

Intern Tip Sheet: Preparing for 1-on-1 Meetings with your Supervisor

During the course of your internship, you will meet with your supervisor to address challenges and successes that you may be experiencing with your work or project. Preparing for evaluation meetings or coaching sessions helps to ensure that you approach the meeting with confidence, and make the right impression.

Here are nine tips to help you make the most out of one-on-one meetings with your Supervisor:

1	Be positive and smile! Reference things you are enjoying about the company and the work.
2	Prepare an Agenda. If you are initiating the meeting, prepare an agenda and consider providing it to the Supervisor ahead of time. If this is not an option, prepare a private agenda to guide you and ensure you make efficient use of the Supervisor's time. If your Supervisor scheduled the meeting, clarify the purpose of the meeting and prepare accordingly.
3	Bring relevant information, documentation and statistics. This is particularly important if you are trying to persuade the Supervisor towards a particular decision or course of action. It's always a good idea to have a running list of your accomplishments to refer back to.
4	Prepare. Prepare what you want to say and how you want to express yourself. If you have concerns about the internship speak to your Faculty Supervisor or QUIP Coordinator (if you are registered with QUIP) beforehand.
5	Professional attire. As always ensure that you dress and groom appropriately.
6	Active listening. It might sound obvious, but we all have a tendency to form our own position and responses while another person is talking. Active listening is about clearing those thoughts and focusing on the speaker. Be sure that you understand the Supervisor's expectations. It's always a good idea to paraphrase back to her/him to ensure that you understand what s/he wants.
7	Use your network. If there is a problem you need help solving, make sure that you have already approached the right people, and explored the solutions available to you, before approaching the Supervisor. You will need to be able to communicate what steps you have already explored.
8	Be accountable. If the Supervisor speaks to you about a mistake or error of judgment you have made, own up to it. In future meetings you can reference what you have learned from the experience, and how you will handle a similar situation or task in the future.
9	Show your appreciation. Thank the Supervisor for their feedback, even if you don't like the feedback. Try not to take constructive criticism as a negative. Remember, the problem or issue is almost always temporary and correctable. Feedback at work is not a comment on who you are as a person, student or even an employee. Constructive feedback represents a challenge that needs to be solved, and a guide to future action.