

THE ABCs OF A SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP

The opportunity to work with a professional in your field of interest is only possible because that professional is willing to make time in a very busy and full professional life to work with you. The success of this experience largely rests with you and your ability to interact maturely and intelligently with your mentor and other people at your mentor site. Remembering and using the strategies listed below can help to make your internship truly extraordinary and remember, your G/T Resource Teacher is always there to help you.

1. **Ask** your mentor for other people to talk to or observe at the mentor site and elsewhere. Converse with other interns, secretaries, technicians, patients, clients, graduate students, residents, colleagues of your mentor, etc. Don't disregard the store of knowledge available from support personnel: secretaries, assistants of all kinds, etc
2. **Ask** your mentor for articles and books to read, web sites to visit.
3. **Brainstorm** possible final products with your mentor and keep him/her informed about changes occurring in your thinking.
4. **Brainstorm** with your mentor the most extensive possible list of things you can do at your mentor site to achieve a varied, enriching experience.
5. **Dress** appropriately. You are part of a corporate image. The people who come in to the office think you're an employee, not an intern, so look like the other adults. Never chew gum at your mentor site. Never wear jeans, flip-flops, or revealing clothing.
6. **Earn** your mentor's respect. Remember, mentors can recommend you for other internships, college, or summer jobs, but only if they admire your intelligence, hard work, advanced skills, resourcefulness and initiative.
7. **Help** your mentor out. All careers involve some tedious, repetitive, or unpleasant tasks. On the other hand, you are not to become free clerical staff. Strike a balance between action/observation/research. If you begin to feel exploited, see your G/T Resource Teacher immediately. Your teacher can intervene with tact.
8. **Hold** yourself to professional, "world of work" standards. Don't expect your mentor to read poor, sloppy, unedited work
9. **Initiate** meaningful contacts with your mentor **every** week. If you are not going to see your mentor for any extended period of time (a week or more) be sure to communicate by email about your activities and progress.
10. **Keep** your parents informed about your experiences at the mentor site. They have many experiences and perceptions to share that will enrich your experience.
11. **Maintain** a professional relationship with your mentor.