which includes your contact information (office address, phone number) – when you start at your company you will see what others use for their signatures and can copy and paste that as a starting point and modify to include your unique information. For instructions on how to insert a signature in Outlook, support.office.com and YouTube have step by step instructions, see [here](#)
- Other tips
  - In person relationship building comes first
  - Details matter- always proofread, avoid slang and abbreviations (ttyl) it's not a text message
  - Beware of over forwarding: avoid letting forwarded chains get out of hand- don't make the reader read a chain of 10 emails to get what they need. Start a new email and highlight the key point.
  - Always double check who you are sending to- beware of "reply all". When someone sends an email to the whole office to let you know there is free food in the kitchen and you want to send a thank you, reply just to the sender rather than clogging everyone's inboxes with messages not intended for them.

- Emails are forever- there is no such thing as confidential – don't write anything you wouldn't want your boss or the CEO to read
- Aim to respond to emails within 24 hours- if you don't have the answer, an acknowledgement that you received the email and will get back to the individual demonstrates accountability
- Some common acronyms used related to email include:
  - CC: stands for carbon copy – it means to include them in the “cc” line of the email which is often keeping them in the loop on something that may not be directly addressed for them but it's helpful for them to be aware.
  - BCC: Blind carbon copy. This has the same function as cc but the recipient can't see who was b-cced. This is common when someone was initially included on an email but is being dropped from the chain because they no longer need to be part of the back and forth but you want them to know that. This is very common when someone writes an email to connect two people for the first time. One of the people receiving the introduction would then write back and say something like “Thank you for the introduction, Melissa. I am moving you to bcc to spare you of the back and forth scheduling.”
  - OOO: stands for out of office and is a common acronym
  - EOD: end of day – people often use this to indicate deadlines
  - COB: close of business- this is also used to indicate deadlines and refers to the time your office closes for the day
  - FYI: for your information. This is commonly used when someone is passing something along that doesn't necessarily require a response but is being shared to keep you informed.
  - WFH: work from home. Some offices have work from home policies and you may see this acronym in an email or on a calendar to indicate the person is working from home.
- More info: check out this article: [Seven Email Blunders You Never Want to Make](#)

### **Common Internship Problems and Solutions**

**Problem: You are bored.**

**Solution:** Ask for new projects! If you notice a need or an area that could use some work, offer to work on it. For example, say your boss has mentioned multiple times that he/she/they never has any time to read industry journals. Offer to read them and write brief summaries for him. If you show initiative and help solve problems, you'll stand out and gain even better experience for your future.

**Problem: You find yourself in conflict with someone at your internship.**

Solution: Maintain positive, solutions-oriented communication. Differences of opinion, personality clashes, and cross-cultural misunderstandings are a fact of life. Learning how to deal with a coworker who might be making you grind your teeth will serve you throughout your career. Even if you sense competition or negativity, stay calm. Will yourself to be open-minded, drama free, and easy to work with.

It's also important to remember that while diversity of thought and differences of opinion can be difficult, it can also lead to innovative solutions. Approach conversations with a sense of curiosity, "I wonder why this is the approach they're taking..." "I wonder if there's some information they have that I don't." Ultimately, your goal throughout this internship is to be remembered as the intern everyone enjoyed working with because of their great attitude, not as the intern that didn't get along with any of the staff.

**Problem: You don't understand something or you are overwhelmed.**

Solution: Don't be afraid to ask questions. Remember, your internship is a learning experience. You are not expected to know everything. However, you are expected to seek out help if you need it. Waiting until five minutes before a deadline to sort out problems is waiting way too long. You might say something like, "Hi [Supervisor's Name]. Do you have a moment? I'm having a problem with [project topic];" If they say yes: "I've completed these steps and still seem to be receiving an error. I've tried X, Y, and Z, but none of them seem to work. Do you have any experience with this, or know of someone else who might know?"

**Problem: You don't know how you're doing. OR You don't have an established check in with your supervisor.**

Solution: Ask for feedback from your supervisor, but don't expect feedback every day. Use a phrase like this one to request this check-in: "Do you have a few minutes this week? I'd like to check in with you and make sure I'm meeting your expectations during my internship." Once you are in the meeting, your supervisor might say everything is fine and want to leave it at that. Nobody is perfect and everyone can improve in some way. So ask, "I'm glad to know that I'm doing okay. What are a couple things I could be working on so that I'm doing an even better job?" Take careful note of what these are and strive to improve. On the other hand, your supervisor might tell you straight up what needs improving. If he says some things he'd like you to work on, thank him. His comments may sting, but constructive criticism is information that may prove useful. If you take it to heart, it will likely make you a better worker in the long term. To ask for regular check-ins, say something like, "This was very helpful feedback. I appreciate your time. Would it be possible to schedule a similar check-in next week or biweekly? I can put together a short agenda and email it to you." Then make sure to follow up on your action items.

**Problem: Your internship isn't what you thought it would be and the work isn't as relevant as you had hoped.**

Solution: Nothing is perfect, and some internships are less than ideal, but that doesn't mean you can't make the best of this opportunity. Try to stick it out to explore what the role entails, build your network, and reframe this experience as useful information to focus your search for next time. Don't be disheartened if you're not assigned big projects, responsibilities, or clients right away. Employees

need to prove themselves first, and that might include some administrative tasks or tedious data entry. Remember, work that may seem inconsequential to you likely matters somewhere in the work cycle of the company.

**Problem: Your internship makes you rethink your career path.**

Solution: Sometimes, the best thing you can learn from an internship is what you do NOT want to do. If your experience makes you question your career path or decide to take another direction, then it has been valuable.

**Problem: You're running late to work.**

Solution: Call ahead and be honest with your supervisor. Apologize and explain why you're going to be tardy by x number of minutes. Don't make up excuses or eccentric stories. Assure your boss it won't become a habit. "Hi [Supervisor's Name], I'm on the Green Line about 15 minutes away and it's being taken out of service. Depending on how long it takes for the new train to come in, I may be 10-15 minutes late to our check-in. I apologize for the delay, and I'll keep you updated as I learn more." Ensure coverage of a task if something needs to get done before you can get there and communicate to your supervisor that you've proactively taken care of it, "Sarah has agreed to start open the store at 9:00am."

**Problem: Your co-interns are competitive and you're feeling intimidated/a sense of imposterism.**

Solution: Sometimes competitive colleagues can push us to higher expectations of ourselves and our team, which can be a good thing! However, if you're feeling insecure about your work or a sense of imposterism, remember that these feelings are common across social and cultural identities: race, gender, ethnicity, age, ability, religion, socioeconomic status, and more. Check out this 4 minute [Ted Talk](#) that explains more about how to combat these thoughts. The video reminds us, "We may never be able to banish these feelings entirely, but we can have open conversations about academic or professional challenges. With increasing awareness of how common these experiences are, perhaps we can feel freer to be frank about our feelings and build confidence in some simple truths: you have talent, you are capable, and you belong."

**Problem: Your supervisor asks you to do something you're not comfortable with.**

Solution: First make sure you understand the request correctly by repeating it back to your supervisor. If the request is clear, investigate with questions and curiosity. "I'm not sure I grasp the reasoning behind xyx. Can you help me understand this approach?" If you've received additional information and are still uncomfortable with the request, you can articulate your concerns and offer an alternative solution. Trust your instincts – while it's important to push ourselves to learn by trying things, ultimately, it's up to you to decide what you're comfortable and uncomfortable with. If you'd like some support troubleshooting this issue, or any internship concerns, you can also always reach out to a Bottom Line staff member to think through how to navigate tricky work scenarios.

## **Managing Your Career- Tools for Reflection**

You are in the driver's seat when it comes to your career. Part of managing your career is consistent reflection to identify what you like, dislike, what you are strong at, where you have room to grow and what support you need to be most successful. This part of the internship guide provides some worksheets and templates to use as helpful reflection activities.

- Internship Key Ingredients for Success Reflection Guide
- 8 Key Skills to Get Hired and Associated Reflection
- Work and Management Reflection Guide to Inform a Conversation with your Manager
- Supervisor Evaluation Form: example template you could give your supervisor to request feedback if they don't have and are open to a more formal process
- Internship Checklists: reflection guide to assess your internship half way through and at the end
- Overall self-reflection: reflection guide to assess your overall strengths, growth areas and lessons learned

## Internship Key Ingredients for Success – Reflection Guide

After reviewing the keys for success on internship, take some time to reflect on these 4 questions as it relates to each tip.

<b>Keys for Success</b>	<b>Ways I have demonstrated this to date</b>	<b>Ways I can demonstrate this on a daily basis</b>	<b>What will help me do this?</b>	<b>What might be challenging?</b>
<b>Be Accountable</b>				
<b>Positive Mindset</b>				
<b>Follow Common Workplace Expectations</b>				
<b>Network</b>				

<b>Keys for Success</b>	<b>Ways I have demonstrated this to date</b>	<b>Ways I can demonstrate this on a daily basis</b>	<b>What will help me do this?</b>	<b>What might be challenging?</b>
<b>Supervisor Relationship</b>				
<b>Strong Org Systems</b>				
<b>Manage Up</b>				
<b>Take Initiative</b>				
<b>Email Communication Best Practices</b>				

## The 8 Key Skills to Get you Hired – Definitions & Ways to Practice

### Critical Thinking/Problem Solving

*Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions and overcome problems.*

- Develop an action plan with specific steps to solve a problem
- Brainstorm solutions to a problem before bringing it to a supervisor/professor
- Activate your mind – read, do puzzles, write, etc.)

### Oral/Written Communication

*Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to internal and external audiences.*

- Develop and deliver a presentation for class
- Teach someone something
- Help persuade someone to consider a perspective or approach
- Proofread written communications to avoid errors

### Teamwork/Collaboration

*Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions & viewpoints.*

- Collaborate with others on a class project where responsibility is shared and not divide
- Handle difficult conversations in person with respect
- Consider others' perspectives before making a decision

### Digital Technology

*Select and use appropriate technology to accomplish a given task.*

- Take a class, workshop or online tutorial to develop Excel skills, Photoshop, Web Design, etc.
- Put learned skill to use by creating something (i.e. analyze data using Excel, create a flyer for a student organization, etc.)

### Leadership

*Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others.*

- Take on a leadership role in a group or organization
- Demonstrate initiative at your job/internship by taking on additional responsibilities
- Act as a project lead in a class or volunteer project & practice motivating others with a positive attitude

### Professionalism & Work Ethic

*Demonstrate personal accountability, effective work habits and professional non-verbal communication.*

- Use a planner or calendar to prioritize work/assignments and meet deadlines
- Reflect on a recent challenge and identify areas of growth and improvement for the future
- Review your social media through the eyes of a future employer and determine appropriateness

### Global/Intercultural Fluency

*Value, respect and learn from others, demonstrate openness, inclusiveness and ability to interact respectfully with all people.*

- Attend an event on campus that encourages you to step outside your comfort zone
- Engage in conversation with people who have different perspectives than your own
- Volunteer or study abroad

### Career Management

*Identify and articulate one's skills and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth.*

- Practice articulating your skills and experiences in a mock interview
- Identify career interests and find experiences to help you confirm
- Identify areas you need to grow in and set goals to gain further practice in those areas

## Develop the Skills Employers Are Looking For

When employers are looking to hire recent graduates, they are not just looking for a certain major or GPA, and are typically looking for soft skills that you have developed outside of the classroom. In 2016, NACE (the

National Association of Colleges and Employers) surveyed employers to find out what skills they look for when hiring recent graduates and developed a list of 8 key skills that the majority of employers seek.

This activity is designed to help you explore some of these skills, think about how you already demonstrate them, and make a plan for how to improve them in order to be the strongest candidate possible when you apply to jobs! These skills don't include the technical skills or other qualifications that may be required as part of the job description.

We recommend you paste this into a google doc to continue adding to and revisiting this worksheet often (minimum once a year, ideally at the beginning of each semester) and continue to build on it as you develop more experiences throughout your college career.

**1) Critical Thinking/Problem Solving**

Definition	Why is this important to an employer?	On a scale of 1-10 (10 highest), how would you evaluate your skills in this area? Why?	What example(s) could you give if an employer asked about your skills in this area?	How could you develop stronger skills in this area?

**2) Oral/Written Communication**

Definition	Why is this important to an employer?	On a scale of 1-10 (10 highest), how would you evaluate your skills in this area? Why?	What example(s) could you give if an employer asked about your skills in this area?	How could you develop stronger skills in this area?

**3) Teamwork/Collaboration**

Definition	Why is this important to an employer?	On a scale of 1-10 (10 highest), how would you evaluate your skills in this area? Why?	What example(s) could you give if an employer asked about your skills in this area?	How could you develop stronger skills in this area?

--	--	--	--	--

**4) Digital Technology**

<b>Definition</b>	<b>Why is this important to an employer?</b>	<b>On a scale of 1-10 (10 highest), how would you evaluate your skills in this area? Why?</b>	<b>What example(s) could you give if an employer asked about your skills in this area?</b>	<b>How could you develop stronger skills in this area?</b>

**5) Leadership**

<b>Definition</b>	<b>Why is this important to an employer?</b>	<b>On a scale of 1-10 (10 highest), how would you evaluate your skills in this area? Why?</b>	<b>What example(s) could you give if an employer asked about your skills in this area?</b>	<b>How could you develop stronger skills in this area?</b>

**6) Professionalism & Work Ethic**

<b>Definition</b>	<b>Why is this important to an employer?</b>	<b>On a scale of 1-10 (10 highest), how would you evaluate your skills in this area? Why?</b>	<b>What example(s) could you give if an employer asked about your skills in this area?</b>	<b>How could you develop stronger skills in this area?</b>

--	--	--	--	--

**7) Global & Intercultural Fluency**

Definition	Why is this important to an employer?	On a scale of 1-10 (10 highest), how would you evaluate your skills in this area? Why?	What example(s) could you give if an employer asked about your skills in this area?	How could you develop stronger skills in this area?

**8) Career Management**

Definition	Why is this important to an employer?	On a scale of 1-10 (10 highest), how would you evaluate your skills in this area? Why?	What example(s) could you give if an employer asked about your skills in this area?	How could you develop stronger skills in this area?

**Work & Management Style Reflection Guide**

**Purpose:** This survey can serve as a starting point for developing an effective working relationship with your new manager.

**Instructions:** Take some time to respond honestly to the questions below. Please draw on any and all previous work experience to provide specific examples. This template is designed to encourage you to have an open conversation about your working style and preferences with your manager. Share the pieces you find most relevant with your manager at an upcoming check-in, or schedule a dedicated check-in to do so.





## **Supervisor Evaluation Form**

Please help me continue to improve my career readiness skills by offering me some feedback to help me learn and grow.

**Company/Organization:**

**Supervisor Name and Title:**

**Intern/Volunteer/Employee Name:**

**Dates of Service:**

**What do you perceive to be the student's greatest strengths?**

**How could this student improve to better qualify for a job in this field?**

**Additional Comments:**

Student's Performance	Score	Examples
-----------------------	-------	----------

<b>(1=Exceptional; 2=Above Average; 3=Satisfactory; 4=Needs Improvement; N/A=Non-Applicable)</b>		
<b>Demonstrates effective critical thinking and problem solving skills</b>		
<b>Demonstrates effective oral communication skills</b>		
<b>Demonstrates effective written communication skills</b>		
<b>Demonstrates ability to work well with others</b>		
<b>Demonstrates ability to learn and work with digital tools and technology</b>		
<b>Demonstrates ability to motivate and inspire others</b>		
<b>Completes assignments on time</b>		
<b>Takes initiative to help others and/or help find solutions to problems</b>		
<b>Arrives to work and meetings on time</b>		
<b>Displays professional body language</b>		
<b>Is receptive to feedback and is able to learn from mistakes</b>		
<b>Respects others and is able to build relationships with people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives</b>		
<b>Understands assignments/seeks clarification if needed</b>		

## **Internship Checklists**

### **REFLECTION CHECKLIST MIDWAY THROUGH MY INTERNSHIP**

OVERALL PERCEPTIONS

- I think my internship is going really well. Reasons and examples:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I think my internship is going okay. Reasons and examples:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I've encountered some difficulties with my internship that I'd like to find solutions for. They are:  
\_\_\_\_\_

SKILL ACQUISITION

- I am learning many new and useful skills. Examples:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I am not learning as much as I had hoped. Reasons and examples:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I am dissatisfied with how much I am learning. My plan for obtaining more substantive assignments is as follows:  
\_\_\_\_\_

EVALUATION OF MY PERFORMANCE

- I have spoken with my supervisor regarding my performance. Here's what they said:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I have not had a chance to check in with my supervisor regarding my performance. Reasons and plan:  
\_\_\_\_\_

NETWORKING

- I have connected with other managers and senior-level personnel in the organization in the following ways:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I have connected with colleagues and other interns in the following ways:  
\_\_\_\_\_

PERSONAL FIT

- Here is what I like about the working environment at my internship:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Here is what makes me uncomfortable about the working environment at my internship:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**REFLECTION CHECKLIST AT THE END OF MY INTERNSHIP**

MY SUPERVISOR'S REVIEW OF MY PERFORMANCE (IF APPLICABLE)

- I have had my final review with my supervisor. Key points of this conversation:  
\_\_\_\_\_

- My final review with my supervisor has not yet occurred. Here is what I think they will say:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I think my supervisor's review is/is not accurate because:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- My work with this supervisor has given me the following insights to keep in mind for my next internship or job:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I have asked for a recommendation from my supervisor.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I have not asked for a recommendation from my supervisor because:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**EFFECT OF INTERNSHIP ON GOALS AND CAREER PLANS**

- This internship has caused me to reconsider whether this is the right field for me. Reasons:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- This internship has made me interested in learning more about the following career possibilities:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- This internship has confirmed my plan to enter this field for my career. Reasons:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**NETWORKING**

- I made a good connection with my supervisor. I know this because:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I wish I had made a better connection with my supervisor. Reasons:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I will take the following steps to stay in touch with my supervisor:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I will take the following steps to stay in touch with my colleagues:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I will be sending handwritten thank-you notes to the following people at my internship:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Ways that I think I did a good job networking:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Networking skills that I need to continue to strengthen:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**FINAL THOUGHTS**

The most important things I learned from this internship:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Self-Awareness Supports Professional Growth**

Self-awareness is key in planning for and developing your career. Understanding your preferences and strengths helps you identify what types of jobs you will likely be most interested in and thrive in. Nobody is perfect – we all have areas to continue to learn and grow in. If we didn't, we'd be bored! It's important to continuously reflect, ask yourself and ask those you work with for feedback so that you can continue to develop throughout your career.

Additionally, continuously reflecting on things you like and don't in a job helps you get a clearer understanding of what type of role, environment, manager, etc. will make you happy.

**1) Think about one of your last jobs or internships and answer these questions:**

- How did you get the job?
  
- What came most naturally to you?
  
- What did you accomplish over the course of that job or internship?
  
- What was challenging for you? Why?
  
- What did you do to overcome these challenges?
  
- If you could change one thing about the company, what would it be?
  
- What is one thing that your manager did that you liked? Disliked?
  
- What, if anything, does this make you think will be important to you in your next job/internship?

**2) Think about all of the experiences you have had to date and reflect:**

- What are 2 of your greatest strengths and examples that demonstrate these skills in action?

- What are 2 of your greatest areas for growth?
  
- What are some ways you are working on developing in your areas for growth?
  
- What feedback have you received from past supervisors, professors, coaches, colleagues, etc?

Revisit the worksheet of skills employers look for and assess yourself against these 8 key competencies