

Do's and Don'ts for a Successful Internship

The first impressions you make do count on a new job, so it's important that they're positive. Here is some advice from Peggy Schmidt, author of *Making It On Your First Job: When You're Young, Inexperienced and Ambitious*.

DON'T be shy about introducing yourself to everyone in your department or firm (also, the firm's customers and suppliers). Having people call you by name makes you feel like you belong and also speeds your "absorption" into the company. Co-workers will feel you've been there longer and will treat you that way.

DO take notes on your basic responsibilities and general office procedures and people's names. This saves you from having to ask again and again how to do your duties.

DO keep busy. Even if you have no specific assignment yet, resist the urge to pull out a magazine or to just sit and chat. Instead, leaf through catalogs, familiarize yourself with the filing system, straighten samples and catalogs, check pricing and sample dates -even dust shelves. This shows your boss (supervisor) and co-workers that you're making an attempt to learn as much about the firm as you can and to be as productive as possible.

DO come into the office early and stay late. Even if you don't have anything specific to do, you will look willing and able to work. In addition, you may pick up informal information about the inner workings of the company.

DON'T let your work area get messy. Your boss and co-workers don't know you yet and will make assumptions based on your behavior and habits. Messiness implies disorganization and hints that you might find the work overwhelming.

DON'T form fast friendships until you get the lay of the land. It won't help your reputation to be allied with the office gossip or a lazy worker. Play it safe--be friendly to everyone, but don't pair off.

DO be enthusiastic.