



**IOWA**

# STUDENT INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

**POMERANTZ**  
**CAREER CENTER**

100 Pomerantz Center, Suite C310  
Iowa City, IA 52242-7700  
(319) 335-1023 • [careers.uiowa.edu](http://careers.uiowa.edu)

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# PREPARATIONS

## Visit with your Career Advisor or an Internship Course Instructor to discuss

- Reasonable goals for what you will accomplish and learn
- Internship course registration directions if needed
- How to use an internship to explore a career

## Things to Know Before You Begin

- What time & day do you start?
- What is your schedule?
- What are your job duties?
- Who is your supervisor?
- Where is the office?
- What is the dress code?
- Where should you park, exit the bus, or walk to?

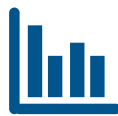
## Become Familiar with the Organization

- Use their website to look at:
  - Mission
  - Products, Services, or Programs
  - Divisions and/or departments
  - Awards, Employee Programs, and Focuses for Company Culture (ex. sustainability)

## Set SMART Goals

### Consider...

- What you want to learn
- What you will do to learn
- How you will know if you've achieve it



SPECIFIC

MEASURABLE

ATTAINABLE

RELEVANT

TIME-BOUND

# UNDERSTANDING THE STAGES OF AN INTERNSHIP

## ANTICIPATION

Excitement & anxiety; worries about preparation or fitting in.

## CONFRONTATION

Face disillusionment; re-examine goals & expectations; compare job duties with learning goals to help with reality check and discuss interpersonal issues with supervisor and mentors.

## CULMINATION

Pride in accomplishments and potential sadness at end of experience; potential guilt with wanting to accomplish more or that project may not continue without them; discuss feelings with supervisor.

1

2

3

4

5

## DISILLUSIONMENT

Excitement wears off; disappointment about reality of professional world; discovery that world of work is very different from school.

## COMPETENCE

Morale, professionalism, and productivity increase; interns can ask for higher level tasks & feel a part of the organization.

*\*Stages adapted from H. Federick Sweitzer & Mary A. King's "The Successful Internship" (2014)*

# BE PROFESSIONAL

Paid or unpaid, remember an internship is a JOB that may start you on the path to a great career.

## Bring your "A" game



- Do your best to contribute to your company's mission every day
- Have a "Can Do" attitude and be positive even if there is a little grunt work
- Ask questions, take initiative, and write notes!
- Record your daily activities in a log



## Dress the Part

- Unable to find the dress code? Dress as if you were interviewing on the first day
- Learn the dress code and adapt your attire for the second day
- If all else fails, take cues from your supervisor's clothing

## You are on the Clock



- Be on time in the morning and to scheduled meetings
- Don't leave before the end of your work day
- Don't take long lunches or breaks
- Don't post to social media sites during work hours
- Reserve personal calls, texts, or emails for lunch breaks



## Mind your Manners

- Check out the many websites devoted to personal and workplace etiquette
- Learn how to properly address people
- Use "please" and "thank you"
- Be courteous and friendly

## Be Positive

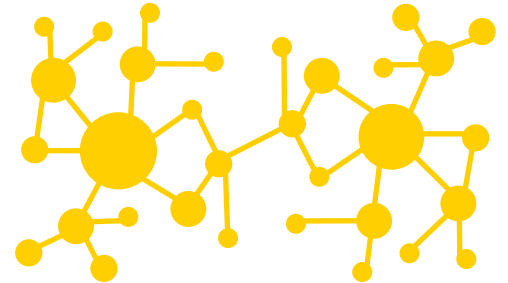


- Strive to be friendly, polite, respectful, humble, flexible, and kind
- Avoid negativity, complaints, rudeness, disrespect, arrogance, and stubbornness
- Don't gossip. It effects people's opinion of you

# NETWORK

Set yourself up to understand the organization & cultivate connections for future job search success!

- Learn people's names—it's a great way to show you care
- Attend the organization's trainings, meet & greets, or team social events
- Request short informational meetings with colleagues out of your department
- Get out from behind your desk—invite colleagues and other interns to join you for lunch
- Ask your supervisor if there is time for a meeting to discuss your career goals or resume
- Discuss the potential for an introduction by your supervisor if there is someone you want to meet
- Inquire about company mentorship programs or if an individual would be willing to remain in contact for career questions
- Inquire about recommendations for conferences and professional organizations in the field
- Be friendly and use phone or face to face contact sometimes instead of just email
- Follow up with short emails of thanks, any needed information, or questions when you connect with someone new at meetings, trainings, or events
- Be prepared to introduce yourself with confidence, listen closely, and then ask follow up questions to your supervisor if shadowing a meeting
- Update your LinkedIn profile and then connect with team members



# BE A TEAM PLAYER

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Very few people work completely independently. Employers are looking for people who can function in a team.



## Get to Know your Team Members

- Get to know everyone's name, position, and something about them
- Invite people to lunch or coffee (if coffee breaks are a part of the workplace culture)



## Understand Organizational Structure and Work Style

- Read all you can about your team's mission
- Find out who is in charge of the team and in charge of the department
- Model your participation to fit the work style of the team
- Identify if you have tasks specific to you or if work is accomplished totally within the group
- Ask questions of individuals, rather than take group meeting time to get up to speed



## Communication is Key

- Request a regular check-in meeting with your supervisor
- Be open and honest
- Discuss problems within your team
- Bring forth as many solutions as you do problems
- Ask questions, you are there to learn



## Contribute

- Don't just sit there! Get involved in the project and do your part well
- Ask for more tasks if you do not have enough work



## Be Open to Praise and Criticism

- Praise and criticism are opportunities for growth
- Assume a negative comment comes from a person who wants to help you
- Ask questions for clarification
- Use those comments to become a better employee



## Be a Person your Team can Count On

- Meet your deadlines
- Keep everyone informed of your progress or needs
- Step up to help other team members –you succeed together

# IDENTIFY & MANAGE WORKPLACE CHALLENGES

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## **I do not have enough work to do!**

- Take initiative. Ask if you can propose solutions to team or organization challenges
- Be honest with your teammates and ask how you can help them
- Tell your supervisor and...
  - Reiterate your excitement to be there
  - Ask for more projects or to help another team one or two days a week
  - Learn a technical skill that will help with future projects/tasks (UI Students have access to LinkedIn Learning for free through the UI Libraries)
  - Ask to shadow meetings or people on other teams in order to learn more

## **My supervisor is giving me too much work!**

- Identify the problem—is it you, your supervisor, or the work culture?
- Are you managing your time appropriately?
- Are you inefficient because you lack a specific skill?
- Do you need training in project-management techniques?
- Is it normal for people in the office to work late or on the weekends?
- Communicate with this formula
  - Reiterate your excitement to be there
  - Articulate the challenges you are experiencing
  - Propose solutions or ask for help in adapting or skill-building
- Still too much? Contact an advisor at the Pomerantz Career Center for coaching!



## **How do I get along with a difficult coworker?**

- Treat the person politely and kindly
- Do not gossip behind their back
- Consider what makes the relationship difficult:
  - Do you have different communication styles?
  - Did they have different expectations for a task or project?
- Ask for feedback if you sense that they think you have made a mistake
- When possible, set boundaries if they are treating you poorly
- Does it feel extreme? Track the negative behavior to discuss with the
- Pomerantz Career Center, your supervisor, or a human resources manager

## **How can I get more guidance from my supervisor?**

- Supervisors won't know your needs unless you speak up
- Politely, assertively request a short weekly or bi-weekly meeting for questions, progress, reports, and feedback
- Ensure you know the timeline, tasks, methods, and expected outcomes for projects
- Ask clarifying questions when given expectations
- Ask when is the best time of the day for questions
- Is there another colleague you should ask if you have small technical questions?
- Make sure to participate in evaluations to discuss strengths, weaknesses, and your career goals



# SAFETY AT YOUR INTERNSHIP

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Some companies and organizations will have trainings or provide guidance during your orientation that covers their anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, and ethics policies. Others may not. If the behavior or language of your co-workers, supervisors, clients, or fellow interns makes you uncomfortable or is blatantly unacceptable, the typical first step is to discuss it with your supervisor or with the human resources representative at your organization. If the problem is with your supervisor, your organization does not have a human resources person, or you do not feel comfortable talking with either of them about the situation, do not hesitate to contact campus resources for guidance. Although we cannot completely control the internship experience, some behaviors are unacceptable. Discrimination, harassment, aggression and illegal behavior do not belong in the workplace, and there are resources to help you navigate tough situations if you feel that your safety or emotional wellbeing are at risk.

## Resources for Guidance

Your internship course instructor: Not sure if something is serious or not? Your instructor can help you navigate who to talk to at your internship site or on campus, and/or provide coaching on what to say. Please note this may not be a confidential resource –if your concerns involve sexual harassment or assault, we may be required to connect you with the Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator to ensure your concerns are addressed.

**Pomerantz Career Center** (319-335-1023): Ask to speak to the Associate Director of Experiential Education. Similar to your instructor they can help you navigate who to talk to at your internship site or on campus, and/or provide coaching on what to say. Please note this is not a confidential resource –if your concerns involve sexual harassment or assault, they are required to share information and connect you with the Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator to ensure you have the resources and information you need.

**Student Legal Services** (319-335-3276): Student Legal Services has two licensed attorneys who provide free legal advice on a variety of issues including workplace harassment and discrimination. They can also review and advise students on employment contracts including confidentiality and non-compete agreements. Services are confidential.

**Office of Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator** (319-335-6200): The Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator (OSMRC) provides a central place to report incidents, works with victims or complainants to ensure their wishes are understood and inform the process, helps them connect with confidential resources and victim advocates, and can facilitate academic accommodations.

For more resources for situations involving sexual misconduct, see the University of Iowa's **Resource and Referral Guide for Sexual Misconduct, Dating/ Domestic Violence, and Stalking.**

**The Campus Inclusion Team** (319-335-1162): The Campus Inclusion Team is staffed by members in the Office of the Dean of Students. You can submit a concern online and a representative will contact you to help connect you with the appropriate resources for incidents related to bias and discrimination based upon age, ability, gender, sexuality, economic background, national origin, race/ethnicity, religion, political associations, and veteran status. Reports can also be made anonymously, but these reports will not be addressed with support.

**The Office of the Ombudsperson** (319-335-3608): The Office of the Ombudsperson is a safe place to talk about any concerns, including but not limited to sexual harassment or misconduct, discrimination, violation of policies, and unethical behavior. This is a confidential resource unless you disclose plans to hurt yourself or others. This resource is especially useful if the situation involves other campus parties including faculty, staff, fellow students or UI interns.

**Law Enforcement: Local or University police** (319-335-5022) If you are in immediate danger in the United States, call 911. If you are in immediate danger outside the United States, you will want to know the local equivalent for 911 emergency services in your location. This information and additional guidance can be found in the Safety & Security section of the US Department of State country page for your location: [travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html)

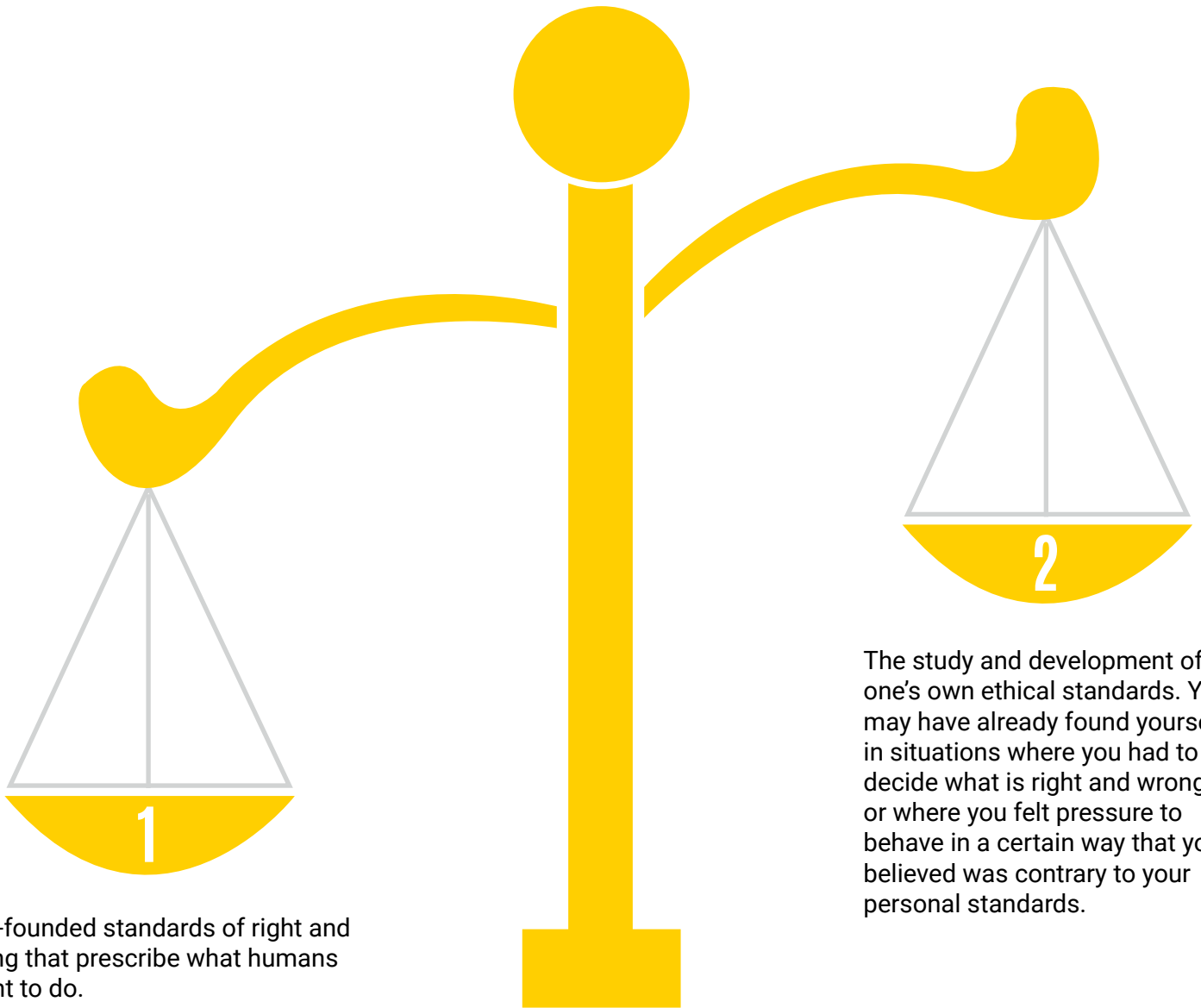
Need immediate help with a situation involving sexual misconduct?

**RAINN: Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network** provides a 24 hr hotline [rainn.org/about-national-sexual-assault-telephone-hotline](https://rainn.org/about-national-sexual-assault-telephone-hotline)

# TIME TO GET SERIOUS: ETHICS

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According to the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, ethics involve:



Well-founded standards of right and wrong that prescribe what humans ought to do.

The study and development of one's own ethical standards. You may have already found yourself in situations where you had to decide what is right and wrong or where you felt pressure to behave in a certain way that you believed was contrary to your personal standards.

## POSSIBLE ETHICAL DILEMMAS:

Ethical issues in the workplace usually involve money, confidentiality, honesty, or relationships.

\*Interns can always contact the Pomerantz Career Center for help.



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## Example #2- Financials

An intern working at a financial services company is feeling pressure from her supervisor to reach sales goal. She also knows she must fully inform clients about the risks of particular investments. If she prepares a graph for her supervisor that shows impressive long-term returns for a specific investment, it will help convince the client to place a great amount of money under the group's management. Providing the client with information showing short-term losses will probably convince the client to allow a competing institution to manage his money. How can she meet her supervisor's expectations and be honest with the clients?

### Response

If the intern feels comfortable, she could discuss her concerns with her supervisor and present graphs for both a short-term and long-term returns. If the intern does not feel comfortable addressing her concerns with her supervisor and is continuing to feel pressure to withhold or alter information, she could seek guidance from the human resources official who helped in the hiring. There may be an organizational ombudsperson who the intern could talk with. All organizations should have a written ethics policy which should be provided to new employees during orientation. The policy should guide interactions with clients and require fairness, honesty and accurate information.

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## Example #2- Labor Law

An intern works at a for-profit organization and accepted a position without pay because he was told by his prospective supervisor that the position met all of the requirements of a legal internship which exempted the company from paying interns. After two weeks, the intern realizes that he was chosen to replace a full-time employee and the firm should provide compensation. The intern needs the experience and a good recommendation from his supervisor, but knows he's being used. How can the intern resolve the situation?

### Response

The intern's options include:

- a) doing nothing, remaining in the internship to gain experience and hopefully a positive recommendation
- b) advocating for himself with the supervisor or human resources
- c) bringing legal action against the employer.

During a scheduled meeting with his supervisor, the intern could indicate that he feels he's performing similar duties as regular employees and ask for clarification about compensation. The intern could also contact the Pomerantz Career Center and ask an advisor to check with the human resources office to discuss the issue.

# TIPS FOR YOUR VIRTUAL INTERNSHIP

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A virtual internship is a great way for you to gain experience without leaving your home. Virtual internships allow for unique opportunities to engage with employers while gaining experience in your field of choice. While you will not be leaving your home, virtual internships require increased planning by both the intern and the supervisor, be sure to take the time to make sure you will be prepared. The tips below are a great place to start when embarking on a virtual internship.

**#1**

**Create a plan** with your supervisor that lays out your work responsibilities and, if necessary, ask for assistance with setting up the technology needed to work virtually.

**#2**

**Maintain a regular work schedule** and **find a comfortable location** free of distractions.

**#3**

**Schedule regular virtual meetings** with you supervisor, and don't be afraid of over-communicating.

**#4**

**Take the initiative** and **communicate** with colleagues to learn about their roles.

**#5**

**Request more feedback** than you typically would if working face-to-face.

**#6**

**Keep track of your accomplishments** no matter how small.

**#7**

**Spend time reflecting** on the skills you're using and learning.

**#8**

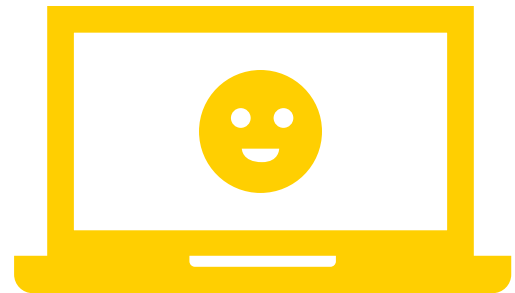
**Start every day by making a to-do list** and **schedule in breaks** every few hours.

**#9**

**Build in time for exercise and creative pursuits.**

**#10**

**Ask your supervisor about being a positive reference** at the conclusion of your final meeting.



# LEAVE A GOOD IMPRESSION

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## Leave on a High Note

### Set Teammates up for Success

- Provide a status update on any unfinished projects
- Tell them where to find all documents or materials

### Ask for Feedback

- Set up a review meeting with your supervisor
- Share a report of your accomplishments, projects, & learning
- Discuss any evaluations for the company or for an internship course
- Ask directly what they think you should work on for future internships

## After Internship

### Share your Gratitude

- Write a letter of thanks including a salutation, body, and closing
- Include what you learned about the profession
- Include what you learned about yourself as a professional

### Update your Search Materials

- Add your internship to your resume
- Put any high quality projects or documents in a portfolio of work samples
- Update your LinkedIn profile with the experience
- Did you do really well? Ask for a recommendation on LinkedIn
- Get feedback on your updates—ask your supervisor and the Career Center to review your resume!

### Continue to Network

- Connect with colleagues on LinkedIn and follow the company
- Give the organization some love on social media—like them on Facebook or Twitter
- Share about the experience in your student groups—is there any opportunity to present or be on a panel?
- Loved your internship? Email your boss 6 months later with an update & reiterate your interest in hearing about full-time opportunities with the organization
- Didn't like it? Meet with an advisor at the Pomerantz Career Center to talk about next steps

