Experiential Learning Curriculum

Guided course designed to maximize the impact and learning outcomes of an international internship

www.internhq.com    |    campus@internhq.com
Whether students choose to intern abroad or remotely with us, our Experiential Learning Curriculum is included on every program and completed during the internship.

Our experiential learning approach provides a structured and guided platform for students to think critically about their experiences on their internship. It accelerates and deepens learning by asking self-reflective questions around the contexts, actions, and outcomes of the internship placement.

1. **EXPERIENCE**
   Students apply their current abilities and learn through doing.

2. **REFLECT**
   Reflection on experiences to critically assess what did well, what outcomes were achieved, and what might be beneficial to do differently next time.

3. **CONCEPTUALIZE**
   Students use reflections to proactively identify opportunities for improvement and growth.

4. **APPLY**
   Students apply these learnings to enhance future experiences!
OBJECTIVES:

» Settle into your host country and become familiar with your surroundings and workplace.

» Identify cultural similarities between your host country and country back home.

» Identify challenges you may face in your new host country due to cultural norms and practices that you are unfamiliar with - along with any similarities.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:

1. How has your experience during your first week been different to what you imagined? What has been the most memorable moment so far?

2. How have you personally been challenged by local behaviors, assumptions or expectations? How might you have better prepared for such challenges and obstacles?

3. Describe the cultural similarities that you have been surprised or pleased to discover. Have any experiences during your first week debunked stereotypes? If so, write about the details.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Cultural competency is often listed as a desirable employability trait, which can be just as relevant at home as it is abroad. But what does it mean? Cultural competency is a combination of having cultural knowledge, awareness, sensitivity and a positive attitude toward differences - all of these things enable you to get along with others from diverse backgrounds, and feel comfortable doing so. Whether you have international travel experience or not, your first week on the internship program has still offered a unique introduction to something new.

1. How do you see multiculturalism being supported within your internship placement?

2. How would you demonstrate or provide evidence of your own cultural competence to an employer? (E.g. think about your previous experiences, conversations, attitudes, etc)

3. What visible and/or invisible barriers have you encountered in your first week that impede the development of cultural competence within an organization?
OBJECTIVES:

» To reflect on how your internship position fits into the host organization's goals for the well-being of the community and to understand your role within this context.

» To think about the realities, contexts, and limitations which influence local approaches to handling tasks and problem solving.

» To critically examine your own expectations and gauge the practicality of them against local resources and realities.

Generally speaking, your role as an intern and guest abroad is to help the local community to achieve their own long-term goals. This approach requires you to appreciate local ideas and ways of doing things. However, it could mean that your own ideas conflict with local practices, realities, limited resource availability, traditions or cultural and historical motivations for handling tasks in a particular way. Under these circumstances, it could sometimes be frustrating if you feel like your efforts are not understood, or are not producing immediate results or changes.

However, it’s important to reflect on the wider impact of your work. Many people who dedicate their time abroad to experiential learning programs often report that while they set out to help, assist and work alongside others, they find that they learn much more in return.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:

1. How have your expectations changed compared to when you arrived, since you’ve been able to develop familiarity and context of your role? What piece of advice would you give to yourself (or others) in retrospect?

2. Share an example of an unexpected situation that you’ve encountered at your placement. How did it challenge your original intentions or result in producing an outcome that you would not have imagined?

3. How does this current internship role contribute toward the achievement of your long-term goals? What specific skills or learnings from your internship experience so far, could directly be applied to a role or career path that you’d like to pursue?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Being able to discard unrealistic expectations and inaccurate assumptions, so that you can appropriately understand situational contexts, is an essential professional skill. It enables you to share in addressing challenges that face the organization you’re a part of, seek to identify appropriate solutions, assess resource limitations and advantages and set achievable goals. Achievable goals are frequently described as S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic and time-based goals).

1. Imagine you’re updating your resume or interviewing for a job - describe your internship role, the tasks you’re involved in and how this role benefits the organization in both the short term and the long term.

2. Imagine that you were to remain in your current internship role indefinitely - what S.M.A.R.T. goal would you set to benefit the local organization?
3. Many service learning participants help with ongoing tasks, supporting local staff and enabling day-to-day operations to run efficiently. Their contribution greatly helps on a daily basis but does not necessarily reduce or eliminate the need for help. Considering your experience so far on the internship placement, what broader social/political/institutional changes do you think would need to be implemented, in order to create more widespread and sustainable benefits for the community? Are these changes feasible and practical and would they be culturally/socially appropriate? Reflect on the possible limitations.
**OBJECTIVES:**

- Form an awareness of how culturally shared values, customs and norms may influence personal characteristics and points of view.
- Gain deeper insight and appreciation for culturally diverse perspectives.
- Consider the impact of cultural misconceptions and incorrect assumptions.

Many countries and cities around the world are renowned for being multicultural. The way that people choose to identify themselves within society can vary - some people may be more inclined to identify with their ethnic heritage (rather than their citizenship/nationality), and vice versa. For example, in Peru, there are about 51 distinct indigenous ethnic groups. The most numerous is Quechua; about 4.5 million Peruvians speak Quechua and 8 million primarily identify themselves as being Quechua.

Commonly held values can often be attributed to culture. For example, collectivist cultures are known for demonstrating the prioritization of communal needs and well-being (opting to put the good of the group ahead of the good of the individual). On the other hand, individualistic cultures prize independence and self-reliance (putting the needs and autonomy of the individual first, ahead of the group interests).

When we learn to better understand the values that are attributed to culture, this can greatly aid our understanding of diverse perspectives and lifestyles, which grows our cultural intelligence, helping us to become more adaptable global citizens!

**QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:**

1. How would you begin to define culture? What habits/customs/norms feature in your own culture? Do you identify most with Collectivist or Individualistic cultural values, and why - what examples of this apply to you?

2. What do you think is the most inaccurate perception about your own culture? How does it make you feel and how would you like that misconception to change?

3. Describe a recent experience during your internship program, in which you were surprised to learn something new about someone else’s culture. Why was it surprising and how did it impact your perceptions?

**QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:**

An understanding of your own cultural characteristics and an appreciation and respect for those of others, is exactly the kind of global thinking necessitated by a world being "shrunk" by globalization, information technology and increased mobility.

1. List ways you have adapted your behavior and actions in order to become more culturally appropriate within your host community (i.e. meeting and greeting, use of names and titles, dining etiquette, body language, personal style or dress, etc). Now reframe those examples to describe them as skills.
Example of a cultural adaptation: I have adapted my behaviour, as here, I now meet and greet others for the first time with a kiss on each cheek. Previously, I would consider this to be too intimate and I know it would make people feel uncomfortable if I greeted them in that manner at home.

Re-phrasing your adaptation as a skill: I can respond appropriately to more affectionate greetings, that previously challenged my comfort zone and concept of personal space.

2. When interacting with someone who is from a different culture than your own, how do you ensure that communication is effective, especially if there is a language barrier?

3. What advice would you give someone about to begin an internship position within a culturally diverse setting?
OBJECTIVES:

> Think critically about how problems may be interrelated with other issues.
> Think creatively to explore consequences that could be triggered by actions.
> Consider contextually specific information when addressing problems.

Now that you've been working and living in your host community for three weeks, you will have had some opportunity to develop your understanding of local contexts and challenges. You will also likely have been able to identify some specific challenges facing your placement. If you have the mental, creative and analytical skills to tackle an assortment of problems, you'll not only be an asset in any situation, you'll also be an asset to yourself!

When you have a particular problem in mind, it's important to think about the type of problem it is, so that you can approach it wisely. Not all problems are alike and some are more complicated than others. It's important to consider if the problem can be totally solved or if it can only be addressed, managed and reduced.

Problems that are deeply entangled with economic, environmental and political issues may be addressed from different angles, but they are rarely solved because variables related to the problem are always changing. As all actions have consequences, sometimes a well-intended action can only replace one problem with another.

Different points of view about a situation/issue can cause specific problem definition to remain elusive or controversial. What one person identifies as a problem may be viewed differently by someone else.

Many solutions to problems are also contextually specific - what works in one situation may not work the same way in all situations. Therefore, a “one size fits all” approach to problem solving can rarely be applied. Creative thinking, an open mind and collaboration are all imperative!

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

1. Describe a problem (or series of problems), that you may have encountered or identified while working on your internship placement. Can you describe how the problem is interrelated with a number of factors, or may be a symptom of other issues?

2. Who does the problem affect? If the problem were to be solved, who would need to be involved in the process? If aspects of the problem can only be addressed, but not solved, explain why.

3. To practice a problem solving strategy, think of an upcoming decision you will have to make (it may be in regard to your education or employment options, further travel, deciding where to live, etc.). Make a list to compare the “pros” (advantages) and “cons” (disadvantages) in order to compare thoughts that are “for” or “against” a particular option or course of action. Does a clear result emerge which could enable you to make a confident decision? Why/why not?

QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

There are a number of academic problem solving frameworks available and you may already be familiar with a particular approach. Basic principles usually involve identifying the priorities and what aspects of the problem you are able to control, then breaking up the problem so that you can deal with each aspect in manageable, “bite-sized” chunks. Don't try to take it all on at once, or by yourself - especially if others can be brought on board, who are in a qualified position to help and offer a fresh perspective.
1. What gaps can you identify in your background, experience or training that could potentially prevent you from solving professional problems you may encounter?

2. What examples can you think of where you've had to manage or handle problematic situations that have been out of your control? How have you made the best out of a challenging situation?

3. What steps do you usually take to analyze a problem before making a decision about how to proceed? Why do you think these steps are important?
Understanding different forms of communication and their challenges.

OBJECTIVES:
» Identify conditions that hinder or help communication efficiency.
» Consider challenges to communication and effective strategies for overcoming them.
» Observe and form an awareness of unfamiliar displays of non-verbal communication.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:
Communication breakdowns and misunderstandings are not just limited to the words we speak, but also the way that we speak them, our states of emotion, perceptions and attitudes. The meaning of non-verbal communication (such as touch, personal space, eye contact and gestures) is not universal around the world and sometimes it can be hard to know how to interpret things from one context to another. Reflecting on communication failures (however awkward or embarrassing) helps to sharpen your emotional intelligence, to become more conscious of how you present yourself and enhances your understanding of how you could be interpreted in different contexts.

1. What conditions make you feel the most confident when communicating with others? In what circumstances do you feel the least comfortable?

2. What’s been the biggest communication challenge you’ve encountered during your internship program (that may be an ongoing challenge) and how did/does it make you feel? What strategies have you devised to overcome the challenge?

3. What differences have you noticed in the way your host culture displays non-verbal communication, such as emotion, affection and respect of authority toward superiors or elders?

QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:
In a business or workplace environment, you can expect to be the recipient of feedback and guidance, as well as being asked to give it to others. Communication may be direct (e.g. saying “no” and meaning “no”) or indirect (e.g. saying “maybe” and meaning “no”). In the context of giving and receiving feedback, it’s important to carefully consider how you will frame your responses and whether you will take a direct or indirect approach. A sensible approach is to be specific, sincere, helpful and humble. If possible, delivering feedback in person also helps to ensure that the message is received as it was intended.

1. Provide examples of direct and indirect feedback that you have given or received in a professional/academic context. What approach did you find the most effective and beneficial, and why?

2. Think critically about providing yourself some professional feedback on the following: What should I stop doing in the workplace? What should I keep doing? What should I start doing?

3. Take some time to actively seek guidance from other people you are working with on your internship placement. You might like to start by asking if there is anything you could be doing differently and take the conversation from there. What did you learn by actively seeking feedback? How was it delivered to you?
**OBJECTIVES:**

- Consider your own cultural norms and expectations concerning time use and management.
- Reflect on personal values concerning the ideal use of time.
- Identify attitudes toward time management that conflict with your own.

“Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin!”

For many people, it can often feel like there just aren’t enough hours in the day. Learning how to set priorities and manage time effectively can mean the difference between whether you run the day, or the day runs you. However, not every culture around the world adheres to such fast-paced, demanding schedules, and their underlying values are often quite different.

**QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:**

Perceptions of time and punctuality differ according to various cultural customs and interpretations. Expectations regarding time management can also be context-specific within our social, business and personal lives. What may be considered "late", "early" or "on time" depends on where you are, who you ask and why you’re asking. Opposing views can potentially cause a lot of friction and misunderstanding, so patience and openness are key. If you’re still figuring out the local etiquette, don’t be afraid to ask!

1. Think about your home country: what is the pace of life like in the society that you live in? What are some benefits and/or pressures of this pace?
2. What do you consider to be the most valuable use of your time every day? Imagine your perfect day - what would you spend it doing?
3. Describe a moment at your internship placement, where frustration may have occurred due to different approaches to time management. How did you react?

**QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:**

Organizing and planning are all about enabling you to work smarter - as being “busy” is not the same as being efficient. Everyone gets the same 24-hour allotment each day, but how you choose to prioritize tasks and take advantage of those hours is up to you. As technology increasingly enables greater flexibility within the workplace, often providing opportunities for flexible hours and working remotely, there is also increasing responsibility for professionals to demonstrate accountability and trust.

1. Imagine that you’re in an interview and your employer asks you to describe an example of a time when you’ve had to juggle multiple responsibilities. Using this internship program as an example, describe your approach to managing the practical service learning tasks, the journaling requirement, any additional activities (such as other course work or language lessons, etc), combined with the social/tourism activities you enjoy in your free time.
2. Within a professional context, what are your biggest time-wasting habits? How could you reduce them to improve your productivity?
3. Often dedicating time to a cause or a project that you believe in means having to sacrifice time spent doing other things that you also value. Describe a time in your professional or academic career that you’ve made such a sacrifice - what was it? Why you were willing to do it and to what extent was your effort rewarded?
OBJECTIVES:

» Objectively acknowledge and appreciate the various factors that may contribute to opposing sides of a conflict.

» Reflect on personal symptoms of stress and the coping mechanisms that may automatically be turned to in response to it.

» Recognize the desirable workplace conditions that provide a positive opportunity for personal and professional growth, from which you can take on the world.

It’s our hope that your time on the internship program so far has been largely positive. However, conflicts can sometimes occur, despite all the best intentions and goodwill. When people come together with different motivations, experiences and ideas, as well as different communication approaches and learning styles, working together requires patience and adaptability. Good teamwork is often easier said than done. Even constructive criticism, though valuable, may not always be delivered to you in the most specific and helpful manner. You may have disagreements with people from other cultures, or with people who, at least outwardly, are very similar to you. While it’s considered a skill to be “assertive” this doesn’t always mean getting your way but can involve reaching an agreeable middle-ground instead.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

Difficulties in being able to successfully resolve conflicts can be aggravated by stressful working conditions - it’s imperative that you manage your energy, as well as your time. Within a workplace, tasks that leave little room for error, are emotionally challenging and require intense concentration, are examples of activities which may sometimes feel draining, making it harder for you to work effectively with others. In order to ensure your own wellbeing and help prevent conflict arising with others, you might consider how stressful environments can be managed. Helpful strategies might include starting your day with the harder tasks, when you’re most rested and energized, and allocating the rest of the day to complete less challenging work.

1. Using an example of a conflict that you may have observed or been involved with during your internship program, what were the different motivations influencing either side of the disagreement? How was the conflict resolved and how could it have been handled better? Do you think the outcome was fair for both sides involved?

2. What physical/mental/emotional symptoms do you recognize in yourself when you’re stressed out, and in need of a break or support? What type of healthy coping mechanisms do you automatically turn to? (i.e. seeking exercise, quiet time, blasting music, calling a friend). What unhealthy coping mechanisms might you turn to, that are potentially damaging to your wellbeing and stress resolution? (i.e. staying out all night, hitting the junk food, lashing out at others)

3. During your ups and downs, what ideal conditions and routines keep you ticking, allowing you to maintain a positive outlook and a balanced, productive lifestyle? (i.e. keeping a tidy desk, clean eating, band practice, morning coffee). What choices can you make to enable this?

QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

Taking a balanced approach to your work roles and responsibilities to utilize stress management skills and appropriate coping mechanisms will help you to respectfully navigate your way through personal and professional clashes. A balanced approach can help you to avoid a damaged reputation, strained relationships and personal burn-out.
Having “courageous conversations” means that you use clear communication strategies to resolve conflicts as assertively as possible. What makes such dialogue “courageous” is that these discussions touch upon sensitive, emotive issues that may initially be awkward to address. However, the consequences of doing nothing are assumed to be more harmful than ignoring the issue. Talking with someone, not at someone, is a “Courageous Conservation” skill. So is the ability to actively listen and respond with empathy (being able to see the situation from their point of view), rather than just waiting for your turn to speak.

1. What steps have you taken during your internship placement in order to create a healthy environment for yourself and others? What “Courageous Conversations” have you had on your internship or in another work environment?

2. Imagine that you’re in a job interview, being asked to describe a situation in which you felt overwhelmed or “in over your head” with the work/study demands that were being placed on you. What specific example would you provide to demonstrate your competence in handling and overcoming pressure?

3. Stressful situations often cause people to “vent” their frustration to others. However, caution should be taken to maintain professional boundaries, confidentiality and relationships, and to avoid damaging consequences. Describe how you would handle (or have handled) being on the “receiving end” of things you’d rather not hear. How would you identify, or create, the appropriate communication channels, where concerns can be voiced in a constructive manner?
OBJECTIVES:

» Identify your most important values.

» Reflect on opportunities and actions which are in alignment with your values.

» Consider what conditions allow you to excel and provide the most personal fulfilment.

The longer your internship duration, the deeper your engagement and understanding has the potential to be. You can expect that your experience and professional identity will continue to evolve over the course of your career, but it’s important to have a strong foundation. It’s worth taking the time to consciously reflect on your values, ethics and motivations - these are the cornerstones upon which your goals will stem, and your personal brand will be built.

Based on your values, you will actively make some very specific choices about who you seek to partner and associate with, what you do in your free time, what investments you make, how you wish to present yourself through your image (i.e. language, clothing, online presence), and how you desire to be seen and remembered by others. Therefore, it pays to be cognizant of the values that drive your personal and professional decisions to ensure you progress wisely, along the path of your own choosing. In what ways could others be perceiving you that you’re not aware of?

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

1. Rank these values in order of most important to you. Feel free to make notes on each and expand the list by adding any other values that are especially important to you: Adventure, Structure, Acceptance, Power, Tradition, Innovation, Mindfulness, Independence, Wealth, Achievement, Comfort, Purpose, Service, Family. How have your values changed since participating on the internship, if at all?

2. What does “the best version of you” look like? What conditions of the internship working and learning environment have enabled you to perform at the best of your ability, with the greatest enjoyment?

3. Objectively review your online presence (i.e. social media accounts, photographs, blogs etc.), according to what any member of the public could see and learn about you. This can be considered an “online resume”. If someone did not personally know you, what assumptions might they make about you? To what extent does your public profile align with how you want to be perceived by others? How can you make improvements that would reinforce the image you want to project?

QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

1. What values are important to you in an employer, and why? How do these values align with your own?

2. How do you want to be perceived by others in a professional or academic context? Has this changed as a result of your time on this international internship program?

3. You can expect to be asked about your internship program by future employers, especially within the context of a job interview. It’s important to practice articulating this in advance, so that you answer quickly, confidently and don’t forget important details. Write an “elevator pitch” (a short, 60-second explanation) that succinctly summarizes your internship role, why you chose your specific program and what your proudest accomplishment has been during the program (so far). What did the experience teach you and what skills can you offer as a result?
OBJECTIVES:

» Define your personal interpretation of success.

» Identify what aspects of your chosen career field inspire hope and positivity.

» Develop an awareness of positive priming and how techniques can be used.

Last week you considered professional identity issues and thought about the values that shape you. These insights will also help you gauge your own personal measure of success. No one is in a position to tell you what it means to be successful - that’s a personal definition, that you can gauge according to your own values, beliefs and goals.

Experts in sales, marketing and advertising certainly know how to use positive priming to their advantage - so why not proactively use such techniques to create success in your own life? Rather than framing any written or oral communication with negative words (i.e. pressure, stress, unfortunate, exhausted, slow, lack) use positive words that will help to promote positive thinking, actions and outcomes (i.e. achieve, helpful, pleased, team, clean, efficient). This allows you to prime yourself for success by expressing and creating what you want - rather than what you don’t want.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

1. What does success mean to you and how will you know when you are “successful”? What have been your greatest successes so far during your internship program and why do you classify these as a success?

2. Considering the field/industry within which your internship program is based - what are the most significant modern changes occurring, which give you the most hope for the future? Why do these changes make you hopeful? (i.e. increased gender equality, better technology, etc.)

3. When you observe your workplace or other surroundings on the internship program, how do the environments make you feel and what kind of messages do you think they are sending? For example, are the grounds well cared for? Are public notices phrased negatively (“don’t litter!”) or positively (“please put trash in the bin”)? Is there crude graffiti or brightly coloured street art? Considering all of the examples you can find, how do you think positive priming could be utilized to have an uplifting effect?

QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

1. With your internship program in mind, what are the biggest challenges to the morale of people working within this field? What examples of positive priming techniques would be the most useful for you to utilize, in order to maintain/boost positive morale?

2. Revisit the learning objectives that you originally submitted prior to beginning your internship program: at this stage of your internship, would you like to change your goals in any way? (If so, how would you update them?)

3. Imagine that you’re asked to describe several personal weaknesses in a job interview (that are relevant to your internship program/field of study). How would you phrase them in a way which reflects more positively than negatively, and hint at professional experience? E.g. “I’m aware that I (describe the weakness) but I am currently working on this by (describe the solution)”. Or: “When I was completing my (project name) internship in (location), I learned that I tended to (describe a weakness or shortcoming) but this led me to (describe adjustment made to overcome the weakness).
Exploring professional resilience for an enduring and meaningful career.

OBJECTIVES:

» Identify the learning style that’s most relevant and helpful for you.

» Recognize experiences that have had the most impact on your learning and understand why.

» Explore your ability to take unique approaches and make unique contributions within an enduring professional career.

Throughout your time on the internship program so far, you will have had to put some effort and energy into being adaptable, flexible and open minded. These are all skills related to being resilient. Being resilient means having the ability to recover and improve yourself, despite external pressures and events. In a professional context, this may mean being conscious of your strengths and weaknesses, learning new skills to remain relevant as technology changes, keeping yourself fit and healthy, investing time in meaningful social relationships and networks, and updating yourself on new research, methodologies or knowledge.

You don't have to be top of the class to secure a competitive edge, but you do need to pay attention in order to spot opportunities, changes and threats, as they arise within your workplace and broader career field. We're all wired differently - if you seek to understand the learning style that works best for you, you'll be better equipped to progress, make informed educational decisions and maintain your professional resilience.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

1. There are a multitude of surveys online that help users to identify their learning style. Some are more comprehensive than others, but most are fun and relatively insightful. Use a search engine to review a few different options and try one out for yourself
   e.g. www.whatismylearningstyle.com
   https://www.howtolearn.com/learning-styles-quiz/
   https://www.how-to-study.com/learning-style-assessment/
   Note your results - what do you think of them? Can you think of any way you can do things differently in the future to improve your learning?

2. Considering your learning style, which experiences during the internship program have been the most effective in enabling you to retain new information and achieve your personal learning goals?

3. What have you been able to contribute during your time on the internship program (considering your skills, personality and ideas) that nobody else has been able to offer?

QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

1. What unique approaches/contributions do you believe you can bring to an organization?

2. In what ways have you had to adapt and change your way of thinking/doing things on your current internship placement? Why was it necessary to adapt?

3. What has been the biggest professional/educational setback you’ve experienced to date? Since it occurred, what steps were the most (or least) successful in getting yourself back on track, and why?
## Objectives:

- Explore how ownership of project tasks and outcomes is shared between your internship organization and the community within which it works.
- Consider how a sense of ownership can be facilitated and encouraged.
- Explore personal experiences of ownership and willingness to shoulder responsibility.

The reflection tasks are pretty close to wrapping up and completing them has required a lot of proactivity and self-drive. One of the final themes is an important one and requires a lot of self-awareness, as you think about setting boundaries for both your personal and professional life.

Ownership refers to taking personal responsibility and being accountable for actions, errors, and development. Taking pride and receiving credit for accomplishments goes hand-in-hand with acknowledging shortcomings and being receptive to critique.

Ownership is also something that you may grant to others, when you relinquish control over certain responsibilities or projects and allow someone else to take leadership (especially someone who may be in a more knowledgeable and sustainable position to do so). It's widely understood that individuals and communities have greater motivation to contribute, protect, and maintain interests they feel an invested connection with and ownership of.

### Questions for Personal Reflection & Journaling:

1. What is the utmost level of responsibility and accountability that you'd be willing to handle within your profession? How would you demonstrate to a superior that you'd be willing to take on more responsibility within your role and have the competence to do so?

2. To what extent do you feel comfortable taking ownership of challenges, which promise greater reward, but also greater responsibility?

3. How do you encourage people to take control and responsibility for issues that you feel they may not be interested in or fully understand?

### Questions for Professional Reflection & Journaling:

1. Evaluating your experiences on the internship placement so far, can you think of any initiatives for the benefit of the community that may have been undertaken by “outsiders” (people from outside the community)? On the other hand, can you think of any initiatives for the benefit of the community which have instead been driven by local stakeholders? With these ideas and either scenario in mind, what benefits have you observed and what are your personal thoughts on the effectiveness and suitability of each approach?

2. To what extent does your internship placement make collaboration with the local community possible? What demographics of the local community are represented? Are there any voices that might not be being heard?

3. Have you had to trust colleagues with aspects of a project that was important to you? What were the circumstances? How did you hand over the project (or begin to collaborate on it) in a manner that preserved the integrity of your work, without undermining the competence of your colleagues?

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OBJECTIVES:

- Gain insight into how general knowledge about an industry or field of work may be developed.
- Consider the wider environment in which an organization operates, including what enables it to function and what purpose it is serving.
- Understand how commercial awareness may be demonstrated to employers.

Many employers will list “commercial awareness” as a desirable trait that they’d like their staff and team members to have. This is relevant to every career, at all times. Typically, the term refers to having a well-rounded understanding of the organization, the industry that it’s operating in and various realities affecting efficiency and success of the operation (i.e. access to resources, current challenges and issues, opportunities for growth).

You may consider using a tool such as Google Alerts to ensure that you’re notified of industry developments that are the most relevant to you. Demonstrating commercial awareness to your employer and colleagues not only shows that you actively take an interest in the field, but it also represents your competence, ability to think ahead, alignment with the direction of the company and readiness to respond from an informed and solutions-oriented perspective.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

1. What relevant media articles or videos have you come across recently that you can link back to your own internship experience? What caught your eye about the article and why is it relevant to your occupational field?

2. Who, or what, does your internship placement exist to serve? Describe in detail the profile and needs of the population or environment that is being served by the operation of this organization.

3. What prominent individual, who has in some way contributed to your field (e.g. field of work/interest/study/internship program), do you admire and why?

QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION & JOURNALING:

1. Using specific examples from your internship experience, how would you demonstrate your “commercial awareness”, in a job interview?

2. Considering other organizations or companies that operate within your field, which ones do you think are doing particularly well or poorly? Why?

3. To what extent has your internship developed your understanding of how an organization operates at various levels? What things must happen each day, for the organization to function? How vulnerable is the organization, should its functionality be impaired (i.e. if funding were to be cut, if a staff member called in sick, if a computer crashed), and what steps could be taken to enhance organizational resilience?