

### Attitude

Maintaining a good attitude at work is important. Be proactive and seek out work when you are not busy. Do not waste time getting a task done, rather work efficiently to complete all assignments. Don't feel that tasks are "beneath you." All work has a number of mundane tasks that must be performed. Ask for new tasks throughout the internship. Get to know who performs which functions in the organization and learn from them as well; they may be helpful to you as you perform your function. Know to whom you can go to ask questions or get clarification.

Learn to accomplish what's asked of you. You may work alone or with others but must be accountable for the work for which you are responsible. Generally no one will "remind" you about due dates and a missed deadline is considered a serious lapse. If you are unsure of any part of your assignment, ask your supervisor for clarification. When you are done with an assignment and have extra time, always ask your supervisor for more work. Be the 'go to' person in the office by delivering work on time and well done.

### Accepting Feedback

From time to time, you will be given feedback from your supervisor as well as others you work with such as peers, teammates, and customers. It is important to listen to feedback with an open mind and accept it as an opportunity to learn and improve. Often feedback is provided to help you develop your skills and expand your knowledge base. Do not try to explain away feedback or debate what is being said. Listen and schedule a follow up appointment if you feel you need to explain your actions or have additional questions.

### Learning the Work Environment and Culture

Every organization has a culture that includes formal policies and procedures as well as informal and often unwritten ways of doing things. You can learn about your organization's culture both through observation and inquiry. Some organizations are quite informal while others are very structured and formal. You may already have a sense of which category your organization falls into from having interviewed with them. Fitting in with the group and following the accepted ways of doing things are all part of the work culture. The bottom line of any business is to get the work done, so do not assume a relaxed environment means you can be late with assignments or walk into work late. If you are unsure of how to handle an issue, ask your supervisor or one of your peers what the conventions of the team might be and do your best to fit in.

### Setting Your Goals and Objectives

Typically, you will have met with your supervisor prior to beginning your internship to get a sense of the work you will be performing, the tools you will be using, the people you will be working with, and the goals he/she may have set for you. If this has not been done, you should schedule time with your manager to get an understanding of the work you'll be expected to do. The job description you applied to often provides an overview of the work to be done.

## The Adams Earn & Learn Program: Working Day to Day

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To be successful it is critical to set specific goals with your supervisor. Prepare a brief set of goals and objectives for the work you perform and review it with your supervisor so you can be clear about expectations. This document will also provide content for the evaluation sent to supervisors at the end of the internship. Start with the job description and add some detail outlining specific projects and tasks. Think about what you would like to accomplish in this internship, skills you'd like to expand and things you'd like to learn. Your objectives should be specific, measurable and limited to a specific timeframe. Schedule time with your supervisor to go over your list and incorporate other assignments he/she may want you to focus on.

### Workplace Correspondence

In the professional work environment, e-mail is a work tool and is considered to be an important way to communicate about and document work performed by members of the organization. When writing or sending e-mails, proper spelling, punctuation, capitalization and grammar should be used at all times; abbreviations, symbols or phrases acceptable in personal text or information messaging are not to be used. Avoid smiley faces and other symbols and never use slang, or what might be seen as inappropriate language. Be aware that text in all capital letters indicates that the sender is "shouting" at the receiver, so avoid using all upper case as well as all lower case letters in e-mails.

### Meetings

With Your Supervisor and the Team:

From time to time, you will meet with your supervisor to talk about a variety of work-related topics. Meetings might be one-on-one or as part of a team. Be aware that all meetings in the work environment are serious business activities. You should be on time, prepared to take notes, contribute to the team discussion, report on the work you are doing, and take on responsibilities pertinent to your job. Always be professional and attentive during meetings. You will likely have questions about policies, procedures or work issues and should feel free to consult with your supervisor so that you can be effective on your job. Keep an ongoing list of questions that you can discuss when you meet with your supervisor or others on the team. The most common area for improvement noted by internship supervisors is communication. Supervisors report that interns often don't ask questions or share ideas. If you are not comfortable speaking up in a group meeting, be sure to schedule one-on-one time with your supervisor to share your ideas and suggestions.

### Company and Organization Meetings and Conferences

Some organizations conduct periodic meetings or conferences to communicate company business, direction or results. Meetings such as these are a good opportunity to learn about the company, the industry and network with colleagues. You should attend all company meetings if your supervisor permits.

### Networking

One of the most important elements of an internship learning experience is the opportunity to make new connections and expand your network. Networking is more than just “talking to people.” It is face to face meetings in which you seek advice and information from organization resources, allowing you to be better informed and providing insight as you begin to explore different career and job opportunities. Getting to know other employees, their roles and contributions in the company, broadens your company and industry knowledge. Showing interest in others and asking them about their experiences allows you to gain first-hand information and knowledge not available through other sources.

### Basic Networking Steps

- Once you’ve been working for a while, consider who you might talk with to learn more about the profession, the company or potential opportunities. Prepare a brief introduction/speech (30 second “elevator speech”) that states something about who you are, your experiences and interests, and what you’re looking to learn (questions on work, functions, careers, the industry or the company are typical). Use this introduction as the opening of your conversation as you approach potential networking contacts.
- Be sure that you plan a convenient (and mutually agreeable) time for the individual you want to talk to and limit the length of time you take with them (20-30 minutes is a good gauge).
- Scheduling time in advance is imperative and telling the individual a little about why you’re seeking to meet is strongly recommended.
- Providing an up-to-date resume is helpful and will give the person you seek to network with some background on your education and previous experiences, clubs, and any volunteer work, all of which may be valuable to the discussion.
- After you’ve met, be sure to thank the person you met with in writing and acknowledge the value of the meeting and the information you received. (See additional information below on thanking networking contacts.)
- You may also want to keep in touch with any networking contacts and keep them informed about how you’re doing on your Internship or provide information about things you may be involved in on your work assignment.
- Be sure to connect on LinkedIn after all network meetings.

### Using Networking Contacts and Thanking Them

Be careful not to overuse a contact or take advantage of a relationship (by asking for too many meetings). Also, always thank the contact with a note (email is fine) but keep it sincere and professional (avoid slang and smiley faces or other informal symbols or abbreviations). In your thank you letter, thank the contact for taking time to meet with you, briefly address what you learned and your appreciation for the information, and, if appropriate, summarize the next steps you will take going forward as a result of what you learned.

### Other Networking Thoughts – Using Organization Meetings and Conferences

Attending organization meetings and conferences adds to your company knowledge and greatly expands your network. They may also be helpful in giving you insights into the work and skills required.

### Giving Back

Be aware that networking is a two-way street and you should think about ways you might be able to help those you network with. This can include providing information about your school, The Career Center, student associations or other organizations that you may be familiar with that the networking contact will find valuable. Also volunteering to help with a charitable company event or activity may be another way to give something back to the networking contact.

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Networking. (n.d.). Retrieved October 01, 2020, from <https://blogs.shu.edu/internships/working-day-to-day/networking/>