Now that you have landed your internship it is time to prepare for this experience. Often times, an internship is viewed as an extended interview for a potential full time position. Other times, internships are viewed as a means to confirm a career direction. Maximize your experience. Learn all you can. Prepare! This guide will provide you with some helpful tips to get you started with your new internship.
Strategy 1: Show the employer how valuable you are to the company. Wow them with your passion and interest in the industry and projects you are working on. Provide them with information about your experience, knowledge, and skills.

Strategy 2: Take the time to really learn about the company, the industry, and the people that work within it. This is your time to confirm whether this is the right place for you.

Making the most out of your internship:

Understand your “Brand”
Aspects include understanding what skills, experiences, and abilities you offer an employer and industry; what you might need to reach your career goals; and making a plan of action to fill in the gap. How does your “brand” fit with your internship site?

Know the company
Take the time to read everything about your company (website, news articles, print material, etc). This will be the backbone to your experience and will help you develop a strong educational plan while at the company.

Network, network, network!
The information you have found in your research will lead you to developing a list of those within the company that would be the most important for you to get to know. Meet with everyone in the company to explore all aspects of the experience. You never know what you will find!

Find your personal “advisory board”
Once you have met with everyone and learned what they do, pick 2-3 of the most relevant and useful people to your particular career plan to be a part of your personal “advisory board”. This is a group of those who you would consider to be mentors. Use them. Ask their advice.

Seek out assignments
Your research and networking will help you discover the assignments and projects most useful for your career. Ask for more! The more you take on, the more marketable you become

Keep in touch
Remember to stay in touch with those on your “advisory board” and others that you have formed good relationships with. They will be useful later in your career.

Tactic: points to follow that will either “make or break” your experience in the internship. Think specifically about what you are trying to accomplish NOW, and in your future career.

#1: Before you start, prepare yourself by learning the “language” and environment of the company. Read everything you can about the company, department, and job function.

#2: Introduce yourself to your new team and others in the company.

#3: Figure out which projects you would like to work on or ones that you could create.

Building Relationships/Establish Rapport

The best way to establish relationships is to ask questions and to listen to those around you. Once “on the ground”, take the time to introduce yourself to each person individually. Ask them questions about their background, job responsibilities, etc. Here are some key tactics:

Tactics (Week 1 – 2):

#1: Make sure to meet and connect with the administrative staff. They are the keys to the organization and normally know more about the inner workings of the office than others.

#2: Listening should be 80% of what you do in a meeting to start with.

#3: Clearly define your work schedule and goals for your supervisor.

#4: Master the art of communication in your office.
Making Connections

**Tactics (Week 3 – 4):**

#1: Take the time to meet with as many people as you can throughout the organization to learn as much as you can while you are there.

#2: Use select individuals from your meetings to develop an “advisory board” of those who would be willing to offer advice and support during your time there and after.

#3: Now is the time to let your supervisor know if you are not getting the experience you thought you would. Also is a great time to ask for more responsibility or to get onto additional projects. Seek feedback!

#4: After you have built individual relationships and rapport, you should start to express your ideas more openly in groups.

Building Bridges for the Future

**Tactics (Week 5 – 12):**

#1: Begin to talk with HR or others about possible opportunities within the company or throughout the industry. If you want to work for the company in the future...tell them! If not, seek references.

#2: Expand your network by asking your colleagues for others you could talk to outside the company.

#3: Explore extending your internship into the next semester.

#4: Make sure to follow up with your supervisor and others after the experience closes.

Closing

As you close down your internship experience, take stock in what you have learned. Update your resume with your Career Advisor, and begin to think about the next steps for your career.