

Experiential Learning: Success Checklist

A success guide for micro-internships, volunteering, simulations, and other hands-on learning.

Set Clear Goals

Clarify what you want to gain before the experience begins.

- What do I hope to walk away with?
- What do I want to learn about this role, industry, or team?
- What's at least 1 skill I'd love to improve or develop?

Tip: Revisit your [gap analysis](#) to help guide your goals.

See it in Action: Sara, Cybersecurity

Sara started a volunteer role at a nonprofit. Her goals were to practice risk assessment skills and explore IT policies in real-world settings. During her time there, she helped draft a digital security checklist.

Have a Growth Mindset

Be open to learning from mistakes and unfamiliar tasks.

- Be open-minded and curious
- Ask thoughtful questions when you're unsure.
- Reflect when something doesn't go as planned.
- Say: 'I'm not sure yet, but I'd love to learn.'

See it in Action: Omar, Data Analytics

Omar struggled to understand a company dashboard during his micro-internship. He asked his manager for a walkthrough and reviewed tutorials. This helped him create reports that his team began using.

Take Initiative & Challenge Yourself

Look for ways to add value and go beyond what's expected.

- Ask for more responsibility or projects when you finish tasks.
- Offer solutions when you see something that could be improved.
- Treat every task like it matters.
- Come with a solution first, then ask for feedback.

See it in Action: Charlotte, Business Management

Charlotte noticed her internship site had outdated marketing flyers. She redesigned them with Canva and presented a refreshed version that the team adopted immediately.

Build Relationships

Connect with people who can share insight or open future doors.

- Volunteering:** Send a personalized LinkedIn message after meeting someone.
- Micro-Internships:** Ask colleagues about their roles and career paths.
- Simulations:** Reach out to potential contacts at the company featured in your simulation and share something you learned or enjoyed.

See it in Action: *Lucas, HR Management*

Lucas completed an HR simulation on Forage. He reached out to an HR Specialist from the company on LinkedIn to share how the simulation sparked his interest in talent development. She appreciated his message and referred him to a colleague leading early career programs at the company.

Give & Receive Feedback

Ask for and apply feedback to grow faster and more effectively

- Ask your supervisor what you're doing well and what to improve.
- Request peer feedback from teammates.
- When giving feedback, be kind and specific.

See it in Action: *Fatima, Instructional Design*

During her apprenticeship, Fatima was tasked with creating a training module for new employees. She worried that asking for feedback would make her seem unprepared, so she waited. When she finally reached out, her supervisor gave clear suggestions. Her next draft was stronger, and by the end of her apprenticeship, she felt more confident in her design skills.

Show Up Professionally

Present yourself with respect and care in every interaction.

- Use respectful, clear language in all communication.
- Dress appropriately for your role and setting.
- Avoid gossip; build relationships through positive interactions.
- Keep your remote background clean and distraction-free.

See it in Action: *Ahmed, Elementary Education*

During his teaching field experience, Ahmed arrived early to classrooms and communicated clearly with mentor teachers and students. He dressed professionally and stayed positive even when lessons didn't go as planned. His respectful attitude helped him build strong relationships with the school staff.

Build Your Personal Brand

Track your impact so you can speak clearly about your skills.

- Keep a record of your key tasks, the tools/methods you used, and the results you achieved.
 - Write down what you did, how you did it, and the impact it made.
 - Use these notes to update your resume or prepare strong examples for interviews.
- **Examples:**
 - Increased social media engagement 30% through new content strategy.
 - Reduced phishing emails 60% after implementing enhanced cybersecurity plan.
 - Helped raise student test scores 10% using creative lesson planning.
 - Created patient materials that cut follow-up issues 30%.



See it in Action: *Nora, Marketing*

Nora volunteered to create a social media calendar for a local nonprofit that increased engagement by 25%. She tracked the outcome, documented the tools she used, and added it to her resume and LinkedIn.