

10 Tips to Make the Most of Your Internship Experience

- **Set Personal Goals.** Set realistic and attainable personal goals prior to starting the internship.
- **Have Regular Meetings With Your Supervisor.** Here you can share experiences and lessons learned -- both good and bad. Provide progress reports regarding work assignments.
- **Tackle All Tasks With Enthusiasm and a Positive Attitude.** Even if given less than glamorous work to do, complete all your work assignments with enthusiasm and professionalism. You might even consider working extra hours to show your work ethic to your site supervisor.
- **Avoid Negativity.** Avoid complaining, being rude, disrespecting co-workers, arriving late, leaving early, being closed-minded, missing deadlines, appearing arrogant, wearing improper attire, acting unprofessionally, appearing inflexible, and taking part in office politics. Remember that you are both a guest of the organization, and a representative of the University of Colorado Denver, and behave appropriately.
- **Learn About the Company/Industry.** Take every opportunity presented to you to attend company or industry meetings, conferences, and events. Participate in training workshops, and read relevant company materials.
- **Don't Be Afraid to Ask Questions.** Remember your internship is a learning experience. You are not expected to know everything. Seek advice and raise questions whenever you encounter something that is not familiar to you. Be open-minded about new ideas and procedures.
- **Take Initiative.** Bosses love employees who tackle tough problems and who think "outside the box" to find solutions. Remember to work with your supervisor so you don't overstep your authority -- and make sure you share successes with him/her.
- **Join the Professional Development Online Discussion Forum.** Connect with other UCD interns/co-ops and learn from each other's experiences. Discuss your workplace, the training and supervision you are receiving, professional interaction, questions, issues, etc. The Forum is moderated by Internship Advisors who will post weekly professional development questions to stimulate your thinking and encourage healthy discussion of the many issues related to experiential learning and professional development
- **Network, Network, Network.** Remember to network with people outside your department. One of the key tools of job-hunting is utilizing your network to find your next career step; whether another internship or a job upon graduation. Build professional relationships with your site supervisor, other managers and professionals in the organization.
- **Leave With Tangible Accomplishments.** The goal of any internship is to leave with tangible results for your resume and portfolio. Keep a journal to help you remember all the things you accomplished during your internship. Take pictures, keep copies of your work products (with permission), and ask for letters of recommendation.