Tips for Maximizing Your Summer Internship

Preparing for/Maximizing Your Internship
Learn as much as you can about the company/organization and industry in advance of your internship.
Career Services' advisors and your new employer can point you to specific resources to get up to speed:
• CCS “Learn About Careers” page: Wetfeet.com, Spotlight on Careers, Vault's Career Insider, etc.
• Company/Organization’s website: general info, annual reports, press releases
• Current news/events! Use LinkedIn to get to know your new colleagues and check out any newsfeeds that mention your new employer

Be prepared to talk about your own goals and career aspirations. Your supervisor will be more motivated and interested in helping you if you can be clear about your interests and goals. Be energetic and positive!
• Why did you pick this site (or this field) to intern?
• What have you done in the past that led you to choose this opportunity?
• What is your next step? What do you hope to gain from this internship?
• About what are you curious?

On-Site Success
You never get a second chance to make a first impression…or to leave a bad impression
• Attitude is key; be open-minded for new experiences and do your best work regardless of the assignment.
• Arrive early, don’t be the first to leave!
• Dress appropriately…throughout the summer (not just the first few days). Learn to iron.
• Accept invitations for social engagements if you can—build relationships with colleagues!
• Make it a habit to turn off (not mute) your cell phone on site…unless it is part of your job
• Do not use employer time to surf the internet or do personal email/social media, etc.
• Be mindful of your organization’s culture: How do employees communicate? What is valued? How casual (or not) is the environment? What do you notice about how different generations interact?
• Be polite and friendly to EVERYONE you meet!

Establish a professional working relationship with your supervisor and your colleagues
• Find time early on to speak with your supervisor to understand both of your work styles—how to best communicate work-related tasks, performance feedback, questions.
• Ask clarifying questions when clarity is needed—never assume.
• Understand your resources—who and what can you tap into to perform well?
• Address and work together to resolve dissonance - do not let issues fester
• Show initiative-ask for a greater role if you are not being challenged and you have completed your assigned tasks. You may have to propose the role.
• Set up mid-summer performance review to gain feedback on your work.
• Always leave the summer on a positive note; Write a thank you note!!
• Maintain relationships with your colleagues/supervisor even if you don’t need anything from them!

Take full advantage of the opportunity to expand your network
Understand that the value of networking extends beyond a person's ability to give you an internship—take time to speak with people (professionals, alumni, peers) even if the “gain” for you is not apparent.
• Connect with career advisors to learn how to identify or find contacts nearby
• Use the informational interviewing guide to formulate questions for professionals you meet.
• Explore all aspects of the organization; don’t be afraid to talk to people other than your supervisor to learn about different roles
• Follow up promptly with a thank you note after you have had conversations.

Most of all…Enjoy your summer experience!