

INTERNSHIP: ARE YOU READY?

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Practical training or internship is an opportunity for students in higher learning institutions to gain some temporary working experience in an organization either public or private sector based on their choice and requirement. Internship is being recognized as a good process for students to apply their academic knowledge learnt in class to a work environment. It is also gives opportunities for students to make clear the direction in their career life after completing their practical training. Many students who have undergone internship have been recruited by the company where they did their practical as internship is also as an avenue for organizations to select good candidates for their company. On top of this, students also can build contacts while they do their internship as this is very important as an avenue to market themselves within the industry. Therefore, internship has become very vital in maturing the student to become a capable worker in the future and even the Ministry of Higher Education has put much emphasis on the importance of internship among public and private colleges in Malaysia.

Some tips before you start planning for your internship:

- Read the internship description: while many internship exist to nurture budding professionals, there are others which serves the employer with cheap or free labor. Make sure you are going to get what you need out of an internship.
- Do some research on the company: try to take your time to do some research about the company as much as possible through media

or internet. This will help you to tell you whether the company is suitable for you or not. On top of that, by doing a study on the company will help you to be a more knowledgeable interviewee if the company requests to interview the candidates first.

- Talk to former interns: it is good if you can contact and hear about the experiences those who went for internship before you. Also you can talk to the internship coordinator who may have kept a record of intern's feedback or can provide you with some information.

DO's

- Be proactive - as an intern, you should always be proactive toward the task given by your supervisor as sometimes they want to test your endurance.
- Ask question - good students always ask question, same thing when you do your intern, don't be shy to ask questions.
- Take notes - always take note while you do your internship as it will help you to know the work better and it will help you to write for your report.
- Network and find mentor - while doing your internship try to build your network as many as possible as it will help you in your future career.
- Sharpen your presentation and communication skills - it is very important for students to enhance their communication skills especially when dealing with business clients.
- Understand the big picture - try to understand the whole idea why you have internship? It is not just a place to enjoy...it is more than that, a

place where you can learn, a place where 'theory turn to practical', a place where you can build your network, a place where you gain knowledge etc.

DON'T's

- Lose patience - it is very important for interns to control their emotions during internship as it will reflect your personality.
- Loss confidence - as an intern, you should show your confidence level to the highest point, as sometimes organization will give some tasks as just to test whether you have a confidence or not towards one task.
- Compete - don't compete with permanent staff who work in the organization as it will create conflicts and you will find yourself in trouble. Be humble and always respect all the people working in the organization even if the people is just 'an office boy'.
- Focus too much on what others are doing - don't be too busy body, just do what your supervisor ask you to do.

What you need to do:

- Decide on career, positions and companies
- Format strategies
- Prepare essential items such as resume
- Begin searching and applying for internship
- Attend interview if necessary

Finally, always focus and be humble, Till then, show you are worth to the company who give place for your internship.