

## INTERNING DURING COVID-19: TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL REMOTE INTERNSHIP

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As you prepare for your virtual internship experience, keep these general tips in mind.

- **Learn the office's culture and its online culture.** It is always important to understand the culture of the organization you are joining. This summer, it will also be important to understand how the organization has adjusted to an online environment. Set up a call with your supervisor to discuss changes to the organizations' internal communication practices, dynamics, and workflow. Are there all-team virtual meetings that you can attend? Have office members started new virtual traditions, like virtual lunch calls or evening social activities online? Has the organization adopted a new, robust online communication channel, like a Slack workspace?
- **Don't take on more work than you can handle.** Because you likely won't be leaving your residence to work, you may feel that your workday stretches from early in the morning to late at night. Remember that you signed on to a 35-hour work week. You should not be expected to spend 12 hours a day on internship projects, and you should communicate with your supervisor if you find yourself regularly working longer than a typical "business day."
- **Manage your work hours efficiently.** A key for confining your work hours to the classic 9-to-5 will be working efficiently and consistently throughout your 8- or 9-hour workday. As you complete online classes, you may notice that your attention is more divided and inconsistent in remote contexts than in the in-person classroom. The same challenge will persist in your remote work experience. Limit distractions in your workspace, take timed breaks, and time-block your assignments to keep yourself on task.
- **Document your achievements.** With so little to break up the days and weeks of your internship experience, your time may fly by. At the end, you'll want a record of your achievements. Consider collecting your finished products and compiling a portfolio, not only for your own reference but also so that your supervisor has a record of your accomplishments in one place. It will allow both you and your supervisor to reflect on what you accomplished under difficult circumstances, and it can serve as a reference point when/if your supervisor supports your future endeavors with a recommendation.

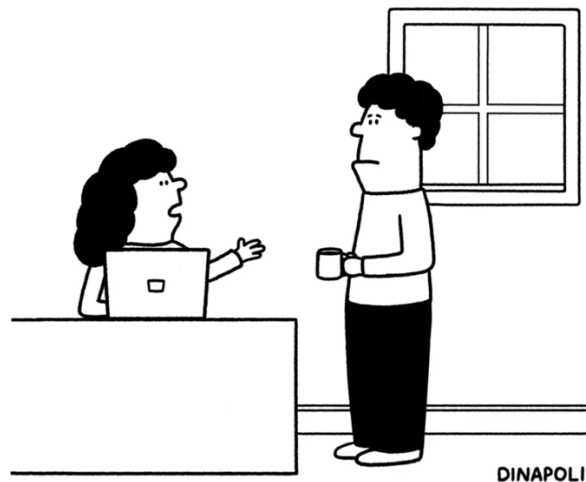


*"My God . . . those meetings really could all have been e-mails."*

## Remote Communication Tips

This may be your first time completing a remote internship, and it may be your supervisors' first time managing an intern in a virtual role. Communication is always important, but this year it will be particularly essential to your success.

- **Ask your supervisor how they prefer to communicate.** They may want to schedule video chats in lieu of daily or weekly in-person check-ins. Clarify how you should communicate in different scenarios – for example, how you should receive and turn in assignments, how you should communicate minor or immediate questions, and how you should schedule or initiate more substantive conversations.
- **Prepare for all of your virtual communications.** Online communication formats like Zoom disrupt normal conversation patterns by removing nuance and body language cues. This can make online conversations feel awkward in the event of a lag or pause in the conversation. Bring a list of conversation points and questions and/or a project you're looking for feedback about so your conversation moves efficiently and smoothly.
- **Ask for ongoing feedback.** In an office, your supervisor might drop by your workspace to check in every so often. In a remote setting, you are not likely to have spontaneous, casual conversations. Don't hesitate to ask for feedback or a quick check-in as you work to complete assignments – even if you don't have a particular question or concern, having your supervisor give your work a quick look-over can significantly improve your project outcomes.



*"Should I sign my e-mails with 'Be safe,' 'Be well,' or 'AAHHHH!!!'"?*

## Self-Care Tips for Remote Internships

Your self-care practice will likely look different due to our new virtual reality. Keep these self-care tips in mind as you balance a new work experience with this summer's extraordinary circumstances:

- **Stay hydrated, move around, and remember to eat regularly.** Your body's need for nutrition and hydration has not stopped, even though you may not be moving or exercising as much as usual. Make sure

to eat and drink water regularly and to incorporate movement into your workday in a way that feels good to you.

- **Keep a flexible approach to your routine.** To the extent that your workload and schedule allow, try to keep an open mind about your work practices. Experiment with where you work, how frequently you take breaks, and even how you sit at your workspace. Flexibility and experimentation, rather than rigid adherence to a routine or your typical practices, can improve your wellbeing as you navigate your new role.
- **Lower your expectations for yourself, and practice self-acceptance.** This will be easier said than done and may even seem counterintuitive when you only have nine weeks with an organization you are hoping to impress. But it may be helpful to keep in mind that you will not be working from home, strictly speaking; you will be at home, during a crisis, trying to work. There is a difference, and working toward the acceptance of your circumstances (and the fact that this summer will not be normal) will be helpful for maintaining your holistic well-being.



*"What's that, buddy? An excuse to go outside?!"*

*Content adapted from:*

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"How to make the most of a virtual internship," Center for Career Development, Princeton

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