



**Washington University School of Law**  
CAREER CENTER

*Successful  
Summer  
Handbook*





The most important rule for having a successful summer, whether at a firm, public interest organization, judicial chambers, government office, or at the University working on research and writing, is to remember that, in many ways, you are experiencing a summer-long job interview. Your summer internship is a great way to build your personal brand as a young attorney who is bright, ethical, motivated and hard working. Use your best personal and professional judgment at all times and work hard. Your priority for the summer is your summer legal job, not any other social obligations or hobbies. Even if your plans change and you no longer wish to return to the employer, your goal is to receive an offer and

to have them speak of you in glowing terms as the “one who got away.” Make it clear that you want the job. Having an offer from your summer employer will aid your future job search, should you decide to seek other employment.

We are incredibly proud of Washington University’s law students and the impression that you continually make on your summer employers. We often hear from interviewers during OCI that our students were the stars of that employer’s summer program. The tips in this Handbook will help you stay on the right track as you begin your summer and will help keep our proud tradition going strong.

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First, impressions matter. Your attire is one of the first things your new colleagues will see. To understand the expectations, observe how other attorneys in the office dress. Regardless of the official dress code, keep your dress professional, both in the office and at social events where attorneys and professionals from the organization will be present. Consider choosing conservative colors and patterns. Pay attention to fit. The same guidelines apply in the virtual space. Even if you do not have video conferences scheduled, dress for each workday as if you will be on video so that you are prepared for any last minute meetings. Your goal is to draw attention to yourself through your outstanding work and positive attitude, not through your clothing choice.

### *Definitions and Guidelines*

**“Business Attire”** - If your employer is in business attire that means a suit, dress and jacket, or professional separates. Business attire should be worn for all interactions with clients or courts.

**“Business Casual”** - If your employer has a business casual dress code, that means dresses, skirts, or nice, pressed khakis, dress pants or trousers with a collared shirt, blouse, or sweater. Hold off on short sleeves or polo shirts until you can determine whether they are acceptable.

**“Casual” or “Casual Day”** - If your employer has a casual dress code, or allows for periodic casual days, err on the side of dressing in business casual attire. No shorts, no jeans, no sneakers.

**Keep it Professional** - Always wear socks with trousers or dress pants. If you are wearing a skirt or dress, be aware of the length. Avoid slides, sandals or other shoes with exposed toes until you can determine whether they are acceptable, and do not wear any shoes that noisily “flip flop” as you walk down the hall.

**Emergency Suit** - Always keep a business jacket stashed in your office or car in case you have an unexpected opportunity to go to court or to a formal business meeting with a client.

**Still Unsure?** It is always better to be over-dressed than under-dressed. On the next page we provide a few examples.

## *Should I Wear It to Work?*



No. Save this patriotic ensemble for your non-work sponsored barbecue.



No. Consider this little number for your next 80s themed party.



No. While this suit is slick (literally and figuratively), save it for the next time you are lounging in a wood paneled study.



No. This orange beauty is too fancy. Tuxedos are not required at work.



Your internship is a summer long interview. It is important to take on a significant amount of work and do it well. What remains after your internship is the reputation you have

created through your positive attitude, your work ethic and the quality of the work you completed.

**Getting the Project:** Carry paper and a pen everywhere, just in case you are stopped in the hallway by a senior attorney with a “quick project.” Carrying paper and a pen also gives the impression that you are engaged. When receiving an assignment, be sure to:

Ask for the deadline.

Ask what form of work product the attorney prefers (*e.g.*, photocopied cases, short memo, full memo, section of a brief, email summary, oral answer, etc.).

Ask for clarification. When receiving the project, you should ask any questions that come to mind. Attorneys will often forget what it was like to be a summer intern and may assume you know more than you do.

Ask for an estimate of the time you should spend on the project. In a firm, this question shows that you are thinking about efficiency.

Ask what client/matter number you should use for billing purposes, if you are working in a firm.

Summarize the assignment and expectations at the end of your conversation (*e.g.*, “To recap, I will prepare a written memorandum by Friday analyzing the application of Section 562.012 of the Missouri Revised Statutes to the facts of our case.”).

**Understand the Big Picture:** Before beginning your assignment, try to understand how your discrete task fits into the larger case. Ask the assigning attorney or other junior attorneys working on the matter for relevant case history, files you should review, and other background information.

Understanding the bigger picture will allow you to parse relevant and irrelevant lines of inquiry as you research and draft your analysis.

**Ask Questions:** Once you start to dig into the assignment, you will often discover that you have many new questions. While it is important to refrain from peppering attorneys with a continuous stream of questions, it is also important to avoid spending needless hours of research on an answer that your assigning attorney could provide in a two minute conversation. If you find yourself spending a lot of time working on what should be a simple question, run it by a junior attorney, if possible. In general, try to work through as much of the assignment as you can, compile a comprehensive list of questions, and then approach the assigning attorney for additional direction.

**Make Use of Available Form Files:** It is unlikely that you will reinvent the wheel during your summer internship. Most organizations maintain a searchable document database. You should use this database to find similar documents prepared by the assigning attorney. Review those forms to determine the assigning attorney's preferred format and style. You can also use the database to find contract provisions, memos on topics related to your assignment, and pleadings prepared by other attorneys that may be useful for your projects. If no database is available, ask the assigning attorney if there is a specific form you should use for the assignment. Most attorneys will have their own form files. Similarly, ask junior attorneys or your mentor if the assigning attorney has any style quirks or preferences. Attorneys are notorious about liking things in a particular format, so try to determine those idiosyncrasies in advance.

**Take Ownership:** Do not assume that anyone will be checking your research. You need to spend the time and exert the effort to create a work product in which you are confident.

**Nothing is Really a "Draft":** When attorneys say "Give me a draft of X," they are really telling you that they realize they will need to make significant revisions, so that you are not demoralized when they completely rewrite it. You must always turn in your absolute best work product; use spellcheck, make sure to be exhaustive in your research, and proofread one extra time. Until you are confident with your work product, you may wish to have another summer clerk or a junior attorney review your work before you submit. Notwithstanding any review by your colleagues, the work product you submit is yours alone, and you must be comfortable that you are putting forth your best work.

**Oral Presentations:** Even if there is a written work product, many attorneys will ask for an oral presentation. Try to anticipate the questions you will be asked. Make sure to go in with an outline of what you wish to say, and bring highlighted copies of the relevant portions of statutes or cases.

**Be Prepared to Take a Position:** Many research projects will not have a black and white answer. If there is no definitive answer, you should clearly state in your work product that the issue falls into a gray area; nevertheless, you must be prepared to take a position on the issue and support that position while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of your argument.

**Work Load:** If possible, try to maintain a balance of some substantial projects where you will produce written work product and a number of smaller projects that give you the opportunity to meet as many people as possible. The goal is to have a nice body of work to be reviewed at the end of the summer, but you also need name recognition around the office. You should not turn down new assignments unless it would be impossible for you to do your best work within the time provided. As you already know from your Contracts class, the impossibility defense is a very high

bar. You should not decline an assignment simply because it will inconvenience your evening or weekend plans, or because it will require you to wake up early. Attorneys take notice when a summer intern declines to take on a new assignment, and they will very likely ask around to confirm that you are actually too busy.

If it is truly impossible for you to take on a new assignment, say “Mr. Jones, I would love to work on your project, but Ms. Smith has told me she needs this first thing tomorrow morning, and I don’t see how I can get both done on time.” Be warned, however, that Mr. Jones will likely confirm your story with Ms. Smith. Never pass off an assignment to another summer intern or a legal assistant. Let’s look at a couple of examples:

Scenario:	Impossible?	Solution:
Junior attorney hands you a new research assignment at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, with a deadline of 8:00 a.m. on Monday morning. You will be out of town all weekend.	No.	You have several options: (1) stay late on Friday and complete the research before you leave; (2) arrive at the office extremely early on Monday and complete the research before the deadline; or (3) Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly ubiquitous – find Wi-Fi in the area you are visiting and finish the research over the weekend.
At 5:19 p.m. on a Thursday evening, senior attorney asks you to provide a draft of a letter before you leave the office for the evening. You have dinner plans with your friends at 5:30 p.m. and it is your birthday.	No.	Court deadlines and client demands will not cease on special occasions. Accept the assignment. Do not mention your dinner plans. With sincere apologies, call your friends and tell them you need to reschedule. Take the time to draft and ace the assignment. Celebrate your birthday on Friday evening.

**When You Are Spinning Your Wheels:** If there is a more junior attorney between you and the assigning attorney, ask that person for help first before approaching the senior attorney. If you have already hit the budgeted number of hours and are nowhere near finished, either you have misunderstood the scope of the project or the attorney has underestimated the amount of time it will take you. This happens very frequently. Make sure to check in and let the assigning attorney know. S/he may refine the project, ask you to stop, or confirm that you should continue with your work.

It is also very important to understand your employer’s policies regarding Westlaw and LexisNexis. Some firms and organizations have unlimited subscriptions, allowing you to run as many searches as needed without incurring charges. However, many organizations (including large law firms) will incur charges either for each search or the time you spend, and those charges are often billed directly to clients. Be mindful of the charges you are incurring. When feasible, consider using free websites (*e.g.*, FindLaw and Justia) as an initial starting point, turning to Westlaw and LexisNexis only when you have narrowed your research.

**Make Sure You Are On-Time:** This will likely not be a 9-5 job (certainly not after graduation). If humanly possible, get everything finished when you have promised it, even if you pull some long hours. If you are overextended, and cannot meet a deadline, you need to tell the assigning attorney as soon as possible. Tell them on Monday you will not have it on Thursday, not Thursday morning.

**Mistakes:** Employers want to know that you will act with integrity. Admitting your mistakes will demonstrate your integrity. Always do your best; check your sources and your work and Shepardize all cases and statutes on which you rely. If you make a mistake and it affects any legal conclusions or the veracity of the work product, you **MUST** admit it as soon as possible and offer to rectify it, if possible. Do not attempt to cover up your mistake. It may cause the client to receive incorrect information. When drafting a memo or making an oral presentation it is helpful if you describe all of your assumptions and conclusions for the attorney. That way, if you make a mistake they will be more likely to catch it and / or able to still make use of the work that you did. There are few (if any) mistakes that you might make during your summer internship that a more senior attorney cannot fix. It is best to bring material mistakes to your assigning attorney, address the issue, and move on.

**Billing Your Time:** If you are working for a private firm that bills by the hour, you will have to “bill” different clients for the time you spend. First, bill all of the time you spend on the project, even if it is over the estimated hours provided by the assigning attorney. Senior attorneys know that it will take you longer to do things and that they will have to cut some of your time. Ask your employer for guidelines regarding any billing goals for the summer, the preferred time increment for billing (*e.g.*, 1/10<sup>th</sup>, 1/6<sup>th</sup> of an hour), how to record non-billable time (*e.g.*, training, group meetings, attorney briefings), and when time sheets are due. Remember that what you write on the time sheet may go directly to the client – be careful how you describe your work, and make sure that the description demonstrates that the client is receiving value for the work you completed.

**Succeed in the Virtual Space:** If your summer program is remote, you will need to be accountable for your time and work progress in a visible way, despite your physical separation from your supervisor. Maintain normal business hours and ensure that you are responsive to communications during these hours. If your employer uses a messaging system where inactivity is noted, be sure to log in and remain active during normal business hours (and beyond). Consider providing your supervisor a daily update summarizing the work you completed the day before and what you plan to accomplish that day. Use video conferencing when possible to put a face to your name.

**Make the Most of Condensed Programs:** Some employers have condensed their summer programs down to only a few weeks. If you are in this scenario, you will want to ensure that you stand out more than ever. With only a short window to impress your employer, you will need to be efficient, productive, and collegial from day one.





Because attorneys are so busy, you may need to be proactive about seeking feedback on your work. Some organizations and firms will have a structured program that includes mid-summer and end of summer reviews. Others will have no formal review process. If there is no process in place, you should seek out feedback from the assigning attorney. If your assigning attorney is receptive to the idea, consider scheduling periodic meetings to develop a relationship with him/her, discuss the status of your projects, and seek feedback on your work.

If you do receive criticism, own up to your mistakes, be grateful for the constructive criticism, resolve to improve, and then actually improve. Do not get defensive. Ask questions about the feedback in a non-defensive way that shows your interest in improving your work product going forward. Be up front, say: "I want to make sure I can fix this problem." Or,

"I can see where I made a mistake. I'd like to have a chance to work with you again so that you can see my improvement." It is ok to ask, "How can I prevent this in the future?" Make use of your mentors or other young attorneys for advice as to how to address any criticisms and improve your work product.

You may find that once you turn in an assignment, you never hear another word about it. Upon receiving your project, attorneys will often just take over the work, fix any mistakes you have made, and complete the project themselves. If your organization uses a shared document management system, you should look back to see the finished product and self-evaluate whether you did a good job or missed the mark.

Strive to establish a reputation as someone who acknowledges mistakes and enthusiastically works to address them.



Whether you are working at a non-profit, for a judge, at a big firm or somewhere in between, your summer experience will likely include several social events, running the gamut from lunch with colleagues, to Zoom happy hours, to inter-office travel. These extracurricular events are an important part

of your summer interview, and should be viewed as an opportunity to get to know the attorneys and professionals in your office and to show that you can be trusted to represent the organization in a professional manner outside of the office.

## *Guidelines*

**Show Up:** Plan to attend every social event offered by your employer, whether in person or virtual. If your organization participates in community events, you should also participate. Make arrangements to be in town every weekend possible. If the judge invites you to lunch on short notice, go (even if you packed your lunch that day). If an attorney asks you to grab coffee at 2 p.m., graciously accept the offer. If you do not like coffee, accept the invitation and order a tea.

If you have a deadline that would be impossible to meet if you accept an invitation, ask for a rain check. If accepting the invitation means that you will need to work late or come in early to meet the deadline, then it is not impossible, and you should accept the invitation and work the extra hours to complete your assignment on time.

**Be on Time:** Be on time for everything, including social events. In the business world, “fashionably late” is simply late.

**Dress Appropriately:** If your summer internship includes social functions outside of normal work hours, dress appropriately, but professionally, for the event. Avoid clothing that is revealing and/or offensive.

**Limit Alcohol Consumption:** It is perfectly acceptable to have one or two drinks at a social event. It is not acceptable to overconsume, even if you are encouraged to do so by other attorneys at the

organization. Other attorneys and professionals may drink in excess. Those attorneys and professionals already have a permanent job. You do not. Sip slowly and do not become intoxicated.

**Be Careful What You Say:** Talk to as many people as you can. Stay positive. Watch your language. Do not engage in office gossip. Do not say anything negative about anyone at the organization. Do not speak poorly of clients, opposing parties, other firms, organizations or cities (you never know their connections). Do not say anything to an attorney or other staff member (or their spouses or friends) that you would not say at the office. Small talk does not need to be limited to “shop talk,” but avoid controversial topics.

**Guests:** Do not bring a guest to work events unless guests are specifically invited. Remember that the behavior of any guest you bring will reflect on you. If you bring someone, make sure s/he knows how to conduct him/herself.

**Common Courtesies:** Do not take perks and social functions as your right. If an attorney approaches you about a social function, do not express disinterest or suggest alternative arrangements. Be gracious and remember to thank the organizing attorneys and staff members.

## *Learn from the Mistakes of Others*

**The Theater Snob:** The recruiting coordinator for an office of a large firm planned a social outing for the office’s class of summer associates. The summer associates were invited to join several attorneys at the theater to see *Les Misérables*. After receiving the invitation, one summer associate informed the recruiting coordinator that he did not care to see that particular play, but he would review the theater’s schedule and select a show that he preferred. The recruiting coordinator accommodated his request, purchased tickets for the show chosen by the summer associate and found attorneys to join him. However, his sense of entitlement and lack of gratitude was noted by all attorneys in the office. He may have enjoyed a night at the theater, but he did not receive an offer for post-graduation employment.

**The Double Luncher:** During the summer, it is important to meet as many attorneys as possible at your organization, but please remember, your primary objective is to contribute to the success of your organization and obtain an offer to return through your great work product. At one organization, a summer intern was so intent on connecting with every attorney in the office that he would frequently schedule two lunches and two coffee breaks in a single day. He barely had time to do any work! Attorneys in his office eventually realized he was spending a majority of his day eating and had to intervene. The summer intern did not receive an offer to return. If you receive more than one lunch invitation for the same day, ask for a rain check or see if it is possible to combine the invitations into one lunch.

**The Card Shark:** Following a formal social event, a few senior attorneys asked the summer intern to join them for a few rounds of poker. She gladly accepted the invitation and spent several hours drinking and playing poker with her summer colleagues. The intern walked away the winner, pocketing a substantial amount of money from the senior attorneys without first declining to accept her winnings. Whether it was because of something she said while intoxicated or because she took a large sum of money from the organization’s attorneys without a moment’s pause, following this event, the organization’s attorneys stopped giving her new assignments and friendly small talk ceased. The intern did not receive an offer to return.



Law firms, public interest organizations, government employers, corporations and other legal employers will not expect a summer associate or a first year attorney to be an expert in any particular field of law. Rarely will an organization withhold an offer to return due to an honest mistake or poor work

product. More frequently, the failure to receive an offer or a positive recommendation at the end of the summer stems from a student's failure to demonstrate the soft skills and professionalism required to succeed as an attorney.

**Maintain a Positive Attitude:** Project positivity and enthusiasm for your work. Accept new assignments with a sense of eagerness and gratitude for the opportunity.

**Excel at Small Talk:** Be personable, but take care to project a sense of professionalism in your interactions with colleagues and clients. It is important to be relatable, but do not engage in inappropriate discussions with other interns or colleagues. Word travels quickly.

**Maintain a Strong Work Ethic:** If your employer sets working hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., make a habit of arriving or going active online at 8 a.m. and staying at the office or online until the judge or a substantial majority of the other attorneys and professionals leave for the evening. Work in the office for a few hours on a couple of Saturdays. If you are working remotely from a different time zone, work the same hours as the attorneys in the office will be working, even if it means you have to wake up earlier or work later than usual. For example, if your position is in California, but you elect to work remotely from London, you should be actively working and available for projects and conferences during California business hours.

**Be a Team Player:** Attorneys function in a team setting. Administrative assistants, paralegals, associates, counsel, junior partners and equity partners will often all work on the same matter – this is your team. If you are interning in a judge's chambers, the administrative assistant, clerks and judge are your team. If you are doing supervised research or working as a research assistant, your supervising professor is your team. Be considerate of your team members. When you have time, offer to assist the other team members with their work, even the paralegals! If your team is working late or coming in over the weekend, stay late and show up to the office on a Saturday, even if you do not

have work to do and even if your team tells you it is not necessary. Your team will appreciate your willingness to make yourself available for new projects outside of normal working hours.

**Be Humble:** Remember, you are still in law school. Even if you are at the top of your class, there is still so much to learn. You will be working with a team of attorneys and professionals who will have years of experience. Admit what you do not know. Learn from those around you. Remember, you are not entitled to this job; you are not entitled to a job next summer; you are not entitled to a job after graduation. All of these things are earned through hard work, professionalism, and a positive attitude.

**Be Responsive:** Return voicemails and respond to emails within the same business day. If your employer uses an instant messaging service, respond to messages in real time or as soon as possible.

**Act with Integrity:** You must be accountable for the quality of your work. If you make a material mistake, you must admit it. Attorneys recognize that everyone makes mistakes, from the administrative assistant to the most senior attorney on staff. It is how you handle mistakes that matters the most.

**Use Common Sense:** Do not use profanity in written work, emails or in conversation. Do not date employees or fellow summer interns. Do not discuss an intent or desire to work elsewhere. Do not discuss your future career search or interviewing plans. We recognize that your summer internship may not be your dream job, but you must treat it with the same diligence and positivity as you would your ideal position.

**Be Nice:** Be kind to everyone, from the parking attendant to the receptionist or senior partner's assistant. All of these people can make your life much easier. Being rude or condescending to any support staff will be a huge mark against you. Moreover, aside from any personal benefit, being kind is just the right thing to do.

**Be Sensitive:** It may be another project for you, but never lose sight of the fact that the matter is very personal and important to your clients. While some of the experienced attorneys may exhibit a "gallows humor" about clients, you should not (*i.e.*, do not say: "We're trying to get this scumbag off" or "We've got to finish this estate plan before the old guy croaks.").



Your summer internship is an opportunity to evaluate your employer and your interest in different types of work. It is important to make the most of the experience.

**Evaluate Practice Areas:** The summer is a great time to evaluate your interest and abilities in different types of law. If you are working as a judicial intern, think about what types of cases and legal questions are most interesting to you. If you are at a firm or public interest organization, try to seek out assignments in as many different practice areas as possible. You may come into your summer internship believing that employment discrimination is your passion, only to find that representing asylum seekers is your true calling. Similarly, you might be convinced that you will be a litigator, only to find that estate planning is more your speed.

**Network:** It is important to meet as many attorneys as possible at your employer. Your odds of receiving an offer to return will increase to the extent you are able to develop positive relationships with many attorneys at your organization. Make an effort to seek out projects from different attorneys. If there are attorneys practicing in an area that interests you, but that do not have summer projects, ask to meet those attorneys for coffee or lunch to discuss their practice. Organized social events are a great way to meet other attorneys in your office.

In addition to building your network within the organization, take the opportunity to network in the city where you are spending the summer. Contact the Career Center for a list of alumni working in your city at organizations or in practice areas that are of interest to you. Arrange informational meetings and participate in the Career Center's mock interview program with alumni. Attend networking events sponsored by the Career Center, law firms or public interest organizations in your area. Be sure to keep up with the Career Center blog and law school calendar for information regarding these events.

**Evaluate the Organization:** During the summer you will have the chance to evaluate the culture and capabilities of your employer, the opportunities it can (or cannot) provide, the personalities of its attorneys and professionals, and what a typical day looks like for an attorney at the organization. Try to get a feel for the lifestyles and personalities of the junior and mid-level attorneys. Take the time to consider whether the organization or a particular practice group within the organization is a good fit for your career and personal goals.





The typical rules of office etiquette apply to all law firms, government offices and public interest organizations. Abide by the organization's written and spoken policies. Act in a professional manner at all times.

**Be On Time:** Arrive at work on time or early. Traffic is not a good excuse.

**Vacations:** Because you are there for the summer only, do not assume that you will have any days off. Try to schedule personal vacation time either before or after the term of your summer internship. If you need to take days off, either for personal reasons or to participate in interviewing, let the administrator or program coordinator know as soon as possible. If you have a good reason, most employers will give you a few days off (*e.g.*, wedding, big family event). It is a good gesture to offer to make up the time or not get paid for those days; in most cases they will pay you anyway. In the event you are taking time off for interviewing, you should be generic when making your request: "I have a personal commitment on July 23 that I cannot reschedule, would it be possible to take the day off? I would be happy to extend my summer term to cover this time."

**Confidentiality:** Understand your employer's confidentiality requirements. Never discuss a client or client matter outside of an attorney's office. Be especially careful in the halls, elevators, restrooms, restaurants, and other public places. Ask for approval before using any work product as a writing sample. Remember, your confidentiality obligation does not end when your summer internship is over.

**Conflicts:** Keep a list of clients for whom you do work. You will need it if you go to another employer in the future. Of course, you will need to ask your current employer before you disclose any information, but it will make future legwork easier.

**Out of Office:** If possible, make sure to tell your assistant and/or the receptionist when you leave the employer's floor. That way if someone is looking for you, they will know you are out. If you will be

out of the office for an entire day, put an out of office notice on your email, and be sure to inform the attorneys with whom you are working.

**Email Etiquette:** Carefully read all emails you receive. Read all outgoing emails at least twice before hitting send. Consider the tone of your email – could it be interpreted by the receiver as unprofessional? Use spellcheck. Do not send any email that you would not want any other employees at the organization to see. You know how easy it is for someone else to hit that forward button. Be very, very careful of hitting “Reply All” or forwarding emails to the entire organization that should not be forwarded. You do not want to be the talk of the town and the featured story on [abovethelaw.com](http://abovethelaw.com). Do not use your work email for personal matters. Remember, the emails you send will likely live for years on the organization’s server and may be housed on a document management system that is searchable by everyone in the organization.

**Voicemails and Call Logs:** The voicemails that you receive and leave will likely be preserved. Most organizations archive voicemail messages and/or transcribe voicemail messages into emails. Keep in mind that even after you delete a voicemail from your office phone and delete the email transcription, the contents of that message will likely live forever on your employer’s data servers. Further, a log of ingoing and outgoing calls will also be preserved. Be selective when giving out your office phone number. Your friends and family should use your personal phone and not your office line. In order to avoid unnecessary pauses, “ahs” and “ums,” and other ramblings, before placing a call, map out the message you will leave if that attorney does not pick up your call.

**Internet Usage:** Do not use work computers or internet access to visit any web sites unless it is work related. Some employers record internet usage – both time on-line and sites visited. Remember, if you connect your personal phone or device to the organization’s Wi-Fi, the sites you visit will be visible to your employer. If your organization gives you a phone for the summer, the phone should be used strictly for business purposes. Do not use it to make personal calls, maintain personal records, send personal emails, browse the internet for non-work related purposes, or download apps that are not required by the organization.

**Earbuds and Headphones:** Do not use earbuds or headphones in the office. As an intern and new attorney, it is important to be approachable and engaged. Listening to music, whether through speakers, earbuds or headphones, sends the message that you do not want to be disturbed. Use of earbuds and headphones by other attorneys at the organization is not a signal that such use is permissible by interns.

**Personal Phones:** Put your personal phone away when you are at the office or social events. Do not use social media during work hours. You do not want your employer to discover that you are posting on Facebook or Instagram when you are supposed to be working on a brief. While we are on the topic, double check your social media privacy settings. Google yourself. Make sure that whatever is discoverable from a Google search is something you are comfortable with your new colleagues seeing. Think twice before connecting with your new colleagues on social media.







Many employers are implementing virtual summer programs. While the switch from in-person to virtual programming may be disappointing, remember that the goals of your summer internship are to make a great impression, to gain substantive legal experience and to earn that offer to return next summer – which you can do virtually. This summer, more than ever, it is important to stand out as the very best summer intern.

**Be Engaged and Accountable:** Some programs have been reduced to professional development, practice area training or other virtual programming. Even if your summer program no longer includes substantive legal work, make a point to attend every virtual session, and do so with enthusiasm. Actively participate in virtual discussions. If materials are provided in advance, log on prepared and ready to discuss the materials.

If you are working remotely, maintain frequent communication with the assigning attorney(s). Consider sending a morning recap of what you accomplished the prior day and what you will be working on that day. If your supervisors are amenable, consider scheduling a daily or weekly check in by phone or Zoom to provide updates on your work and obtain feedback on your performance. If your employer uses a messaging system where inactivity is noted, be sure to be logged in and active during normal work hours (and beyond). Especially if you are not responsible for billing time, you will want to find ways to be accountable for your workday.

**Maximize Virtual Networking:** Working virtually requires that you be more intentional about networking within the organization. Be sure to reach out to many different summer colleagues to introduce yourself and make yourself available for projects (when appropriate).

**Be Professional:** Even though you might be working from your home, it is important to be professional in all of your work interactions, including informal communications on messenger platforms. It is also important to remember that certain private conversations in Zoom can be

downloaded and viewed by the organizer. In addition, all Microsoft Teams chats are visible to the administrator and cannot be deleted by the chat participants.

## *Tips for Video and Phone Conferencing*

**Eliminate Visual Interruptions:** You may be able to concentrate with a roommate walking in and out of a frame, the dog jumping around on your lap, or the cat sitting on your head, but these visual disturbances will distract your summer colleagues during video conferences. Consciously control your environment and what appears on your video feed. Avoid multitasking and be stationary, not driving or walking. Where possible, conference in a room at your home with a closed door, and avoid moving in and out of the video frame. Before the meeting begins, gather whatever resources you will need to make it through so that you do not create a visual disruption by repeatedly moving in and out of your video feed. When participating in video conferences, be sure to have your video feed on – this shows you are an active participant.

**Eliminate Noise Disruptions:** Silence all devices prior to the beginning of any video or phone conference. Email notifications, text messages, and calendar hits all briefly interrupt flow. Keep pets out of your work space during conferences to avoid interruptions from barking dogs or Polly asking for another cracker. When you are not speaking, mute your microphone.

**Consider your Setting:** If you can, choose a place for video conferences that has a background that communicates order and calm. Consider the lighting of your work-space. If you are back-lit (a window is behind you) your face can be lost in a shadow. Instead, have lights next to your webcam. Ensure your space is tidy. Make Marie Kondo proud and have an area that looks put-together (*e.g.*, no visible junk).

**Dress the Part:** The clothing you wear during a video conference should reflect what you would wear for an in-person meeting. Attorneys employed in long-term positions have years of goodwill that might enable them to dress more casually for video conferences. This goodwill is earned through hard work, positivity and diligence. As a summer intern, you are still earning that goodwill and should always dress professionally. Even if you do not have any scheduled video conferences, it is still a good idea to dress professionally while working remotely, as you never know when a colleague might initiate a video call. All interactions with clients and courts via video conference require a suit.

**Test, Test, Test:** You want to avoid scrambling and troubleshooting moments before you need to exude a capable demeanor. Before any video or phone conferences using unfamiliar technology, ensure you know the program being used and test out audio and video capabilities on your device well in advance. Call friends or family to confirm that the sound quality of your video and audio equipment is acceptable. Consider investing in a headset for video and phone conferencing. There are plenty of economical options available for you to use.

**Check your Voicemail Greeting:** Make sure your phone has a professional voicemail greeting. Be sure to check your voicemail periodically throughout the day, and return messages on the day they are received. Do not let your voicemail box get so full that it stops accepting new messages.



Please stay connected with the Career Center over the summer. Make a habit of checking your WashU Law email daily. Recruiting for next summer and post-graduation positions will begin in early June and will run through next spring. Important bidding dates and deadlines will be conveyed through the Career Center blog and on Symplicity.

If you have any questions during the summer, big or small, feel free to call the Career Center. We are here all summer. The Career Center's main number is (314) 935-6451, or you can email [lawcareers@wustl.edu](mailto:lawcareers@wustl.edu). Even when the Career Center is working remotely, all calls are forwarded, and voicemails and emails are checked frequently. Do not hesitate to reach out.

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