

Resources

Internship Dos and Don'ts

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It's your first internship and you want to make a good impression. But chances are what passed for appropriate conduct in your dorm room and classroom won't earn you points at work. So cop a professional attitude and use on-the-job etiquette to get ahead.

Watch Your Time

Start with the most basic rule of business etiquette: Be punctual. Always arrive to work on time, if not early. If you think you're going to be late, call in and let your coworkers know.

Timeliness also applies to the work you produce. Always submit projects by deadline or before. Blow important deadlines, and you may find you won't be trusted with bigger responsibilities.

Dress for Success

No matter what internship you have, it's important that your appearance fits the corporate environment. Find out what the dress code is and observe what your co-workers are wearing. Even if the atmosphere calls for casual outfits, make sure to wear clothes that are clean and in good taste.

Choose accessories carefully; they should accent your appearance, not overwhelm it. Don't wear noisy jewelry or a huge amount of cologne or perfume.

Telephone Tactics

Business protocol has developed alongside advances in technology. Use the technology but don't abuse it.

- When picking up the phone, don't just answer "hello." Use a greeting and identify yourself (e.g. "Hi, this is Jane Smith.").
- Keep your outgoing voice mail message current. State when you will be back if you are going to be away from the office for an extended period of time.
- Limit your personal calls. Time them for your breaks, and keep them brief and low-key. And never keep a fellow employee or client waiting while you finish a personal call.
- Unless you're waiting for an urgent call, it isn't polite to put a person on hold when you get another call. Let the voice mail pick up the other call and respond to the message as soon as you're finished with the first call.
- If a coworker is on the phone, don't hover outside their office or cubicle waiting for them to finish. Leave and come back later to talk to them.

Netiquette

The Internet and e-mail can be valuable work tools. Make sure the technology works for you, not against you.

- Your e-mail messages shouldn't include anything you wouldn't want anyone else to see. E-mail can easily be forwarded and passed around.
- Because it's so easy to send e-mail, it's just as easy to send a message that's poorly written or incomplete. Always proofread and spell-check before you hit send. And double-check to make sure you've included all attachments.
- Never use abusive or objectionable language or forward an e-mail message that does.
- Internet access can be a big boon to business, but don't abuse it. Limit your personal Web surfing, and don't use your access to the Web to visit inappropriate sites.

Use the Right Words

In all office communications, use proper written and spoken language. If you need help with grammar or

spelling, and spell-check doesn't always catch your mistakes, have someone check over your mail, memos or reports before you distribute them.

Never use foul language. It can be offensive and doesn't say much for your vocabulary skills.

***Keep the Company in Mind ***

Remember at all times that you are an integral part of your company. How you behave impacts the organization as a whole—and reflects on you as well. Help the company and improve your professional image by following these tips:

- Maintain a positive attitude at work and when dealing with clients. Your demeanor reflects on you as well as on your company.
- Don't abuse company resources. The fax machine, printer, letterhead and office supplies are for office use only. If you have to conduct personal business, save it for lunchtime and use a calling card or credit card for long-distance calls.
- Keep all company secrets to yourself. Whether it's good news or bad news, don't relate anything that is meant to be confidential inside or outside the company.

To survive and succeed in the work place, you have to make a positive lasting impression. Keep professional and keep to the codes of office etiquette, and you'll make the best impression—one that will get you ahead.