INTERNSHIP GUIDE BOOK

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# Table of Contents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chapter 1 - “Laying the Groundwork”</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chapter 2 – “Framing the Experience: The Developmental Stages of an Internship”</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chapter 3 – “Understanding yourself as an Intern”</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Chapter 4 – “Ever Hear of This?”</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Internship Guide Book - Chapter 1

“Laying the Groundwork”

“Education is revelation that affects the individual".  
(Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, 1780)

“It gives meaning to everything you have learned and makes practical sense of something you’ve known as theoretical”.
(Student Reflection)

Welcome to your Internship

You are beginning what is, for most students, the most exciting experience of one’s education program. Chances are you have looked forward to this experience for a long time. You’ve probably heard your share of stories – both good and bad – from other, more experienced students. And while, as an intern, you may be part of a small minority on your campus, you join virtually thousands of other students all over the country.

Introduction

The internship is the culminating academic experience for many students; some programs have several internships, but for many students the internship occurs near the end of the academic program and can be a chance to pull together and apply much of what you have learned. Many students see the internship as a chance (finally) to learn to actually do something. Although you may have had courses that developed particular skills, the internship is a chance to improve those skills and acquire lots of new ones.

Skill Development, though, is only one of the possible goals and outcomes of your experience. An internship offers a chance to apply theory to practice. Actually, it is a chance to develop the relationship between theory and practice, for each should inform the other (Sgroi & Ryniker, 2002). The theories you have studied (and continue to study) should help you analyze and perform effectively in various situations. However, your experience will also help you see where the theories do not quite apply or where you need to search for a new theoretical model to help you. Thus, theories are transformed through their application.

The internship also affords you the opportunity to understand the world of work in a more complete way than you do now. Even if you have had full-time jobs, presumably your internship is taking you into an area in which you have little professional experience.

The internship is also a catalyst for personal growth. If you give yourself a chance, you can learn a tremendous amount about yourself. Finally, the internship can help you clarify your career and educational goals. In order to continue on a path of learning you need to understand the tools for it, which are as follows;
Tools for Learning

Reflection and Seminars:

To take advantage of these two big ideas and to maximize your learning during your internship, you need some basic tools. These tools may be somewhat different from the ones that have brought you success – or struggle – in other kinds of learning experiences. As an individual, you need to develop the skills and the habit of reflection. And as a member of seminar group, you need to learn to use that class to promote everyone’s learning and facilitate their journeys through the stages of internships.

Reflection

Reflection is a fundamental concept in experiential education. In order to turn your experience into learning you need to stop, recall events, analyze and process them. Dwight Giles, who has written extensively about service-learning and internships, makes a point about service-learning that we think applies to all the experiences covered in this guide (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Giles, 2002). He says that reflection is what connects and integrates the service, or the work in the field, to the learning. Otherwise, whatever theory you study can be emphasized in your classes but not necessarily integrated with practical experience. At the other extreme, practical experience is left to stand on its own. Reflection is the connection, and it is a powerful key to your success, your growth, your learning, and even your transformation. While this may sound daunting, you actually do it all the time. If you are walking back from class and find yourself mulling over the remarks of a professor, or wondering how a classmate came up with a particularly interesting comment, you are reflecting. If you are in the car and start to think over an argument you have had with your child, your partner, or a friend, trying to figure out what happened and how you could have handled it differently, you are reflecting. These examples, though, are instances of spontaneous reflection; we want you to make reflection a deliberate and regular habit. Reflection means to look back, and there will come a time when we ask you to look back on your experience as a whole, but for your internship the process should start at the beginning and be integral to the process (National Society for Experiential Education, 1998) developing the habit of productive reflection takes patience, practice, and discipline. It means setting aside quiet time to think, because as one of our students put it, “The best answers come from the silence within.” And it means resisting the temptation to just keep going from one activity to the other, in your internship and in your busy life; another intern said. “The internship proceeded at such a fast pace that I often felt it was one step ahead of me.” Paradoxically, we have found that one of the best ways to stop the internship from getting ahead of you is to make time to stop and think.

There are lots of techniques for reflection. We will discuss some specific ones but it is not a comprehensive list; you will need to find the one or ones that work best for you, your instructor, and your situation. Remember, too, that there is a difference between reflecting and recording, although the two can overlap. Your instructor, your placement site, or both, may have specific ways that they want you to keep a record of what you have done. These records may be used for documentation and be kept
in official files. They may be used in supervision as well. The primary purpose of reflection, though, is to promote your growth and learning, and the primary audience for a reflective technique is you. Eyler and Giles (1999) have offered the “Five Cs” of reflection that can guide you in selecting and assessing potential techniques. The Five Cs are Continuous, Connected, Challenging, Context, and Coaching. In keeping with these principles, you need to make reflection a habit; structure and connect that reflection to learning goals; and make sure you are challenged to reflect more deeply and through a wider range of lenses. You also need to work with your instructor to see that your choice of techniques makes sense for your particular context, and that you get the coaching and guidance you need to use any technique to your best advantage.

**Keeping a Journal**

“I believe that class work and journals are critical to internships because they allow support from peers, feedback from teachers, and reflection on your own work and feelings”.

(Student Reflection)

One of the most powerful tools for reflection that we know of is keeping a journal. Your instructor may require you to keep a journal of some kind, but even if it is not required in your setting, we strongly recommended that you keep one. We also suggest that you write an entry at the end of every day that you go to your internship. Although it may occasionally seem like a chore, if you put time into it, journal keeping will give you a way to see yourself growing and changing. It also forces you to take time on a regular basis to reflect on what you are doing. Many of the quotes you have seen and will continue to see throughout this guide are drawn from student journals. A well-kept journal is a gold mine to be drawn on for years to come. It becomes a portfolio of the experience as well as a record of the journey.

Again, perhaps the most important thing you can do for your journals is to allot sufficient time to do it. Doing it over lunch on the due date is not a good approach! For many of you it is going to take practice and focus to learn to write in your journals in the most effective and productive way. As you plan your days and weeks, leave at least 30 minutes at the end of each day at your internship to write.

If you have a disability that makes it possible or difficult for you to write, or if writing does not come easily to you, your journal could be tape-recorded instead. Your instructor can listen to the tape each week and respond to you on tape or in writing, whichever the two of you prefer. Of course, you will need to negotiate these arrangements with your instructor, but a little time and thought should yield a method that allows you to reflect comfortably on your experience and maintain a dialogue with your instructor.

For those of you who are doing your internship at a great distance from campus, or as part of a distance learning program, the journal is even more important. In addition to the benefits already mentioned, the journal and responses to it are a way for you and your campus instructor to have a continuing conversation about your work and your reactions to it. Advances in web-based technology such as
Blackboard and Web CT make it easy to send journal entries back and forth. If you do not have access to these technologies, e-mail can work just fine.

If you do decide to keep a journal, make sure you are very clear with your instructor, supervisor, and clients about the intent of the journal and issues of confidentiality. If your journal is for your personal use only then there is no issue. You have full responsibility for its content and for ensuring that what you write is for your eyes only. However, if you want, or are required, to show it to other interns, your instructor, your supervisor, or anyone else, you must be careful not to disclose information about clients, the placement, or even yourself that is supposed to be kept private. Discuss this issue with your instructor and your site supervisor before going too far with your journal. Some interns keep their journals in loose-leaf format and merely remove any pages they wish to keep private before showing the journal to anyone else.

There are many different approaches to journal writing, and many different reflective techniques. Your instructor may have forms and techniques that you are required to use, but we would like to discuss just a few of the more common forms here.

**Unstructured Journals**

The simplest form of journal writing is just to take time after each day to think back on what stood out for you that day. Although there is no “right” length for these entries, they should record what you did and saw that day, new ideas and concepts you were exposed to and how you can use them, and your personal thoughts and feelings about what is happening to you. It may be helpful to divide what you learn at an internship into four categories: (a) Knowledge, (b) Skills, (c) Personal Growth, and (d) Career Development.

**Knowledge** refers to things you know about; for example, you might learn the principles of behavior modification. **Skills** are things you know how to do; for example, you know how to set up a behavior management program. **Personal growth** refers to what you have learned about yourself and your attitudes, values, reaction patterns, and personality traits. **Career Development** refers to what you are learning about the field of human services, counseling, social work, criminal justice, or whatever profession you are considering, and your place in it. Try to include all these categories in your journal.

Many interns tell us they are afraid that there are going to be days when there is just nothing to say. Well, our experience is that you won't have that happen very often, but there may be some days when writing is difficult. For those days, here are some questions to consider, generated by a community service program (National Crime Prevention Council 1988).

**When you Don’t Know What to Write**

- What was the best thing that happened today at your site? How did it make you feel?
- What thing(s) did you like least today about your site?
- What compliments did you receive today and how did they make you feel?
What criticisms, if any, did you receive and how did you react to them?
How have you changed or grown since you began your work at this site? What have you learned about yourself and the people you work with?
What are some of the advantages or disadvantages of working at this occupation?
If you were in charge of the site, what changes would you make?
What do you think is your main contribution to the site?
How do the people you work with treat you? How does it make you feel?
What have you done this week that makes you proud?
Has this experience been a rewarding one for you? Why or why not?


Other Kinds of Journals Some other forms of journals that have been used with interns include these (Baird, 2002; Bringle & Hatcher, 1999; Inkster & Ross, 1998):

- **Key Phrase** journals are those in which you are asked to identify certain key terms or phrase as you see them in your daily experience.

- **Double Entry** journals are divided into two columns. In one column you record what is happening and your reaction to it. In the other you record any ideas and concepts from classes or readings that pertain to what you have seen and experienced.

- In **Critical Incident** journals you identify one incident that stands out over the course of a day, or a week, and write about it in some depth.

Processing Techniques

There are a number of processing techniques that you can use and that you may want to include in your journal. Some techniques are specific to a discipline, such as “verbatim” in pastoral counseling or “process recording” in social work. If you are not in one of these fields, you can use different ones at different times, or you can use one consistently depending on your preference or that of you instructor. There are merits to both choices. Switching techniques from time to time may let you see things you have been missing. On the other hand, using consistent techniques allows you to look back over several entries and look for patterns.

Three Column Processing

Gerald Weinstein (1981; Weinstein, Hardin, & Weinstein, 1975) developed a method of reflecting on events that may be helpful with your journal. Take a moment at the end of the week to recall any events that stand out in your mind. Select one to two (they can be positive or negative). Divide a piece of paper into three columns. In the left-hand column, record each action taken by you or others during the event.
The Integrative Processing Model

Pam Kiser has developed another reflective technique for interns called the Integrative Processing Model (Kiser, 1998, 2000), consisting of six steps:

1. **Gathering Objective Data from Concrete Experience** In this step you select an experience that you have seen or been part of. You can see a written, videotaped, or audio taped account of the experience.

2. **Reflecting** In this step you record and assess your own reactions to the experience. You may respond to particular questions or you may use a less structured format.

3. **Identifying Relevant Theory and Knowledge** Here you seek out or recall ideas that can help you make sense of the experience in a variety of ways.

4. **Articulating Learning** Here you look back over your writing and thinking and write down the major things you have learned from thinking about this experience.

| TABLE 1.1 Keeping a Journal: Reflecting on Events |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| **Actions** | **Thoughts** | **Feelings** |
| I am sitting in a lounge with several residents. John walks in and sits down. There are several chairs available, but he sits right in front of me. | • This guy is always looking for trouble. What is he doing? | • Nervous • Uncomfortable |
| I say “hello”. He nods. I continue my conversation with the residents. | - | - |
| John Squirms around in his chair several times. Finally, I notice the outline of a pack of cigarettes in his pants pocket (a clear violation of house rules) | • What is his problem? Damn. He has cigarettes and I’m supposed to take them away and take points. He has a terrible temper. He set this whole thing up. | • Annoyed • Anxious • Angry |
| When I look up, he is looking right at me. | • I have to do something now. He knows that I saw them. | • Embarrassed • More Anxious |
| I say, “What’ve you got in your pocket there, John?” | - | - |
| John: “Where”? | • Here we go. | - |
| Me: “Right there”. | - | - |
| John: “Nothing! What are you talking about?” | • He’s not going to make this easy. I’m trying to be nice. | • Nervous  
• Angry |
| Me: “The cigarettes. You obviously wanted me to see them.” | - | - |
| John: “I did not! So what are you going to do about it anyway?” | • If I punish him now, he’s going to do something worse | • Confused  
• Uncertain |
| Me: “What do you think I should do?” | • I’m standing and he knows it. | • Stupid |
| John: “I think you should leave me alone.” His face is getting red | • I’m tired of this nonsense. | • Angry  
• Resentful |
| Me: “If you wanted that, you shouldn’t have come in here. You could have just gone outside and smoked, you know”. | • I can’t believe I just suggested he break a rule – I just wouldn’t have had to deal with him if I hadn’t see him. | • Upset at myself. |
| John: “Go take a flying leap (expletives deleted) he jumps to his feet.” | • Uh oh! Is there any other staff around? I have to calm him down. The other kids are watching me. | • Scared  
• Self-conscious  
• Alert |
| Me: “Look, if you just give me the cigarettes, I won’t report this”. | • May be this will work. | • Hopeful |
| John: “They’re mine. No one takes my property!” he is clenching his fists. | • He’s not going to get physical over this. Is he? | • Frightened |
| Me: “you’re not allowed to have them here and you know it. I should take points away”. | - | - |
| John: “Do I get them back?” | • I can’t give them back  
| | • Confused  
• Desperate |
| Me: “I don’t know. I’ll think about it.” | - | - |
| John: “All right, but only because I like you.” | - | - |
| Me: “Thanks”. | • Thank God. I wonder if I did the right thing, though. | • Relieved  
• Embarrassed |

(From Sweitzer, in Harris & Maloney (Eds.) Human Services: Contemporary Issues and Trends, 2/e. Published by Allyn & Bacon, M.A Copyright © 1999 by Pearson Education)
The Seminar

Most of you will be meeting with an instructor and other interns on campus during the semester. We refer to these meetings as “seminars.” The word seminar comes from the Italian seminar, which means “to sow or seed.” The class sessions are a medium that is most helpful in the integration of intellectual and affective learning, encouraging new understanding and creative responses, and strengthening the effectiveness of interpersonal relationships (Williams, 1975).

An effective seminar affords opportunities for reflective dialogue, support, the development of important relationships, and a variety of new learning experiences. You may engage in many different activities as part of the seminar, including, lectures, discussions, reflective assignments, journal writing, student presentations and support groups.

Creating a Community of Support

Effective support is both very simple and quite difficult, especially when someone is sharing a problem. We have found two principal barriers to creating a community of support in a seminar: a tendency to rely on the instructor and the common cry, “I don’t know what to say.” A pattern we have observed many times in seminars, and been told about many more, is one where a student recounts an event or poses a problem and the instructor responds.

Please remember that this is not a therapy group. You are not therapists. There may be times when certain individuals encounter a challenge at the internship or an experience that touches something inside them that needs the attention of a counselor or therapist. Your instructor can help you recognize those instances and locate appropriate resources to deal with them.

Finally, if you are seeking to build a community of support, then leave some time in the seminar to reflect on how that endeavor is going. As the semester progresses, take time to celebrate your success and growth in this endeavor, to discuss and try to solve problems, and to give one another feedback about the achievement of the groups goals.
“Framing the Experience: The Developmental Stages of an Internship”

“Internship is like a diamond, in that it is multifaceted; it is also like a roller coaster with its highs and lows.”

“Allowing the stages to happen allows the intern to learn and have positive learning experiences”.
(Student Reflection)

Each intern’s experience is unique, and yours will be, too. You may have an experience that’s different from those of other interns at the same placement or from any other previous field experiences you have had. Placement sites differ, too; you may be in a seminar with peers who are doing very different work, with very different group of people, than you are. Some of the concerns and challenges that most interns face seem to occur in a predictable order.

The Development Stage Model

“The focus (of the week) has been for me to normalize my feelings and allow the process to happen”.
(Student Reflection)

There are five developmental stages of an internship:

- Anticipation
- Disillusionment
- Confrontation
- Competence
- Culmination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2.1 Developmental stages of an Internship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception and acceptance</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coworkers:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards of behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Field Site:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy, norms values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring potential</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clients:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance and perception</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs and presenting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life Context:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disillusionment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexpected emotions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy of skills</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Breadth of demands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with clients</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating values of organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disappointment with supervisor/ coworkers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledge gap between expectations and reality</td>
<td>Normalize feelings and behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledge and clarify specific issues</td>
<td>Acknowledge and clarify feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Confrontation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieve independence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain confidence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience effectiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal blocks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reassess goals and expectations</td>
<td>Reassess support systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reassess support systems</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Develop specific strategies</td>
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<td><strong>Competence</strong></td>
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<td>High accomplishment</td>
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<td>Investment in work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality supervision</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethical issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worthwhile tasks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Home/self/career issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share concerns openly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop coping strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culmination</td>
<td>Termination with clients</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case management issues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Redefine relationships with</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supervisor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coworkers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ending studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-internship plans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this chapter, we ask you to consider some specific issues that will be important as you begin your internship. Your motivation for your work, along with any unresolved or partially resolved issues that you bring to it, is important issue to consider. We also ask you to consider your feelings about self-disclosure, assessment, authority, flexibility, and reaction to dissonance, which we have found to be features of nearly every internship. Another issue that many interns don’t think enough about is their life outside the placement, which surely affects and is affected by the work that they do. Finally, we ask you to examine and assess your personal support system, which will be an invaluable asset to you throughout your placement.

**Motivation for Placement**

At some point in your education, someone has probably asked you to think or write about the reasons you are considering human services as a career. Perhaps, too, you have been asked by a placement coordinator or a prospective placement why you are interested in a particular kind of internship. Understanding and reminding yourself of these motivating factors can be a source of strength.

**Self Disclosure**

All of us set boundaries around certain areas in our lives. There are aspects of ourselves we would discuss with anyone and aspects we would discuss only after we know someone for a while. An even more private “zone” consists of those things we would tell only our closest friends. There may even be things about you, such as events in your past or feelings you struggle with, that you would not discuss with anyone.

You may feel hesitant to discuss a particular area but wonder whether you should try to overcome that reluctance. Or you may feel very comfortable but wonder whether certain topics are appropriate in a particular setting.

Finally, self-disclosure is important in supervision. You will need to think about, and possibly negotiate, how much of your thoughts and feelings you want to share and what is expected of you.

**Authority**

If you are working with clients, you may be in a position of some authority. Take some time to think about your own experiences with authority, both as the authority figure and as the recipient of authority.
Flexibility

Another important aspect of your personality to consider is your level of flexibility. How do you react to sudden changes of plan? To multiple opinions? How important is it to you that your day or week is predictable? School-based helpers, while they have a lot of variety, at least have the structure of the school day to lean on. Crisis counselors and shelter workers probably have among the most unpredictable jobs.

Your Life Context

“My biggest concern is stress, basically from outside the internship. The stress to get all the papers done in time, working many hours a week at my job to pay bills, and still put in 30 hours in the internship”

(Student Reflection)

Your life context consists of all the other things going in your life besides the internship. That context will vary according to your family situation, your social life, and the configuration of your academic program. You will have some responsibilities outside of your placement, some expectations placed on you, and possibly some stress. Here are some areas to consider.

- School
- Work
- Roommates
- Family
- Intimate Partners
- Friends
- Yourself
- Doing it All

Support Systems

Balancing all the demands we just discussed in your support system, which is made up of people who give you what you need to get through life’s challenges. Your support system is made up of many different people, and you will need different kinds of support at different times (Seashore, 1982). Here is a partial list of the kinds of support you might need. You may be able to add to it.

Listening

Sometimes you just want someone who will listen to you without criticizing or offering advice. The person listening should be someone to whom you can say almost anything and on whom you can count not to grow restless or frightened. Think of these people as your “sounding boards”.

Advice

On the other hand, sometimes you need sound advice. You may not always follow it, but you need a source of advice that you can trust. Think of these people as your “personal consultants”.
Praise

There are times when what you need most is for someone to tell you how great you are. If they can be specific, the entire better. Think of these people as your “fans”.

Diversion

Some people are friends you can count on to go out and play with. You don’t have to talk about work, your problems, or anything else. You just have activities you enjoy together. Think of these people as your “playmates”.

Comfort

When we were children and we became ill, there was nothing we wanted more than pure comfort. A comfortable place to rest, good food, and music we enjoy, all without having to lift a finger! At times, ill or not, this is still just the kind of support we need.

Challenge

There are times when challenge is the last thing you want. At other times, though, someone who will push you to do more, look at things in a different way, and confront problems you have. Think of these people as your “personal coaches”.

Companionship

It is good to have people in your life with whom you feel so comfortable that you can do anything, or nothing, with them. Think of these people as your “buddies”.

Affirmation

Another kind of support comes from people who have some of the same struggles that you do. Knowing that others feel the way you do, even if they can’t change it, can be very helpful. Sometimes there is no substitute for someone who has been through what you are going through. Think of these people as your “comrades”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3.1</th>
<th>Source of Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Source 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
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<td>Companionship</td>
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<td>Other ............</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other ............</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Spring Board for Discussion**

Here is an exercise about self-disclosure adapted from Paul Pedersen (1988). For each category listed, mark it as either an area you would talk easily about with relative strangers (Public) or one you would only discuss with those close to you (Private):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My personal religious views</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My views on racial integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My views on morality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My taste in food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My likes and dislikes in music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My favorite reading matter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The kinds of movies and TV shows I like best</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The kinds of parties and gatherings I enjoy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The shortcomings I have that I feel prevent me from achieving what I want</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. My professional goals and ambitions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How I really feel about the people I work and go to school with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. How much money I make</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. My general financial situation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. My family’s finances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Aspects of my personality I dislike</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Feelings I have trouble expressing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Feelings I have trouble controlling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. My relationship with my friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. My relationship with my family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Things I feel ashamed of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Things about me that make me proud</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. How I wish I looked</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. My feelings about self image</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. My past illness and treatment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We encourage you to share your answers with others. If you want to keep the answers anonymous, put a number or symbol on the paper that identifies it as yours and exchange papers with classmates. Discuss the similarities and differences you find. Where do you think those difference come from? How do you think your clients might answer these questions?
INTERNSHIP – RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

“EVER HEAR OF THIS?”

“They want to hire someone with experience, but how can I get experience if they don't hire me?!”

You are just as qualified as the next person. You have a good GPA and a related major. But there is one thing you don't have: experience. And the catch is, you need experience to get experience. Employers want good minds and talent, but they also want people with an idea of exactly what they're getting into in the workplace. That's why employers hire graduates who have gained experience.

Add an Internship

“Internships allow students to experience firsthand, the pressures and rewards of the workplace, while under the supervision of faculty and selected workplace Supervisors”.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is an internship?

According to the National Society for Experiential Learning, already discussed in detail in the guide, experiential learning, or an internship, is a “carefully monitored
work or volunteer experience in which an individual has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning throughout the experience. It’s temporary work that gives you on-the-job training and practical experience. Internships usually last one semester, although some can be longer or shorter. Some are paid positions. Others earn you academic credit. You can intern in almost any area of study in almost any part of the country, or even abroad. Internships can get your foot in the door for your first full-time, permanent position. Employers are using internships as a way to gain a first in-depth look at prospective employees.

**Why is an internship important & what are the benefits?**

- Experiential learning is the single most effective way to obtain employment after graduation. Approximately 85% of interns receive a job offer from the parent company.
- You get the opportunity to learn new skills, and apply the things you learned in the classroom in “real life situations.”
- It is a way to explore career options, likes and dislikes, with little investment in terms of time and money.
- You can earn academic credit, and for some internship you may even be paid!
- You can network and develop professional contacts in your field of study.
- You can increase your self-confidence and professionalism.
- You can learn more about a chosen field.
- Find out before graduation what you’d like to do after graduation.

Whether as a means to enhance their academic resume, to gain professional experience, or to open the door for that first job, NUST University students have discovered that **internships are the key ingredient to success!**

**What types of Internships exist?**

- Paid Internships
- Credit Internships
- Volunteer Experiences
- Summer, Fall and Spring Internships
- Part-time Related Work Experience

**When is the best time to do an Internship?**

The ideal time to do an internship is during the 6th semester of your university year or during your 3rd year. This gives you the option of doing another internship when you are a senior. However, it is **NEVER** too late to do an internship!!
When are internships offered?
Internships are offered throughout the year (Fall, Spring, and Summer). Many students prefer to do summer internships because they have more time to devote to them, however, students also complete semester long internship programs. Please contact Career Development Centre at NUST for further queries.

Are all internships unpaid?
No! While many organizations believe that the experience gained through the internship is compensation enough, other organizations offer competitive wages and professional development opportunities for their interns. There are three types of internships academic, paid and unpaid.

- **Academic Internships:** These are internships that allow you to gain academic credit for your experience. Students interested in receiving academic credit for their internship must meet with their faculty advisor to establish the specific criterion that must be met like in the case of NUST Business School and Army Medical College.

- **Paid Internships:** A paid internship will offer you monetary compensation for your work as an intern. Students completing a paid internship will receive compensation in the form of a stipend (usually a lump sum paid out over the course of the internship). Be aware that there are alternative forms of compensation such as reimbursement for travel, housing and/or other living expenses.

- **Unpaid Internships:** Unpaid internships are no different from any other Internship except there is no monetary compensation. Unpaid internships show your excitement and commitment to the field.

Do I need a career goal in mind before I pursue an internship?
No! While it is helpful to gain experience in a field that you want pursue a career in, it is not necessary. In fact, internships are a way to explore what exactly it is that you want to pursue as a career. Internships are a valuable, hands-on way to test those areas that you are considering as a future career. If you would like help learning about what opportunities would fit your goals, the CDC has plenty of resources to assist you!!

Will I need a resume & cover letter?
Resumes and cover letters are an essential part of the internship process. Without a solid resume and cover letter how are you going to market yourself? If you need assistance writing these, there is a resume and cover letter guidebook as well as countless resources in the Career Library. In addition to the resume and cover letter, much organization will require an interview as part of the application process.
What should I have prepared?

- Resume/Cover Letter
- A professional reference list. (Former and present employers, members of faculty, staff and administration. Advisors and coaches. No family members or friends.)
- Interviewing skills – practice and think ahead. Review ‘Successful Interviewing’ Guidebook

What will I do in an internship?

Each internship experience will differ because each organization has different needs and opportunities. Internships are designed to give practical, hands-on experience to the intern and therefore many internship sites include the following: opportunities for research, customer contact, and management of databases, attending meetings with supervisor and/or staff and project management.

Can I do more than one internship?

Absolutely!! Completing multiple internships allows you to explore and understand your field and future career goals. Additionally, it will make you more attractive to future employers because you will have more experience to offer them.

What’s in it for the employer?

- A recruiting strategy for employers
- Employers hone in on academic major and internship experience above all other characteristics on a resume

You prove to employers:

- You are truly committed to your chosen field.
- You probably have the right stuff

Where do I Identify/Look for Internships?

- Directories in the Career Development Center
- Positions posted in the Career Development Center
- Internet/Web sites plenty more are linked from the Career website
- Job Fairs (many employers there also have internships to offer)
- Contact previous/present employers and/or faculty
- Contact local seasonal employers (e.g. Department of Parks and Recreation)
- Consult a phone book/yellow pages
- Alumni contacts/database
What resources are available at the CDC to help me?

- Internship Postings - Postings are placed in binders in the office and are categorized by Colleges/Majors within the University (e.g. “Internships for students in the “College of Business”). There is also a listing of current internship opportunities posted on a bulletin board outside the office.
- Websites - All internships received are posted on the web. You may also explore the internship links listed on the CDC homepage.
- Directories – The CDC has a host of internship directories in the career library to help students identify possible sites to intern.
- Individual Appointments - Meet with a career counselor to discuss possible areas of interest, how to go about contacting employers, etc.

SERIOUS STUFF

To get the most out of an internship or summer job, you must take it as seriously as a "real" job. Speak, act, and dress in a way that says you are professional. The employer will be evaluating you and your work. But also realize that it is a learning experience – you are not expected to know everything beforehand!

Be aware of...

- Organization requirements
- NUST requirements
- Application deadlines
- Application materials requested
Keep in mind that employers look for

- Enthusiasm
- Professionalism
- Responsibility
- Communication skills (written and oral)
- Drive and desire
- Good GPA (how good depends on the employer)

Remember...

Even an internship or related job that is not in the career field you ultimately decide on can still be a very positive experience for you. It let's you know what you weren't cut out to be -- while you still have time to do something about it. It will be far less emotionally and financially expensive to make that discovery before you get a degree, not after.
“It’s As Easy As”

1. Take a Look at Yourself
   - Personal Interests: What do you enjoy doing?
   - Academic Interests: What do you most want to learn?
   - Career Goals: Where do you see yourself in 1 year? 5 years?
   - Work Values: What rewards do you seek? Causes do you advocate?
   - Abilities: What skills/abilities do you have to offer?
   - What personal criteria do you have for an internship?
     - Geographic location
     - Duration
     - Monetary Compensation
     - Academic credit

2. Gather Information & Make Contact
   **Resources:**
   - Internship directories & guidebooks
   - Bulletin boards
   - Academic department/advisor
   - Career Development Center library
   - Fellow students/previous interns
   - Professional associations
   - Community agencies
   - Public officials
   - Internet resources
   - Your network

   **Narrow It Down:**
   - Develop a manageable list (10-15) and prioritize it.
   - Review organizations in light of your goals and objectives from step 1.
   - Do you meet the organization’s requirements? Does the organization meet the university requirements for credit?
   - Application Deadlines
Contact Them!

- Telephone Scripts
  - (If you have a contact name) "Hello, my name is ______. Is ______ still the person in your office who handles the student intern program?"
  - (If you don't have a contact name) "Hello, my name is ______. May I please speak with the person who coordinates your internships?"
  - Be Prepared. The intern coordinator may want to interview you on the phone during this first conversation. Be ready to describe briefly who you are, your goals, and why you're interested in the organization.
  - "Hello, (Name of person). My name is ______. I am a Junior/Senior at NUST University majoring in ______. I am interested in (Area of interest) and understand that (Name of organization) provides internships in this field."

- Send your credentials:
  - Cover Letter
  - Resume
  - References
  - Writing samples
  - Transcripts
  - Other materials (application forms)

3. Your Final Decision

- Helping you decide
  - Which organization fits your personal interests/needs the best?
  - Are your abilities suited to the organization?
  - How well does the project/assignment relate to your career goals? Academic goals?
  - Do the co-workers and supervisor appear to be enthusiastic and supportive toward interns?
  - How much does the general work atmosphere (employee morale, dress) appeal to you?
  - How much responsibility will you have?
  - Will the internship offer valuable experience?

- Accepting and rejecting offers
  - Show appreciation – either way.
  - Confirm start and end dates, intern supervisor, academic credit requirements, etc., in writing.

- Explore Academic Credit Options
  - See your advisor or department.
- Get acquainted with the faculty sponsor who will oversee your credit arrangement.
- Find out what documentation/requirements you need to make the credit arrangements.
Questions to Ask During the Internship Interview

Whether you're aiming for a paid or an unpaid internship, it's important to ask your prospective employer intelligent questions - these show you are enthusiastic and motivated. They also help you make the decision of where you want to interview. Listed below are questions you may want to ask:

- What are the principal duties of this internship?
- What are the principal duties of those departments?
- Are there any special programs provided for interns?
- Will I work with more than one department or division of the company?
- Will I work for more than one supervisor?
- What skills will I develop through the internship? (ie: Writing skills? Analytical skills?)
- What outcome do you expect my work to have? (In other words, will what I do become part of a written report or oral presentation? Will I be required to leave the office to speak to anyone?)
- How much interaction will I have with other interns? Are there special programs for interns to meet one another?
- Would there be opportunities to shadow employees?
- Would I have any interaction with top management or supervisory personnel besides my own supervisor(s)? Would the interaction be spontaneous, or at planned events?
- Is this a paid or an unpaid internship? Additionally, especially if it's an unpaid internship, will any of my expenses be paid?
- How will my performance be evaluated (on paper, orally, or both)?
- How would you describe the work climate here?
- What are your expectations for an intern?
- What is the dress code?
- Do you consider an internship to be a recruiting tool?

Of the last question, you can't say, "Are you going to hire me?", because nobody knows that before seeing how you perform. But you can say, "Do you consider your internship a recruiting tool?" The answer to this question may suggest how many interns eventually are hired for full-time jobs or give you other clues to possible opportunities within a company or agency.
Advice for the Intern

Exhibit a Can-Do Attitude

- Attitude speaks loud and clear and makes a lasting impression, so make sure your’s is one of your greatest assets.
- Take on any task assigned – no matter how small – with enthusiasm.
- Take the initiative to acquire new skills and ask for things to do. Make the most of your time there!
- Accept criticism graciously and maintain a sense of humor.
- Ask to attend meetings and events that interest you.
- Ask to shadow different people and talk with them about their work experiences (if time permits).

Set Realistic Goals & Expectations

- Work with your supervisor to set up your learning agenda. It should target specific skills and competencies you wish to acquire. After all, the learning agenda is what distinguishes a short-term job from an internship.
- Maintain a journal of your activities and accomplishments in order to monitor your progress.
- Read everything you can get your hands on; talk with people in different departments as well as clients and vendors to become informed on all elements of the business.
- Seek regular reviews from your supervisor to assess your performance.

Learn the Unwritten Rules

- Being the “new kid” is like being a freshman all over again...you will need to adapt, observe, learn, and process a large volume of information. Be patient; don’t expect too much too soon.
- Buy into the mission & vision of your work place.
- Get to know your co-workers early. Office customs may not always match the formal rules...so ask questions and pay attention to how people interact with each other. Watch closely how things get done.
- Be sensitive to others...don’t gossip, don’t complain, and avoid internal politics.
- Be aware of people’s differences (cultural, work style, management style, etc.)
- Also be receptive to the dress of your co-workers and supervisors...and tailor accordingly.

Take Your Position and Assignments Seriously

- Build a reputation for being reliable and dependable.
- Be diligent and accurate in your work.
- You may encounter a great deal of ambiguity, so seek direction when in doubt. Your supervisor knows there will be an initial learning curve and will make allowances for mistakes. Learn from your errors and move on to your next task.
Meet Deadlines

- Always assume the responsibility to ask when an assignment is due. This will help you understand your supervisor’s priorities and to manage your time accordingly.
- Be willing to accept additional work responsibilities as the position continues.
- Be prepared to work late or overtime when necessary...give 110%. Your willingness to go the extra mile, especially during “crunch time,” will help you pave the way to assuming greater responsibilities.
- Alert your boss in advance if you will be unable to meet expectations....this shows respect and professional maturity.

Communicate Respectfully

- Find out the proper way to address supervisors and co-workers, including customers. Remember their names!
- Maintain a pleasant and respectful demeanor with every person, regardless of his or her rank.
- Assume everyone else knows more than you do, but don’t be afraid to present useful ideas that may save time, money, or solve problems.
- Make sure, however, that your style doesn’t come across as cocky. Employers value assertiveness, not aggressiveness.

Be a Team Player

- Learn how to follow the chain of command. Don’t go over or around your supervisor to get noticed, to get ahead, or to complain. Establish and maintain good business relationships with everyone.
- Learn how your assignment fits into the grand scheme of things. In today’s work environment, success is often defined by your ability to get along with and interact with others. You’re a winner only if your team wins.

Get a Mentor

- Identify at least one individual to serve as your mentor or professional guardian. It should be someone who is willing to take a personal interest in your career development and success.
- Once you know your way around, begin to network wisely and get “plugged in” by associating with seasoned employees who may share their knowledge, perspectives, and insights.
- Get noticed, because many people will have a role in determining your future.

Have Fun!

- Last but not least, enjoy learning, sharpening your skills and developing professionally and personally.
- Participate in work-related social functions and become an active member in your work community.
Market Your Experience!!

What To Do When Your Internship Ends

- Ask your supervisor to serve as a reference and to write a recommendation letter for you.
- Write a thank you letter to your site supervisor and faculty advisor (if you are receiving credit).
- Maintain your network!!
- Let the Career Development Center know about your experience (you could be the next Internship Spotlight!!).
- Offer to assist the organization in marketing the internship to other students.
- Assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities that you have developed at your internship.
- Write or update your resume based upon your experiences and projects.
- Make a list of what you liked and disliked about your position and use this list to explore future internship and job opportunities.
- Redefine your career goals based upon your experience and clarify how your internship relates to these goals.
- Reflect upon the work environment, organizational structure, location, atmosphere – what will you look for in the future?
- Reflect upon your values and attitudes about work and how they correlate with those of the organization.
- Think about how specific experiences at your internship will be excellent examples to offer employers during the interviewing process.
References


- (From Sweitzer, in Harris & Maloney (Eds.) Human Services: Contemporary Issues and Trends, 2/e. Published by Allyn & Bacon, M.A Copyright © 1999 by Pearson Education) (Page-09)


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