

Your Mistakes as An Intern



You think you are super helpful and wonderful during your internship, everyone likes you. But being in the workforce, it is totally different than what you learn from your college, no longer a textbook telling you what you should follow. You need to slowly gain your sense of professionalism when you are an intern. You may make small mistakes that mean a lot while you don't know. Do not hesitate to ask whenever you want to clarify your actions, because there may be no one telling you all these common mistakes that you should avoid. For your knowledge, we've compiled the advices from experts about your mistakes as a intern:

1. Avoiding menial tasks which are a part of every internship

For interns, menial tasks may take up a big part of their internship which can be frustrating when their objective is to learn how to do the job in real workplace. Show a great work ethic by taking the menial tasks quickly and cheerfully, it's a bonus to gain the employer's confidence. They will have more confidence to give you more challenging assignments. If you can't do the small thing, you can't achieve the big thing, so the say goes.

There can always be a fine line between contributing to an organisation's bottom line and being taken advantage in doing all menial tasks such as making coffee and photocopying materials. Therefore, you should speak to your employers regarding your responsibilities prior to starting your internship. So in case what you are experiencing is not actually what you have discussed earlier with them, you can further discuss with them about it.

2. Dressing Inappropriately

When in doubt to dress up, don't be afraid to ask. It is always better to be too fancy rather than too casual in work environments. Read the environment. If you work at a law firm or investment bank, go with a suit or pencil skirt ensemble. Look how people are dressing around you. As a college student you have been given some leeway on how you may dress but in the workplace being too casual or inappropriate can negatively impact you when it comes to getting professional references or an offer for a full-time job. Unless you are working for a start-up which has a more casual environment, then go with more casual pants and skirts.

3. Thinking you know exactly how you are supposed to do

Greg Brooks, founder of Text Book Assault, said:

"The biggest mistake interns make is coming in with a predefined notion of what they should do and how they should do it. Oddly enough, movies, blogs, or other media impact what an intern expects to do and how to contribute. In reality, each company is a completely different culture and has a different set of needs. It is crucial for interns to listen and learn — they are, after all, there to increase their work experience."

4. Poor Time Management

Not getting to work on time or taking long break or lunch periods usually does not set well with employers. You will want to adhere closely to the rules and regulations of the employer as a professional intern. Don't come in late and leave earlier. When you are given an hour for lunch, don't make it more than that even everyone else in your company does so. Remind yourself always you are still an intern, don't act like a full time who is actually being treated differently than you.

5. Defend for their mistakes

For senior experts, the most common mistake interns do is arguing. Don't ever argue when you do mistake. Worry too much on your mistakes and try hard to defend yourself can be real annoying for people who works with you. Instead, you should listen and learn from your mistakes.

6. Poor English

Communication skill is very important in every company. To communicate well, you need to have language skills, and nowadays there are many complaints about poor English (writing and speaking) in fresh graduates. As an intern, you are expected to have good English for normal tasks like emailing. You are soon to be graduate so brush up your English now. Unless you are working for some companies which don't use English at all.

7. Not establishing important relationships

In order to be successful at any internship, it is crucial to establish key relationships that can further assist you in learning over the course of your internship. It can be continuing as important networking contacts after the internship is over. Good mentors and co-workers can share important knowledge and skills which you should be aware of. Instead of a quick goodbye, give them an appreciation notes before your leave and mention that your hope to keep in touch.

For current interns, start to reflect on your actions if you have any above and avoid them in the future. Always remind yourself as an intern while act like a professional.