



## CAREER DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

C H A N N E L  
I S L A N D S

### THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE STARTING YOUR INTERNSHIP

**Role of the Intern Supervisor:** For the student, this internship is an opportunity to synthesize classroom theory, work skills, and professionalism to gain valuable career-related experience. The intern should be supervised by an experienced professional who is qualified to mentor, train, and evaluate the intern. The intern's duties & responsibilities should be clearly outlined in the internship position description. The Intern Supervisor should conduct a thorough review of the expectations and role of the intern in the beginning of the internship experience.

**Communication:** Close communication with your intern is a major factor in providing a meaningful internship experience. You are encouraged to communicate with your intern and provide frequent and honest feedback to assist your intern's development in an experiential- learning setting. Present opportunities for your intern to develop skills necessary for success in your industry, providing any initial instruction or information as required for skill development.

**Workspace:** Provide a physical safe workspace with access to appropriate resources for your intern to complete their assigned tasks, preferably in close proximity to the Intern Site Supervisor.

**Orientation:** A brief intern orientation will provide a forum to educate your intern on the organizational structure, practices and goals. It is recommended that you provide an orientation with your intern and complete the following:

- Tour of Site including restroom and break room
- Introduce your intern to appropriate staff members
- Check-In person (if you expect the intern to check-in/out)
- Review safety rules of the site including location of emergency exits and emergency procedures
- Review dress and conduct code, calling in sick procedures
- Office Equipment: How to use telephones, where to obtain basic office supplies, etc.

**Evaluation:** Intern Site Supervisors should conduct a mid-semester and final evaluation of their intern's performance and the results of the evaluations should be submitted to the appropriate office.

### KNOW COMMON EMPLOYER EXPECTATIONS

Employers have some fairly universal expectations related to professionalism and self-management that you should be aware of before your internship begins.

Here are the characteristics that employers consistently seek in the college students they hire for internships:

- Initiative and self-motivation (generally seen as No. 1 in importance)
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Willingness to learn and take constructive feedback
- Problem solving and critical thinking skills
- Ability to work in teams
- Communication skills (written and oral)
- Solid work ethic
- Attention to detail
- Reliability
- Interpersonal skills (getting along with other people)
- Organizational skills
- Planning skills (establishing priorities and following through on tasks)
- Tact
- Honesty and integrity

One other skill set is becoming increasingly important as well: the appropriate use of technology, especially social media. On the simpler side, employers want some assurance that you will write professional emails, avoiding “textspeak” (i.e., not using capital letters and/or punctuation) and instead using complete sentences and language that is appropriate to the work setting and the industry. On a more complicated note, employers expect you to keep work-related matters off public forums like your Facebook and Instagram feeds. The expectations for your particular internship will become clearer during your first days in the position.

## **BE EVER MINDFUL OF YOUR KEY INTERNSHIP GOALS**

You decided to pursue an internship for a reason—probably several of them, in fact. Now is a good time to clarify them, so that you can remain mindful of what you’re trying to do throughout your entire internship experience.

Here are some key goals you might have for your internship:

- Career exploration
- Developing Core Career Competencies
- Networking and relationship building
- Collecting evidence

It is one thing to read about a particular career, or even talk to someone working in that career. It is quite another to live it for yourself, if only for a short time.

As your internship begins and throughout the experience itself, be sure to remember: One of its main purposes is to help you understand what a career field (or at least one particular organization in that career field) is really like.

## **DEVELOPING CORE CAREER COMPETENCIES**

Career readiness is the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace. Source: [National Association of Colleges and Employers](#)



- **Critical Thinking/Problem Solving**

*Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.*



- **Oral/Written Communications**

*Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.*



- **Teamwork/Collaboration**

*Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure and can negotiate and manage conflict.*



- **Digital Technology**

*Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.*



- **Leadership**

*Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.*



- **Professionalism/Work Ethic**

*Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes.*



- **Career Management**

*Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.*



- **Global/Intercultural Fluency**

*Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates, openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences.*

During your internship, reflect on how can you use your internship to proactively develop these competencies, through both routine, everyday activities as well as any bigger projects you might take on?

**Networking and Relationship Building:** Many career paths are influenced by the people we meet along the way who open doors and provide opportunities. Through your internship, you will be able to tap the expertise and connections of the various people around you-co-workers, your supervisor(s), clients and customers, and others. Are you still trying to pinpoint a future career, for instance, or even your academic major here in school? The people you work with during your internship can help by offering you their insights and sharing their career development experiences.

Use this opportunity to network with not only your site supervisor but also other interns and employees at your internship. Creating a profile on a site like LinkedIn will help you establish an online professional network so that the relationships you develop during your internship last long after the semester is over.

Additionally, CSUCI has its own networking platform – [Dolphin Connect](#) – to assist you in connecting with other Dolphins (alumni). Dolphin Connect is connecting the Dolphin Network through mentoring and purposeful connections. By joining Dolphin Connect, you will be able to network with Dolphins in your industry, share career advice or gain insights from experienced professionals, and access career development resources. Read more about how to create a LinkedIn account on the Career Development Page and more tips about networking on [Dolphin Connect](#).

**Know your resources.** CSUCI has many resources for you while you navigate your internship. Be sure to check in with the Career Studio, (805) 437-3270 or [career.services@csuci.edu](mailto:career.services@csuci.edu), if you have any questions about your remote/virtual internship. Or check in with your major chair or academic adviser. Your Dolphin Pod is here for you!