



***GETTING ACCLIMATED***

- Talk with multiple people at the organization to expand your knowledge and networking resources.
- Ask many questions, do online research, read books or find other ways to learn about the field and organization.
- Use fellow interns to expand your knowledge of interesting organizations. Consider visiting those that interest you.
- Jump right into your project; the semester goes quickly. Schedule periodic and consistent meeting with your supervisor in which you can start sharing your knowledge , continue asking questions, and request feedback. This will increase the supervisor’s confidence in you, particularly if you are in an unfamiliar field or organization.

**TIPS FROM STUDENTS: MAKING YOUR FEP SUCCESSFUL**

***WORKING WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR***

- Communication is key. Some students find they work independently at their FEPs. If so, clarify with your supervisor the best way to connect and receive periodic feedback. Try doing as much as possible by yourself and if you still have questions or confusions, ask for help. Do feel free to keep asking questions.
- Share your work progress regularly with your supervisor. If you begin to feel overextended by the workload, renegotiate assignments or deadlines. If the problem persists, contact your TF. You have many responsibilities with school work. You may also have a large learning curve at your FEP if you aren’t familiar with the organization and industry.
- If you need to push back, state it in a professional manner by saying, “I want to make sure I meet our deadlines so I’d really like to make this project my priority right now.”
- If your supervisor can not attend the Mentor Seminar, let your TF or the Program Director know immediately so that they can arrange a separate meeting or conference call to review mentor expectations.
- Feel free to respectfully offer differing opinions or suggestions to your supervisor. You will learn a great deal by debating various issues and hearing the insight of your more experienced supervisor.

***MANAGING YOUR WORK AND RELATIONSHIPS***

- If you are working independently, stay structured by setting up daily or weekly tasks and update your supervisor on your progress. Make sure each goal will help you achieve your overall FEP goal.
- Develop good relationships with other interns that may be at your site. They may have more knowledge or experience at the organization and can provide advice and guidance.
- Come prepared to supervisor or staff meetings with a list of topics you’d like to discuss or a list of tasks discussed previously about which you can provide updates. Advance preparation will help you achieve a positive impression at your first few meetings.
- Prioritize your tasks with your supervisor based on what is most important and time sensitive.
- Ask many questions if you don’t know something – your supervisors understand this is an internship and you aren’t expected to know as much as you would for a full-time job.

### ***ENSURING THE INTERNSHIP IS SUCCESSFUL***

- If you have challenges at your site, discuss the situation with your TF as soon as possible – don't wait until the end of the semester. This experience is ultimately about you and advancing your career so try to ensure you gain maximum value from the experience by advocating for yourself.
- Talk with your supervisor if you feel you have too many tasks outside the parameters of your Internship Contract and Learning Agreement. Review your Learning Agreement with your supervisor 2 or 3 weeks after it is due to ensure you are focused on your goals. Make sure your supervisor understands their responsibility in helping you adhere to the Agreement (the Mentor Seminar will help with this).
- If you are given tasks that are not at a level sufficient for a graduate-level internship, either inform your TF or the Program Director right away or have another conversation with your supervisor to review your resume and skills/experience. Early action to resolve issues will result in an even more meaningful experience.

FEP Office - 617.495.3427 - [fep@gse.harvard.edu](mailto:fep@gse.harvard.edu) - <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/fep>  
025 Longfellow Hall