

Tips for Maximizing your Internship Experience on Study Away

1 - Recognize that your internship placement is much more than a chance to work in your chosen field.

- See your internship placement as an example of a typical workplace for the country where you are studying. This may be the best place to develop interpersonal relationships with locals. It is also a wonderful opportunity to observe appropriate cultural interactions and behavior patterns.

2 - Do the appropriate research to prepare yourself for the internship and the work culture in which you will be immersing yourself.

- Learn about the organization: what do they do? What is their mission? What can you find out about their history and reputation/public image? Arriving at your internship demonstrating that you have taken the time to learn about the organization will demonstrate your commitment to doing a good job.
- Learn about cultural norms for the workplace where you will be working. Going Global (<http://online.goinglobal.com/default.aspx>) provides country guides that address professional standards, customs for networking, how to write a resume, as well as what you can expect in an internship setting in the country where you will be conducting your internship.

3 - Develop a learning contract for yourself.

- Even if not required by your program, taking the time to outline your objectives for the experience will help you to focus on exactly what it is you hope to get out the internship.
- Set clear and measurable goals for yourself. Focus on skills you hope to develop rather than specific tasks.
- This learning contract will be a great touchstone for you during the course of your internship. Use it to keep yourself focused and on track. Share it with your site supervisor so that they know you have some clear expectations for yourself while completing the internship.

4 - Develop a resume or C.V.

5 - Make sure you are looking out for your best interest.

- You may need to be your own advocate if things are not going as expected.
- Don't assume that someone else is looking out for you. Utilize the structure in place to make sure, in a culturally appropriate way, that your needs and expectations are being considered.

6 - Know your reporting and support structure.