

KEEPING AN INTERNSHIP JOURNAL

Students are required to keep an internship journal in which they regularly (at least once a week) reflect on their work experiences. Taking the form of a Google doc your instructor will share with you, the goal of this journal is twofold: not only does it provide students with important material with which to reflect back on their internship experience when they are writing their final papers, but it also provides a discreet way for the instructors to make sure the internships are going well (or step in should issues arise).

Your internship journal will help you keep track of your new skills and knowledge, and of the networks you build during your internship, embedding their meanings and values in the larger context of contemporary work and urban life. The journal will help you reflect on and analyze what exactly you're learning – about your area of work, about work in general, and about yourself.

How to keep an internship journal?

There are various ways to keep a good internship journal. Don't simply record what happens – reflect on your internship experience and analyze it, whenever possible in connection to the readings we discuss in class. Every few weeks, you'll also find a playful prompt, highlighting a specific aspect of your internship experience. Answer these prompts as creatively as you like.

As for composing your weekly entries, you may find this checklist helpful:

- hours worked this week
- skills and knowledge you used this week
- skills you learned this week
- skills and knowledge areas in which you felt deficient this week
- what do you want to improve about your performance and how?
- interactions with mentor and colleagues
- situations you observed in your workplace this week
- your feelings and mood

You are likely to experience some internship days as more intense than others so your journal entries will vary in length and detail. That's ok. Keep in mind that even some seemingly mundane experiences will take on new meanings later when considered in larger, complex contexts, which we will discuss in class. It is important that you record, reflect on and analyze your internship experiences regularly.

Try to be disciplined about it. You may want to pick a scheduled time once a week to write in your journal, preferably on an internship day. It won't work if you leave the journal for a couple of weeks and then try to catch up. And you will find your journal entries particularly valuable when you start working on your final paper.