

YOUR INTERNSHIP JOURNAL

- TIPS AND THOUGHTS -



Your journal entries do not have to be lengthy, but should capture your general thoughts and reactions to your work. Ideally, you should maintain your journal on a daily or weekly basis to ensure that you capture details as well as your feelings and reactions to the day-to-day events and your responsibilities while interning.

BENEFITS OF KEEPING A JOURNAL

- Your journal entries will prove quite useful when updating your resume in the fall.
- It will provide a "record" of your professional growth and development over the course of your internship.
- The process of writing about your experience will afford you the opportunity to reflect on your experience on a regular basis.
- It will be helpful to have your journal in hand when meeting with a UCS counselor to discuss your experience in the fall.
- It will prove to be helpful as you take on other opportunities and are able to draw parallels between experiences.
- The journal will be beneficial when it is time to interview and you are asked to articulate your experiences.

JOURNAL WRITING TIPS

- Be consistent with your entries. Set aside a regular time each day (or week), even if only for five minutes, to devote to journal writing.
- Find your own journal writing style. Some may want to keep it simple and maintain a spiral-bound notebook. Some may prefer a more traditional journal, which are available in endless designs, fabrics, etc. Or, you could consider keeping your journal on your personal computer or laptop. Whatever works for you!
- Keep your journal at home! We recommend you do not keep your journal at your workplace. Since you will be recording your own private thoughts and observations, you do not want co-workers accessing your material, intentionally or accidentally.
- Your journal is a great place to record the names and pertinent information of contacts you make during your internship. Note the contacts you feel may be helpful to you and how they may help in the future.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR JOURNAL

Before you begin your internship:

- What do you expect from this experience? What goals have you set for yourself? What obstacles exist that may prevent you from achieving your goals?
- Speak with a counselor at UCS to help define your *skills, interests and values* in order to assess whether your internship experience meets your definitions of these integral factors.

During the internship:

- What do I enjoy most about the work I am doing? What do I enjoy least? What am I best at? When I leave work feeling I had a good day, what have I accomplished? When I feel I have had a lousy day, why?
- Analyze the organizational culture. What are the formal and informal power and social structures? Look at communication and friendship patterns, politics, demographics, value systems, and unwritten codes of dress and conduct. Compare these patterns with official power structures and organizational policies and values. What do I enjoy most about this organization's culture? Least?
- What are the intellectual, psychological, and physical requirements of this type of work? What are the costs and rewards? Does this work mesh with my interests, values and skills? How have my expectations of this work compared with my daily experience?

As your internship ends:

- How has my academic background proved helpful to my work as an intern? Specify which classes, subjects, projects, etc. (if any) have been most beneficial and why. How will your internship experience modify your learning process in future courses?
- How has this experience impacted my personal and professional goals?
- Would you want to do this internship again? Why or why not?