

## A MONTH BEFORE YOUR LAST DAY – PLAN YOUR EXIT AND RE-ENTRY

Sometimes the most important learning experience in an internship is finding out this is not what you want to do. There are the occasional horror stories, but most interns' part with their employer on a positive note. Just because you don't want to continue in a particular field, doesn't mean the folks who you have worked with can't help. If you have decided to change directions, thank them for helping you to come to this decision and find out if they have contacts in your new area of interest.

- Schedule a formal appointment with your supervisor to discuss your career plans. If you have not already talked about the possibility of a full-time position in the future, now is the time.
- If the organization is currently in a hiring freeze, ask for advice on opportunities in other departments or similar positions with other employers. Most professionals network in their field and will know of contacts outside of their current employer.

If you do not have an offer following your internship, stay in contact with your supervisor, fellow interns, human resources personnel, and other decision-making individuals at the organization on a periodic basis. Convey your continuing interest and keep them informed of your job search progress.

### ADVICE FROM STUDENTS:

"To be honest, a newbie is always expected to do the most tedious work. You must be willing to work hard."

"It is important to be proactive as an intern. A lot of times, these positions can be as challenging or as easy as you make them, and being engaged in what you are doing lets your boss and co-workers know that you are serious about the job."

"I feel like you should work with the other employees and interns in a way that if you were to leave, your absence would be noticed and missed."

"Flexibility is key because you never know what is going to come at you."

### ADVICE FROM EMPLOYERS:

"Always put in 110% into everything, so that you are seen as a go-getter!"

"Constantly evaluate yourself and strive to improve even if you did well on a project."

"Make sure you get the 'big picture.' Remember there are menial tasks included in all jobs and 'pitching in' and doing your share will establish better teamwork and goodwill among co-workers."

"Approach the internship as if it's your full-time job. Continue to be the best and exceed expectations in a short period of time."

"Take note of your accomplishments. Write down the things that you have accomplished. Your notes will come in handy for completing your mid-point and final review with your supervisor."

"Pay attention to details and don't wait to be asked to contribute to a project."

# Convert Your Internship into a Full-Time Job



## El Camino College Career Center



### Career Center

**Phone #:** 310-660-3593 x6137

**Location:** First floor of the Student Services Center, in the Counseling Office.

*The El Camino Community College District is committed to providing equal opportunity in which no person is subjected to discrimination on the basis of national origin, religion, age, sex (including sexual harassment), race, color, gender, physical or mental disability, or retaliation.*

# Convert Your Internship into a Full-Time Job

Many students have been successful in converting their internships to full-time employment, even during the economic downturn. Although the market continues to be competitive across all fields, interns are telling us that they are doing more meaningful work. The bottom line is that you need to consider an internship as a first step toward finding a full-time position. Once you have your internship, you may decide this is the place to start your career. This handout provides advice from both students and employers if you plan to convert your internship into a full-time job.

## BEFORE YOU START – PLAN FOR A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE

- Do your research. If you are working in music, you need to know a variety of music genres. If public relations is your choice, you need to know your field and how to effectively communicate. Find out what trade papers, websites and journals are specific to your industry. Take some time to catch up with current trends.
- Set specific expectations for the internship. Often in the excitement of obtaining the internship, you forget to let the employer know what you hope to gain from the experience. Schedule a formal appointment with your supervisor on the first day of work to establish goals for your projects.
- Plan your commute and activities to be sure you arrive on time and avoid time conflicts with other commitments (classes, discussion groups).
- Check your ego at the door. A sense of humility is important so that you can be open to learn from other people around you.

## FIRST DAY – ESTABLISH YOUR PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

- Approach the internship as an extended interview, because that's essentially what it is.
- Exhibit your professionalism by being punctual, efficient and dedicated.
- Ask questions. It is important to clarify an assignment upfront rather than get it wrong.
- Introduce yourself to co-workers including other interns.
- Learn everything you can about the workplace. This may include accepting tedious and menial tasks; copying, filing, and other administrative work. Most of your full-time colleagues followed the same path to their job and will trust you with increased responsibility once you prove you are willing to "pitch in" to get the job done.
- Pay attention to details! Take time to ensure accuracy and quality in what you produce.



## FIRST MONTH – MASTER YOUR SKILLS

- Go above and beyond what you are expected to do.
- Ask for more work once you complete an assignment.
- Stay motivated and excited about what you are doing. Leave your personal drama at home.
- Don't check the job description every time you are asked to do something. Be flexible and respond positively to change. Continually show you are eager to learn.
- Be willing to step outside the box and apply your resourcefulness and creativity to problem-solving.
- Check your list of expectations. What do you still want to accomplish? Who do you want to meet?
- Invite colleagues to lunch or coffee and find out why they are successful.
- Ask what they seek in a new hire and then adjust your behavior to fit.
- Use your understanding of technology and social networking to help brainstorm marketing ideas.



Check out the Career Center Web page for more resources

<http://www.elcamino.edu/student-services/co/careercenter/index.asp>