



## Internship Journal

You should begin your journal at the start of your internship. At the halfway point and at the conclusion of your internship, consider sharing your journal with your business sponsor. This journal is a recommendation, not a requirement.

This journal is a useful way of keeping track of what you are learning on the internship. A journal causes you to think about your experiences and can help give insight into what you are experiencing and feeling. It is also a useful record of your learning.

To be most effective, the journal should not be merely a log of events. It should be a means to analyze or reflect on the activities you are performing and the new things you are learning. In addition, it helps you to recognize important events and to relate your stated objectives to what you perceive you are learning and doing.

Record something in your journal each day you work. Be sure to date each entry. Write at least several sentences each day.

Use the following to help you decide what information to include in your journal entries:

### 1. Job Description

- Describe in as much detail as possible what you will be doing during your internship. You may need to add to this description as your internship progresses.
- How do your job responsibilities match your own personal objectives?

### 2. The Organizational Setting

- What is the organizational structure? Who are the leaders? Who makes things happen?
- Who are the clients/customers of the organization?
- Describe the work atmosphere at your internship site. How are decisions made? Is it a cooperative or competitive atmosphere? Is there a lot of group work, or do people work by themselves?

### 3. Journal Entries

- Describe what you did and what you observed at your internship site.
- Describe what the best thing was that happened to you today. How did it make you feel?
- Describe what new skills or knowledge you have learned since beginning the internship. How might these new skills or knowledge help you in future job searches?
- Describe what people do who work at this occupation. Describe a typical day at your site.
- Describe some of the advantages and disadvantages of working in this occupation or at this organization.

- How have your duties changed since you first started? Have you been given more responsibility?
- What do you feel is your main contribution to the organization?
- How do the people at the internship site treat you? How does it make you feel?
- What have you done this week that makes you proud? Why?
- List new words and their definitions that you encounter during your internship.

#### **4. Questions You May Want To Ask Your Business Mentor During Your Internship**

- How did you become interested in this field?
- What training or education must you have to pursue this career?
- What do you like the most or the least about your work?
- What skills do you use most often?
- What personal qualities are helpful?
- What are the major problems or frustrations in your work?
- What advice would you give to someone interested in this field?
- How will work in this field affect your lifestyle?

## Your Internship Journal - Thoughts and Tips

Your journal entries do not need 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?