Making the Most Out of an Internship

Congratulations - You’ve landed an internship! Take advantage of every opportunity to turn the internship into a meaningful experience, secure professional references, and potentially obtain a more permanent position. Here are a few tips to help you get the most out of your internship:

Set Goals and Take Initiative
Identify what you would like to learn and accomplish at the internship. Make sure that your goals are obtainable and know that they may change throughout the internship. Be conscientious of what you hope to accomplish by the end of the internship and seek opportunities to help you reach your goals.

Dress and Act Like a Professional
Create the impression that you belong in an organization by dressing as well as anyone who works there; this alone may help you stand out. Carefully watch how the permanent employees speak and act and try to emulate their style. Say “No” to negativity! Avoid complaining, participating in office gossip and not performing your tasks on-time—it only reflects poorly on you!

Interact with Colleagues and Supervisors
Build professional relationships within the organization and try to meet people in various departments. The more you are exposed to new ideas and new people, the more you will learn. Never burn your bridges—it’s a small world and you never know when and where you will see these people again.

Seek a Mentor
Finding a mentor within the organization is a major key to a successful internship and will typically be your supervisor. They will make sure that you are given opportunities to learn and accomplish your goals. Your mentor will also be there for you to ask questions or seek help when you need it.

Obtain Feedback
Seek feedback on your performance from supervisors. The fact that you want to be evaluated attests to your seriousness about a career. If your rating shows some weaknesses, improve on those areas as quickly as possible. If you don’t have regular meetings with your supervisor, be sure to request them.

Keep Track of Projects That You Created
Maintain a personal record of reports, projects or letters that you worked on at your internship. It will help when updating your resume and may come in handy when applying for permanent positions.

Keep In Touch
As your internship comes to a close, be sure to thank your supervisor and co-workers. Maintain contact with your supervisors as they may serve as a reference or can offer you assistance in identifying job leads.