

## Internship Reflection Paper Questions

Saint Mary's University requires that all student interns report and assess their learning throughout the internship period via reflection papers. Please note the following things about these reflection questions:

- ❖ These papers should be sent directly to **BOTH** the Internship email ([internships@smumn.edu](mailto:internships@smumn.edu)) and to your faculty internship advisor.
- ❖ Submit the dates and hours you worked at your internship site for each reflection period signed by your site supervisor. For your convenience, you can complete the timesheet located at <https://csi.smumn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2017/12/Timecard3.pdf> and submit it with your reflection paper.
- ❖ The papers do not replace any additional departmental requirements that you have set up with your faculty internship advisor (ex. HH, PY).
- ❖ NOTE: Any changes to these reflection questions, due dates, etc. must be pre-approved by your faculty internship advisor and Career Services.
- ❖ Papers must be typed and should average 3-5 pages.

### Getting Started

1. **Make sure you have completed the [Pre-Internship Student Self-Assessment form](#)** and have saved the copy that was sent to you as you will refer to the Career Competencies section throughout your internship experience.
2. **Establish your networking goal:** One of the most essential goals for career success is growing your network (3 out of 4 jobs are found through networking). Identify what your networking goals are for this internship (examples: meet 5 new people in this industry, have a conversation with the President, join a professional network, etc.)
3. **Prepare to conduct an informational interview:** One of the best ways to learn about people, careers, and industries is by conducting an informational interview. As you are getting started and are meeting people at your organization identify someone working in a position in which you may have a career interest. Schedule a time to meet with them in advance of your midterm paper to complete an informational interview. Be sure to send them a thank you note following your meeting.

Read more about what informational interviews are and how to conduct them by reading the following: [How To Get the Most Benefit From an Informational Interview](#).



### Mid-term Reflection Paper

1. Describe the major responsibilities you have had to date, including any new experiences (examples include: new duties, equipment, technology, cultures, populations, etc.). What have been your biggest lessons learned during the first half of your internship experience? What has surprised you the most at your internship so far?
2. Describe your feelings, attitudes, and expectations of your internship up to this point. Give reasons as to why you have these feelings, attitudes, and expectations.
3. What are the expectations for your character (how you conduct yourself and the decisions you make) and personality (how you behave and interact with others) at your internship site?
4. How do your daily activities and responsibilities relate to your learning agreement and your expectations about your site? How do they relate to your major? Your intended career path?
5. What has pushed you outside of your comfort zone? Or, what has been the biggest challenge you encountered to date?
6. Conduct an informational interview with someone at your internship site. Include the person's name, title, and relationship to you regarding the internship, and share the key insights you have gained about the company, industry, their role, and the world of work. Did the information provided change or confirm your interest or perspective in working in this type of role in the future? How?
7. If you have not established [your Handshake profile](#) and/or a LinkedIn account (or another professional networking site/ e-folio that professionals can follow/ join), set one up and include your internship experience. Provide your LinkedIn profile link. You can find yours on your profile page in the upper right under 'Public profile & URL' (ex. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/yourname/>). Set a goal of connecting with as many professionals from your internship site as are appropriate for your career goals and the work setting. For more information about how to set up your Handshake profile, go to: <https://support.joinhandshake.com/hc/en-us/articles/218693368-Getting-Started-with-Handshake>. For a LinkedIn profile, go to: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JbJfQZYKL2Wz0rm391QKYz4WFA\\_EXA6B/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JbJfQZYKL2Wz0rm391QKYz4WFA_EXA6B/view?usp=sharing). Connect with Anne Pryor, Saint Mary's alum and LinkedIn Strategist, on LinkedIn.
8. Reflecting back on the competencies from your pre-internship survey complete the "What employers Want" below to help identify what ways your internship is helping you develop these competencies into specific, marketable skills.
9. Are there any problems requiring our assistance? Are you receiving adequate supervision on-site?



### **What Employers Want**

According to the National Association of College's and Employers (NACE), there are eight career-readiness competencies that employers seek in employees regardless of the opportunity. To reflect on your experience at your internship site in terms of how it has (or can) develop your career competencies, complete the worksheet below by answering the two questions in column 2 and 3 regarding each competency in the left column (1). Include specific and concrete examples. Consider writing your responses in column 2 in the STAR format: Describe the Situation, the Task you had to complete with the situation, the Action you took and what was the Result. This will help you prepare for job interviews and framing your experience.

For more information regarding the Career Competencies and to see sample behaviors of each competency visit:

<https://www.naceweb.org/uploadedfiles/files/2021/resources/nace-career-readiness-competencies-revised-apr-2021.pdf>.

You can copy and paste the following into your paper and if you type directly into this document, the boxes will expand. Otherwise, feel free to use additional paper.



<b>What Qualities/ Skills Employers Want</b>	<b>What specific ways have you built this competency during your internship?</b> (NOTE: These answers will serve as good preparation for job interviews – especially behavioral based questions, which often start with the phrase, “Tell me about a time when,...”	If you’ve had no opportunities to develop this skills in your internship, <b>what strategies would help you develop them during the remainder of your internship?</b>
<b>Example:</b> Problem-solving Skills (Critical thinking competency)	We had two projects with the same deadline date (Situation) and I was put in charge of creating the task timelines (Task). I communicated with my coworkers to understand needs and priorities (Action) and created a project plan resulting in completion of both projects by deadline (Result)	
<b>Example:</b> Verbal Communications Skills (Communication competency)		I have been quiet at the team meetings and should speak up more. Also, I plan to volunteer to make a presentation to the department at next week’s staff meeting.
Career & Self-Development		
Communication		
Critical Thinking		
Equity & Inclusion		
Leadership		
Professionalism		
Teamwork		
Technology		



### **Final Reflection Paper**

1. Have you learned about new jobs or careers while at your internship? If so, what are they and what are your thoughts about them? How has your internship helped define and/or clarify your career goals/career path?
2. What were the main goals you presented in your Learning Plan? Briefly discuss your progress toward meeting those goals.
3. What pushed you outside of your comfort zone? Or, what was the biggest challenge you encountered during your experience?
4. In what ways have you been able to apply what you have learned in your academic coursework to your internship? Describe a situation in which you have been able to take previous classroom experiences and apply lessons learned at your internship site.
5. What was the most important thing you learned about yourself?
6. What was your greatest accomplishment or reward?
7. Based on your internship experience, do you have a stronger sense of self-worth and self-esteem? Explain.
8. Reflecting on the career competencies, what skills, knowledge or career competency areas would you like to continue develop/improve upon as you move on from your internship experience?
9. What skills/ experience have you gained that will help build your resume? (NOTE: be sure to update your resume in light of your internship experience)
10. Overall, was your internship a worthwhile experience? Explain.
11. In order to more effectively network, review, and revise (or develop) your 30-second commercial, an ideal tool you use to introduce yourself to people in the work world. Include your most recent 30-second commercial here in your reflection paper. For more information on what a 30-second commercial is and how to develop one, go to: <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/how-to-give-an-elevator-pitch-examples>
12. Complete and submit the [Post-Internship Self-Assessment Form](#) located at: <https://forms.gle/rQMyd23PebCKfXrw5>