

How to be a Productive Intern this Summer...

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 on getting some on the job training and taking what's learned in the classroom and applying it to the real world.

Internships are an excellent way to begin building those all-important connections that are invaluable in developing and maintaining a strong professional network for the future.

Each year, thousands of students gain experience by doing summer internships. In order to be successful at your internship this summer here are seven tips that could help you make your stint productive.

Start your day early

Set your morning alarm earlier than usual and swing by the office ahead of time. If you're feeling overwhelmed, this extra time in the morning can be very useful. This allows you the chance to complete a few tasks, check your inbox, and feel less rushed throughout the day.

Write down everything

Whether you consider yourself to be an absorbent sponge it never hurts to carry a notebook. When you have to remember important information, you won't need to waste time racking your brain, but can open up your handy notes instead. Invest in a quality notebook or two and always keep them handy throughout the day for easy access.

Utilize to-do lists

Keeping a planner or to-do list can help you keep track of your daily and weekly assignments as an intern. Remember, time management is crucial to becoming more productive. You will be thankful that you have everything scheduled neatly once your tasks and weekly meetings start to pile up.

Take regular breaks

Taking regular breaks may sound counterproductive however this will increase your performance at work. Studies have shown that breaks can help increase attention span as well as prevent fatigue and eyestrain from sitting at your desk all day. Everyone needs time to unwind and stretch- take a water break, make small talk with staff or take a few minutes to meditate.

Eat snacks

Don't go hungry during your internship; snack on some healthy treats for extra energy and brain power. Skip the sugary sweets that can make you feel sluggish and grab something quick for the office for example almonds (a handful is rich in vitamin E, calcium, and potassium), fresh or dried fruits (naturally sweet and also strengthen your immune system), or carrots with hummus (which has protein, calcium, iron, and can improve your eyesight).

Ask for help

Try to avoid being the intern who refreshes their outlook inbox every five seconds waiting for something to do. Ask your supervisor or any other colleague in your department if there are additional tasks that needs to be done. Always ask for guidance if you are unsure of how to complete tasks and bear in mind that you are there to learn and grow. Showing initiative and interest will definitely increase opportunities for growth.

Meet everyone you can

You're an intern in an office filled with industry professionals make use of this opportunity to network. Start by saying "hello" to people in the hallways, and always make sure to introduce yourself. The connections you make at your internship can not only keep you busy at work today, but also land you your dream job five years down the line. Remember to stay connected with everyone you meet (and add them on LinkedIn)!

(For more information on productivity contact the National Competitiveness and Productivity Council on Second (2nd) floor, Financial Centre Building, Bridge Street, Castries. We can also be contacted at 468 -5576 or visit the Council's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/stluciancpc> or email them at stluciancpc@gmail.com)