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10-1

Introduction

There comes a time in nearly every internship when interns tell us that they are enjoying their internships in a whole new way. For many interns, this is the time in the internship when their experiences most closely match their “dream” internships or the ideals and images they carried. Others describe it as the “emotional moment.” The initial anxieties have subsided, problems big and small are being resolved, and considerable confidence has been gained. There is a sense of feeling grounded—finally! If this sounds like what you are experiencing, then you have entered the Competence Stage of your internship.

During this stage, interns begin to take charge of the learning experience and develop a pace and style of learning that is their own. Striving for competence often means bringing all that you can be to your role as intern and doing your very best. For many interns and supervisors, it is the most exciting and rewarding time in the field experience. With confidence and pride, the intern demonstrates on a regular basis the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes expected by the internship site, along with the interpersonal skills, motivation, and cognitive abilities needed to attain success.

Interns arrive at this stage at different times: Some of your peers may not be here yet, while others may have been here for some time. What is important is not how fast you and your peers reach this juncture, but rather having confidence that you will get here in due time. In this chapter, we discuss the pleasures that most interns experience—and have earned—during this stage. As we have for other stages, we also identify concerns and tasks that await you and encourage you to take an engaged approach toward dealing with them. While it is less likely that an internship will go off track at this stage than in earlier ones, it can happen, and we end by considering the shape and challenge of disillusionment in the Competence Stage.

In Their Own Words

Voices of Competence

The Competence Stage consists of being confident in myself. I am looking forward to that aspect of my internship. It's not that I have never been competent in a task before. It is just that the sense of professionalism will be much greater.

For the first time in a very long time, I feel on top of what I am doing. I know my work, I am respected by my supervisor and coworkers, I get great pleasure from seeing the difference I make in the

community, and I just can't get enough of the work. I finally know what I am going to do "when I grow up!"

My supervisor is great. I have developed important relationships with her and the workers, and I feel a part of the team. I have learned so much about myself too. This I didn't expect when I started out. This internship is everything I hoped for, and it happened.

I feel that all my years of schooling have been for this exact purpose. The minute I walked in the door, I felt at home ... and in my element. ... It's like nothing I have ever felt before.

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10-2Enjoying the Ride

LO 10.1

Students often liken this time in the internship to that point in an air flight when the plane is no longer ascending and begins to level off. When this happens, you experience the *cruising effect*: The intensity of increasing awareness, accelerated learning, knowledge, understanding, and responsibilities plateau, and you settle into a rhythm of working that is more realistic and predictable. However, to pursue the metaphor, there is plenty to see—and new ways to see those things—and plenty of ways to enjoy the ride.

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10-2aNew Perspectives

Now I look back on all those feelings of inadequacy and laugh!

—*Student Reflection*

Feeling competent in doing the work is critical during the Competence Stage. It's not as simple as what you know and what you don't know. Discovering knowledge you didn't know you had and discovering gaps in knowledge you thought you had can be both exhilarating and overwhelming.

The **Competence Stage** is often a time when interns are able to differentiate more clearly between what is and is not important to their work. Subtle dynamics that escaped you before are probably visible now. Remember when you were concerned about acceptance and adequacy issues?

Even though you spent quite a bit of time trying to find your way around the organization while you were concerned about these issues, the organization's internal politics and stance in the

community were virtually invisible to you at that time because your primary concerns were focused elsewhere. Now, however, you have a better opportunity to explore and understand the norms and rhythms of the organization.

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10-2bA Time of Transformation and Empowerment

Your emotional landscape is changing as well. Many interns feel an enhanced sense of mastery as their skills become sharper, and their growing sense of autonomy means less need for constant supervision and direction. There is also a tremendous sense of confidence associated with this stage. The anxiety, awkwardness, and trepidation of earlier stages have gradually given way to a period of calm and inner strength. Interns often tell us that things have settled down at the internship site. In reality, life at the site is still hurtling along at the same or even an increased pace. It is not the world around you that has changed and become more peaceful; rather, it is you who have developed an inner sense of calm from which you will derive strength as you move through this intensely productive period in your internship.

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10-2cBecoming the New Me

I am fitting in around the office. Everyone is helpful and giving me tips on how to do things. They even ask me what I would do in certain situations. I feel they respect what I have to say. I realize that people really do depend on me here. ... my advice is important.

—Student Reflections

Another aspect of the ride is a transformation in your sense of self from that of a student to that of an emerging professional. Have you noticed that you no longer refer to yourself as “just an intern” or “the intern”? (Remember the Voices of Experience, p.163?) Instead, you identify more closely with the professional role you have and being a member of the professional staff.

You develop a greater sense of self-awareness and self-respect in this stage. You are most likely learning that you can trust your knowledge and skills, and you are developing a good sense of your strengths and limitations. And if you have clients, your work might suddenly take on new meaning because you realize that you are making a difference in the lives of others. Your professional identity is beginning to emerge.

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10-2dRedefining Relationships

At the beginning of my internship, I was constantly asking: “What do I do next? What do I do now?” Now I am not asking what to do. I am just doing it.

—Student Reflection

When we ask our interns to reflect on the changes that have occurred in their placements, they often identify changes in relationships with their supervisors. They smile, for example, as they tell us that they no longer need to check in as they go about their work. We are often struck by the quality of the relationships students develop with their supervisors. They not only are supportive and encouraging connections but often become redefined into mutually satisfying relationships that last long after the internship ends.

Working with supervisors and coworkers usually becomes easier during this stage. Communication becomes more comfortable and open, issues can be approached without concern about rejection or conflict, genuine teamwork can develop, and supervision can be a source of insight and feedback for personal as well as professional growth. Often, a change in the openness of the supervisory relationship becomes evident at this time as well. Most interns would not have considered disagreeing with their supervisors earlier during the placement. However, a combination of confidence and a sense of emerging equality may make those conversations more possible in the Competence Stage.

THINK About It...

Becoming Mentor and Protégé: To Be or Not to Be

In some instances, site supervisors develop more than a supervisory relationship with their interns; that is, they develop a *mentoring relationship*. This relationship differs from supervision because it is interpersonal and the supervisor takes a heightened interest in the intern’s professional development and career advancement (Collins, 1993). Mentoring can be a very empowering relationship, leaving both the mentor and the mentee (protégé) better professionals for it. The mentor not only oversees the development of knowledge and skills but also provides “valuable insight into an organization’s environment and culture, as well as psychosocial support for the student” (Stromei, 2000, p. 55).

In some fields, the mentoring relationship is considered the most important aspect of graduate education (Mozes-Zirkes, 1993). At the undergraduate level, we have found that the mentoring relationship, when it develops, is a most instructive and influential factor in the quality of the internship experience. More than that, in research done by Gallup in 2013 that considered the connections between education and long-term success in the workplace, two factors stood out: having mentors and an academically relevant internship (Friedman, 2014).

The best mentoring relationships may evolve spontaneously between supervisors and interns. The effective mentor makes sure that the intern becomes part of the organization very quickly and is given highly visible tasks; this type of mentor ensures that the intern is introduced to the profession through such resources as networking, luncheons, and conferences. Although many supervisors do

make sure that all these bases are covered for the intern, the mentoring supervisor *personally* invests time and resources in coaching the protégé for success (Tentoni, 1995).

Of course, this relationship takes time to develop (Collins, 1993). It moves from a relationship of positive role modeling, when much of the learning occurs through interactions, observations, and comparisons with the supervisor, through a time when you have grown to really like each other, and then to the point where you might be right now: valuing the relationship and recognizing how mutually rewarding it is for you and your supervisor. In the best mentoring relationships, a more equal relationship emerges over time. That stage becomes evident when the supervisor accepts you as a colleague, and you accept the supervisor on an equal footing (Collins, 1993).

The process of becoming a mentor is described from the professional's perspective in terms of six stages (Russo, Capuzzi, Stauffer, & Coker, 2016). Although each stage has its unique aspects, we draw your attention to the second stage, *Checking for Compatibility*. Whether the mentoring relationship results from spontaneous or intentional interest on the part of either party, both must understand the other's personality, ensure that there is a "fit" in the core values, establish trust levels, further explore mutual interests and goals, and think about ways in which each can be helpful to the other.

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10-3The Tasks You Face

LO 10.2

As you move through the Competence Stage, along with the joys you are likely to face some challenges. As always, you can approach them on the engaged or disengaged end of the continuum, or somewhere between. Many interns, even the most engaged, fall prey to the misconception that the days of difficulties or problems are behind them. Some say they expect more difficulties in their internships, but when the difficulties arise, they ignore or otherwise do not acknowledge them; other interns just want to focus on the good feelings of having resolved issues. We refer to this common experience as "freezing the moment," staying in the comfort zone of the internship, intentionally or not. Still other interns fall into the trap of believing that real professionals (like "really good" interns) should be beyond having difficulties.

Well, you are not beyond them—no one is. Your skills; your relationships with clients, supervisors, peers, and coworkers; and your understanding of the internship site are all evolving, and you could continue to experience new difficulties in all these areas. The good news is that you are better equipped than ever to meet these challenges; in fact, your ability to handle difficulties can be a source of ongoing pride. The difficulties you face at this time may actually feel different now and not be so overwhelming or anxiety provoking. At the same time, they still need to be managed in engaged ways or the difficulties will become problems. [Table 10.1](#) provides some examples of engaged and disengaged approaches to the concerns of this stage.

Table 10.1

The Competence Stage

Associated Concerns	Critical Tasks	Response to Tasks	
		Engaged Response	Disengaged Response
High accomplishment Seeking quality	Raising the bar: quality and integrity	Embraces tasks and challenges	Content to continue with current challenge and activity; bored but willing to change
Emerging view of self		Sets high aspirations	Satisfied with status quo
		Sets personal standards of excellence	Sets standards of “good enough”
Feeling empowered Exploring professionalism	Having feelings of achievement and success	Actively seeks fulfillment. Engages self and others in achieving the feeling of success.	Accepts whatever sense of fulfillment is present. Relies on others to succeed. “Guts it out” if not feeling successful
Doing it all	Maintaining balances	Keeps personal and internship demands in check	Unable to manage conflicting demands effectively
Ethical issues Worthwhile tasks	Preparing for the profession	Seeks to understand and adhere to professional and ethical guidelines	Ignores or accepts transgressions
		Seeks to identify as an emerging member of the profession/field	Content to identify as a student



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10-4Raising the Bar

In our discussion of the Exploration Stage, we encouraged you to revisit your Learning Contract and make adjustments in the goals and activities if necessary. If you followed our advice, you have most likely achieved some of your new goals now and are on your way to realizing many more. If you are in a year-long internship, the Competence Stage lasts for quite a while, and in that time more and more of your goals can be met. That is a satisfying feeling, but over time the satisfaction can begin to give way to boredom or complacency if you are not continually challenging yourself or being challenged to “be all you can be.” If you choose to plateau and rest on your laurels for a while, the joyful feelings we described earlier may well begin to fade—unless, of course, you are approaching the end of your internship when culminating concerns and tasks will be challenging you. If you choose to plateau and still have months left in your internship, however, you may be leaning into a *fixed mindset* (see [“Defining Success for Yourself”](#)). Remember, you have a number of new tools to challenge yourself, and when it comes to the urge to plateau, challenging yourself is exactly what you need to do! You may need to remind yourself that you have been through this before and that the risk of new challenges (and possibly setbacks) brings with it the possible rewards of new satisfactions and learning. We cannot say for sure what the new challenges will be, but our experiences have repeatedly identified two potential sources of opportunities: a commitment to quality and the growth of personal integrity.

Stories in the Field

Calling It like It Is: Meet Jarnell

Jarnell is interning in public relations at the regional medical center. He has received limited training for the tasks he is expected to perform, at least from his perspective. He struggled with how to voice his concerns in the beginning of his internship, but when he did, he was assured that his feelings of being incompetent in doing the tasks were unfounded and that he was doing “a good job.”

Jarnell is now at a point where he is expected to interact with patients in the Emergency Department. This is very overwhelming for him because he has had no training in working with patients or clients and was informed just that morning that he was to begin this new assignment. Sure enough, the feelings of not being competent are resurfacing. Jarnell is assured he is doing “a good job,” but he knows he isn’t. Oftentimes, he does not ask a patient questions because he is under the impression that he might upset the patient or family even more in an already difficult situation. He realizes that he needs more training even at this late stage in his internship. He is not hearing about these kinds of problems in his seminar class; everyone seems to be having the experiences they hoped for. Jarnell, however, feels as if he is back in the struggles of the early days of his internship (Anticipation). He knows he needs direction and information about how to go about this aspect of his work. He fudged his way through the other tasks, but he doesn’t want to fudge his way when it comes to patients. Too much is at stake—the patients and their families are in crisis.

What Would You Do If You Were Jarnell?

Jarnell knows that his supervisor is not up to the job of supervising an intern and doesn’t take the internship very seriously. Because of the busy nature of the Emergency Department, there really is no one to whom he can turn for help.

What Are Jarnell's Next Steps?

Before answering that question, think about his situation in terms of the four guiding questions: *What? So What? Now What? Then What?*

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10-4aA Commitment to Quality

Not so long ago, in the throes of learning the work, “good enough” may have been all you expected of yourself in your internship; just getting the work done seemed a lofty goal! That was especially the case if you were dealing with a multitude of responsibilities in addition to your internship. In the Competence Stage, the “good enough” standard that prevailed earlier in the internship can give way to a standard of mastery and even excellence. If you want that transition to happen, you must become more demanding of yourself in all aspects of your internship experience, regardless of the amount of responsibilities you have. Interns who are not engaging in such ways tend to be satisfied with “good enough” as the standard that guides their work.

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10-4bA Commitment to Integrity

Developing integrity is a lifelong process that begins during the college years (Chickering, 1969). This is not a goal of your internship but rather a gift that emerges from the maturing process. Interns who are not maturing at the same rate as their peers may appear to be or actually could be disengaging; they are not yet able to make the conscious commitment to a sense of personal integrity that time will bring. Integrity, simply put, means aligning your actions with your values. Doing so more consistently, and in situations where your values are challenged, is part of the growth process.

FOCUS on Practice

Choose Your Companion: Excellence or Perfection?

At the beginning of the internship in the first seminar class, we often asked our students, “Who here is a perfectionist?” Some interns acknowledged this label immediately, with moans, grunts, or laughs. Other interns identified with it after thinking about it, with resignation. We took that moment to share these observations with them: Many interns have learned from experience not to confuse the need to do work well (excellence) with the need to do work perfectly (perfection). Although both may guarantee success, one guarantees headaches as well—for all involved. When you do not give yourself permission to make mistakes while learning, you deny yourself opportunities to learn how to recover from mistakes and how to solve problems. If perfection is your only or preferred way of doing things, you are bound to be chronically exhausted from the pressure you are putting on

yourself (*Harvard Mental Health Letter*, 2007). Our suggestion is that for the duration of the internship, if at all possible, you give up the need to be perfect and replace it with a commitment to excellence in your work.

As you grow in integrity, your values become genuinely reflected in how you act. In other words, your behaviors truly represent your values. Sometimes that means changing your actions; sometimes it means reconsidering your values. For this harmony or congruence to occur, you may have to reexamine beliefs you have grown up with or held for a long time. Whatever happens, the result will be a system of values and actions that is truly your own. This is no small feat, and in fact, you are already working on this process. Although necessary, letting go of literal beliefs can be quite perplexing when you are in the throes of a life transition, as the internship is for many students. The closer you are to adopting this value structure openly and without a façade, the closer you are to living with a sense of personal integrity (Chickering, 1969). This is a lifelong task, and your journey has just begun.

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10-5 Feeling Success on the Ride

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Some interns become concerned and challenged at this point in their internships when they realize that they appear successful to others, but they do not necessarily *feel* successful relative to their accomplishments. Such a situation can become a problem because the lived experience of the internship is based on what you *feel*, not on the perceptions of others. Thus, feeling good about all aspects of the internship is very important to your sense of success. Being able to *feel* your success, often described as a sense of fulfillment, is what makes the success genuine, both emotionally and cognitively (King, 1988); anything less can compromise those experiences.

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10-5a Sources of Fulfillment

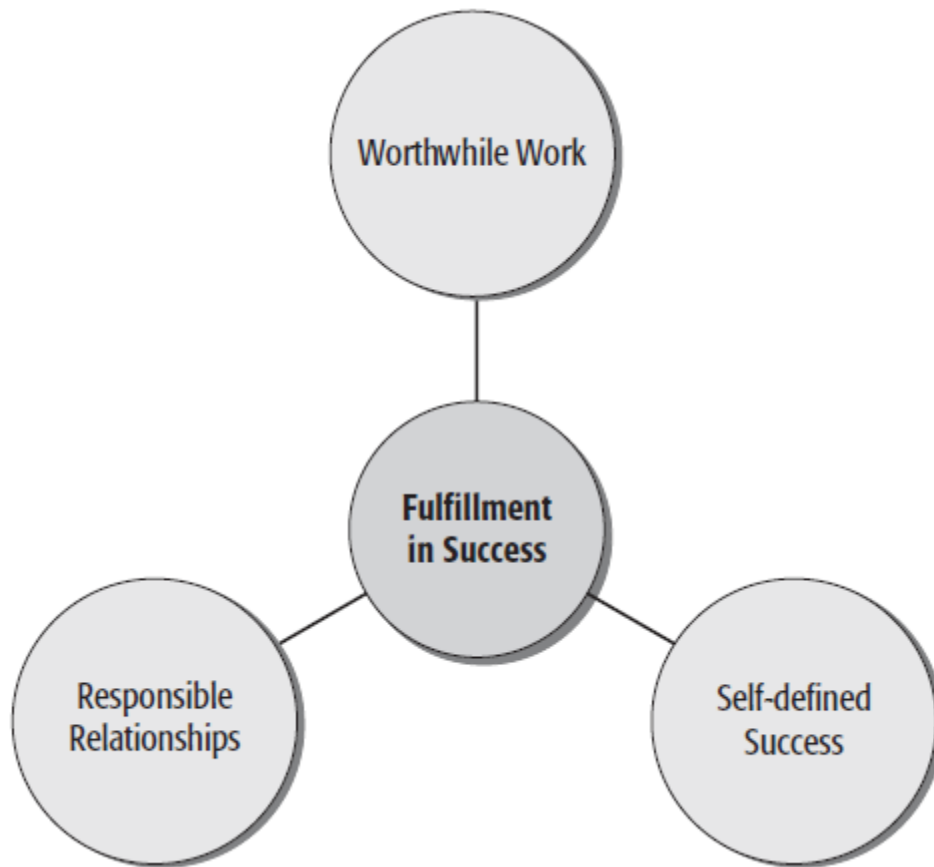
The aspects of my experience which contribute to my sense of fulfillment are the feelings of satisfaction I get when I know I have connected with a client and really made their day better in some way. ... In my internship, it is rare to receive gratitude from a client, but I feel pleasure just knowing that I am giving of myself in a positive, caring way.

—Student Reflection

There are three sources of fulfillment that nurture the emotional experience of feeling one's success: **worthwhile work**, **responsible relationships**, and **self-defined success** (King, 1988). As you read about these sources, which are summarized in [Figure 10.1](#), think about your own

internship and the ways in which it provides you with what you need to *feel* the success you have earned.

Figure 10.1 Sources of Fulfillment in Success (King, 1988)



Worthwhile Work

Whatever your work is, it must be considered *worthy* or *worthwhile* by you and by your supervisor. It must be productive, with responsible activities that are personally meaningful, and the work must allow you to accomplish clear goals. There are five aspects of the work that allow these feelings to develop:

- **Accomplishments.** The work itself needs to provide you with opportunities to develop your skills and apply concepts in real-life situations. For your part, you need to take an active, engaged role in creating your work and your achievements. What you accomplish must be *purposeful in nature, constructive, responsible, challenging, and a source of pride* for you.
- **Acknowledgment.** Being *recognized* and *respected* by your supervisors take on paramount importance in how the achievements are experienced. Such acknowledgment is especially significant when your contributions are above and beyond what is expected of an intern.
- **Self-determination.** This aspect of the work has to do with the potential for autonomy, which is evident in the *freedom to create and carry out* the tasks.

- **Self-actualization.** Opportunities for *creative expression* and *personal growth* need to be built into the work. Otherwise, the work can feel stagnant.
- **Intrinsically rewarding.** Above all, the work has to provide you with personal pleasure, regardless of the demands or stresses inherent in the work.

In Their Own Words

Student Reflections on Worthwhile Work

- **Accomplishments:** *By allowing me to take charge and work independently with a group of clients yet having the support of a professional... I am proud of my internship now that I feel like I'm making a difference and doing some meaningful work.*
- **Acknowledgment:** *It really made a difference when my supervisor and my coworkers complimented me and told me that I had done outstanding work. Up to that point, I thought that I had done a good job on the project, but I didn't really know. I needed to hear it from someone there. Up until then, I began to question myself and my abilities.*
- **Self-determination:** *I coordinated the event and actually made it happen. ... I was given the opportunity to develop something on my own. It felt great.*
- **Self-actualization:** *I was getting worried because everything I was expected to do was already laid out for me. There was no room for "me" in the work. I was just carrying out someone's prescription for how to do the work. I had some great ideas, really creative ideas, for how to do it better, and I felt so frustrated because I didn't think my ideas were welcomed. It's not really my work if my ideas aren't reflected in it. I hated how I felt. I was going nowhere just doing what I was told to do.*
- **Intrinsically rewarding:** *It made me feel good to help someone, and it was nice to be appreciated for my efforts. I feel like I am making a difference at my internship. It feels good.*

Responsible Relationships

The second source of fulfillment is derived from the personal relationships that are integral to your internship experience. It is this sense of inner success—your success as a person—that renders your achievements worthy (Huber, 1971; King, 1988). So, if you want to reap such psychological rewards as the internship being “the best experience of my life,” then you’ll want to pay attention to the quality of your relationships. In particular, they need to be *genuine*, *cooperative*, and *mutually satisfying* for all involved; in other words, they need to be *responsible relationships* (King, 1988).

Real commitment on your part and on the part of coworkers, peers, supervisors, and the community is needed to make responsible relationships happen, and that calls for engaged approaches. On the one hand, your coworkers must be receptive to your coming on board, and the supervisor needs to establish an effective supervisory relationship with you and include you in work groups/teams, staff meetings, and social functions (when appropriate). On the other hand, you need to be willing to engage both the supervisor and your coworkers in responsible supervisory and collegial connections. In some internships, you also need to be willing to engage community groups in genuine, cooperative, and mutually satisfying ways.

Defining Success for Yourself

Self-defined success essentially means you are doing what *you* truly want to do, not what someone else wants you to do. It is the result of a conscious choice, free of the influences of other people (King, 1988).

Corey, Corey, and Muratori (2018, p.34) encourage students to reflect on what success means to them by considering which “mindset” they tend to lean toward: a *fixed mindset*, in which success is “about validating your abilities and proving to yourself and others that you are bright, talented, and capable” or a *growth mindset*, in which you strive to learn and stretch yourself, facing challenges and overcoming setbacks. Our approach in this book and especially in this chapter is to encourage a growth mindset. Dweck (2006, cited in Corey, Corey, & Muratori, 2018, p.34) takes the position that having a growth mindset helps “increase intellectual achievement, promote conflict resolution, reduce aggression, improve willpower, and nurture race relations.”

When it comes to your internship, making conscious choices can be evident in your involvement in the selection of your internship site and/or in the development of the goals of your Learning Contract. Ideally, you were actively and consciously engaged in both decisions: they were freely made, reflect self-determined goals, and are a source of enjoyment or pleasure. That is certainly a tall order and not necessarily possible in all academic programs, which means that some interns were not given that opportunity early in the process. But even if the campus/program supervisor determined your site, the site supervisor determined your Learning Contract, and you were not actively involved in an informed way in these processes, all is not lost! Even if you went into the internship not consciously aware of what you really wanted, those overseeing your actual placement may have created a context that allows you to eventually *own* the decision—that is, to avow the decision as your own. That context could be one in which the supervisor assessed your interests and goals quite well and placed you with a site and/or a supervisor who can provide considerable support for personal growth and awareness while simultaneously entrusting you with worthwhile work. If that is the case, then there is a good chance that you will eventually fully accept the choice of internship site and the learning goals and, in turn, feel success in your achievements.

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10-5b Wait! Wait! It's Not Success That I Feel

What about those of you who, instead of feeling the success you are achieving in your internship, are experiencing something that feels like anxiety? It may be that you are experiencing what is generically referred to as achievement-related anxiety. Initially it is experienced in subtle ways, and then in ways that are not so subtle. This anxiety is felt in contexts related to *expected* achievement, such as living up to expectations of others or of yourself, working in a competitive atmosphere where you are expected to compete, or, in some cases, feeling a need to avoid failure at all costs. If this is what you are experiencing instead of enjoying success in your internship, then you might want to bring it to the attention of your supervisors and/or peers, depending on your circumstances. In that way, you can create a context within which to explore the anxiety you are feeling and what

might be contributing to it, and to brainstorm ways to move beyond it. Your peers may be feeling similarly or your supervisors may have had similar experiences during their internships. Even if they haven't, they are there to support you through this stage.

There are a number of reasons why an intern may not feel the success being achieved. If you are not enjoying this ride, even though from the outside it looks like things are going great, you should take some time to think about what may be amiss. For example, are you stressed to a point where you are not enjoying many aspects of your life? Are you feeling down? Are you worried about something to the point of constant distraction? Most of us have experienced some, if not all, of these feelings, and we know from experience that when we do, it is difficult to smile, let go and have a good time, and enjoy our daily lives. If any of these descriptions apply, then it might be difficult to enjoy your success at this time.

There is a big difference between anxiety that is pervasive and chronic over time and anxiety that is situational and transient. Regardless, an engaged approach is needed to move beyond this stressful time in your internship. If the anxiety persists, we urge you to talk with one of your supervisors, who can point you in the right direction for helpful resources.

Keep in mind the overall need: *productive work* that allows you to accomplish *clear goals* through *responsible activities* that are *personally meaningful*. Your responsibility is to ensure that each of these aspects of worthwhile work is in place. If perchance something is missing, your responsibility is to fill that gap. Not sure how? Begin with your supervisor. During supervision, review the qualities that need to be shored up and create a plan to move each of them forward.

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10-6Reclaiming a Balanced Life

LO 10.4

I realized I was not giving enough attention to my relationships with my friends and family. It had been nearly three months since we had spoken. The incident made me stop and think about how important my relationships are and how, even though I am busy, I must not neglect them because these are the people I count on for support.

—Student Reflection

The Competence Stage is not without its predictable issues. Notably, this is a point in the internship at which interns can begin to feel the pressure of trying to meet all their commitments both within and beyond the internship.

If you are like many interns, you may suddenly realize that you had a life before the internship—a social life, a family life, a private life—and find yourself needing to reclaim it. If you are an experienced intern, you have been dealing with this issue every day as you manage the internship while keeping your priorities clear and in place. That may be no easy feat if continuing on in your academic major or graduation depends on the grade earned in the internship.

Perhaps that awareness will come to you on your way home from the internship, when you are no longer so preoccupied and are thinking about aspects of your life that were left behind in all the excitement. Or perhaps it will happen during a morning break as your mind wanders to more personal needs—for relationships on site or in your personal life, for family time, for time alone. Noted one intern: *I can really understand the need now to slow down and pace myself and try to create a more livable, useful pace for other people in my life, including at the site.* Another student's experience was a nagging feeling: *I can feel a tug going on between family demands, work, and my academic requirements. ... The holidays can also complicate my situation to the point where I am beginning to feel both pressure and stress.*

Interns usually find a need to get on with living at this point in their internship. In our experience, these changes signal a healthy shift of energies toward a more *balanced way of living* with your professional life. Although your internship still remains very important, it may no longer be the driving energy of your life. As one intern noted: *The kids notice when I am not there. Continuity is important to them. This incident reinforced my need to balance my job and internship both for me and especially for the students I see.*

Stories in the Field

Could This Be Happening to Me?: Meet Sabrina

Sabrina is an international intern from the United States. She has worked very hard at the site and her evaluations reflect high levels of competencies in the work she is doing. She is thinking that it is time to have some social life; after all, she may never visit this country again, and she doesn't want her only memories of the experience to be the work she is doing in the internship. So, Sabrina and friends from the internship program went to a local bar that weekend. Shortly after arriving, she split from her friends and started talking with a local man. During the conversation, Sabrina smiled and talked with him the same way she talked with any other friend back home. The man started coming on more strongly and asked her to leave the bar with him. Sabrina likes talking with him, and she finds him attractive. But, something doesn't feel right, and she is not sure what to do.

What Would You Do If You Were Sabrina?

This internship is the first time Sabrina has traveled abroad, and this is the first night she has gone with friends into the local community for a night out. A number of questions are in the back of her mind as she talks with this man—questions that she recalls from her preparation seminar class about international internships, cultural differences, and living in host communities. Has she put herself into an unsafe position? Could gender roles in the host country be that different from those of her home community when it comes to being “friendly” with local residents? Could her personal behaviors and boundaries regarding flirting, dating, and sexual activity actually be changing in her host community? Is this man an example of the local residents who were described as “too friendly” by her program's supervisor?

What Are Sabrina's Next Steps?

Before answering that question, think about Sabrina's situation in terms of the four guiding questions: *What? So What? Now What? Then What?*

Source: United Planet. Health and Safety Scenario for Volunteer & Intern Training. March 2017.
Adapted with permission.

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10-6a Feeling the Crunch

Up to this point in your internship, you have had to struggle with the ups and downs of learning skills, developing competencies, resolving differences between real and ideal expectations, becoming part of an organization, and contending with changing perspectives and life's big questions. Just when you thought it was clear sailing ahead... *wham!* You run into yet another wall in your journey.

This wall is different from previous ones—but just about everyone hits it. This one you know you can manage, but you just don't know whether you can muster the energy needed to deal with the hassle. You feel some anger about the amount and level of work you have and frustration over the amount of time you do not have. Something subtle is happening as well. Your perspective seems to be changing again. You have little tolerance for trivialities and you find yourself feeling indifferent toward some of your assignments and responsibilities, especially if they are not directly related to the internship or do not measure up to the importance of the work you are doing. This is *not* a crisis in growth that you are having; it is a *crisis in management* of your time and the workload. This new crisis takes on added importance because it poses a real threat to your schedule, and the quality and pace of your internship.

You are encountering what we endearingly refer to as [the crunch](#). This early warning signal lets you know that the end of the internship is fast approaching. This crisis in management is no different from the crunches you faced at the end of every semester (usually at the end of the mid-semester slump, remember?) when papers, exams, and projects all came due at the same time. Now, however, there is much more at stake academically, financially, and professionally. On top of that, you are probably carrying the greatest number of responsibilities you've had to date in your studies, whether you are a traditional-age or experienced intern.

Most of your peers are or will be going through “the crunch” at roughly the same time that you do. It's important to be aware of the extent of its effects so you can manage it effectively through engaged ways. If any of the following questions describes you at this time, know that you are not alone! Do you...

- Question the merit of each assignment?
- Challenge requests for more work from you?
- Struggle to avoid the wall of ineptitude?
- Feel overwhelmed?
- Feel stuck in time?

- Think you have...
 - too many deadlines?
 - too many details?
 - too few resources?
 - too little social life?
 - too little family life?
 - too high standards?
 - too many responsibilities?

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10-6bManaging the Crunch

To get through the crunch, you'll need to use engaged approaches, some of which can be found in [Chapters 4](#) and [8](#), and some of which are discussed here. You know yourself best in times like these. What works for you? What allows you to manage time and workload crunches? Some people actually thrive when they are up against a wall of deadlines, while others crumble under the same circumstances. Perhaps one of the following engaged approaches will give you the support and structure you need, as they have for many of our students.

- **Taking time for you.** A day will do; an afternoon or evening could do just as well. The important thing here is to stop. Just stop everything. Take a holiday from the assignments, the responsibilities, and the timelines you are facing. It is very important that you do something that you enjoy. Sing. Dance. Shop. Bike. Hike. Climb. Swim. Draw. Paint. Read. Run. Play. Ski. Work out. Create. Sew. Meditate. Sleep. Listen. Make music. Take in a movie. Go out to eat. Take a walk! Do something, anything, whatever it takes to help you... *let go!*
- **Focusing on the tasks.** Things simply must get done. So, it is time to make decisions about your schedule and prioritize the tasks. You will need to decide what is doable in the time you have and what can get done only if you make significant changes in your schedule. This means prioritizing and scheduling as efficiently and effectively as you can. If this is not one of your strengths (and it isn't for many people), then get help. Use the information in the FOCUS on Skills box below to seek out someone who knows how to organize; then consult with that person. This individual could be a peer, one of your supervisors, a coworker, or a friend. Also, instead of focusing on the long list of things you will need to do eventually, focus on what you need to do now. Look at the list and think: Chunk it down! Say to yourself, "All I need to do NOW is ____ and I can do that."
- **Eight-Stepping it.** During the crunch, it becomes obvious that something has to change to put you back on track and in charge of your internship. But you should also recognize that

people sometimes struggle with change for many different reasons. For some, it's a matter of not perceiving a path forward; for others, it's a matter of not using resources that can make a difference. In her blog (www.drjonicewebb.com/), renowned American psychologist Dr. Jonice Webb has identified six personal traits that get in the way of making changes and personal growth, including not perceiving a path forward and not using effective resources. If change is difficult for you now and then, this may be a good time to think about those situations, determine what they have in common, and name it. Once named, you are ready to roll up your sleeves and get to work. Using the *Breaking Through Barriers Eight-Step Model* discussed in [Chapter 8](#) will help you clarify the biggest hurdles you face during this time-and-workload crunch and get a handle on this crisis in management.

FOCUS on Skills

Organizing for Time Management

Here is an exercise that students find helpful in improving their time management. First, list all the tasks that you have to complete. Then, next to each, indicate the time frame within which it *can* be finished, but not necessarily *must* be finished. For example, if you have a final culminating statement to write for your seminar class, it obviously cannot be completed before the internship ends. Nevertheless, you can work on much of it before the end of your placement. Then, when the internship is over, there will be relatively little content to add. The time frame for this assignment actually begins on the date you start this exercise and ends on the due date. By listing tasks, assignments, and responsibilities in a similar manner, you will have a more informed framework for prioritizing tasks and assigning calendar dates to work on them.

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10-7Preparing for the Profession

LO 10.5

As the headiness of the Competence Stage continues to define your daily feelings about the internship, you may find yourself thinking more and more about the profession for which you are preparing. Writing your résumé, seeking out job opportunities, networking, or deciding where you want to live after graduation are tasks that may come to mind immediately. Certainly, those are important ways to begin your journey to your professional home. We find that interns are preparing themselves in other ways as well—ways that reflect their growing awareness of the importance their profession will have in their lives. Two of those ways are a need to “give back” to their internship site and a need to feel a continued part of the organization and profession after the internship ends.

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10-7a Leaving Your Footprint

I think, no, I know that the [police]] station needs to have the back room cleaned out. I want to do that for the chief. He has been very supportive, and I want to give back in some way... I guess it means a lot to me to know that I somehow am still going to be part of the department in some way after I leave.

—Student Reflection

There certainly are ways to ensure that you are not forgotten at your site. Whether you are in a public service setting, corporation, civic organization, research laboratory, or nonprofit agency, you may be feeling a need to make a contribution to the field site in a meaningful way, as did the intern whose reflection introduces this section.

These contributions rarely are part of the Learning Contract; rather, they tend to be given from the heart. They are undertakings that benefit the agency but have not been completed to date because of workload demands, fiscal constraints, and task priorities. The intern's contribution may take the shape of creating an internship manual for the site, developing a database, creating an online resource library, or reorganizing workspaces to meet best practices for efficiency. For the most part, the contributions tend to be on the "wish lists" of site supervisors or others in the organization. If you have been thinking about making such a contribution, now is a good time to think about how to do it and when.

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10-7b Moving Beyond the Textbooks

A second area of awareness that typically develops in students during the Competence Stage is an appreciation for what is beyond textbook knowledge. By now, you realize that remembering facts, working with efficiency and speed, approaching problems in logical ways, and effectively using the environment to meet the needs of the work are effective ways of going about your work. In fact, they may be exactly what is expected of you in your future profession. But you also realize that it takes more than these skills to handle challenging situations and resolve complex problems in the workplace. There are two invaluable resources that interns look to when they realize that everything they need to thrive in their future professions is not found in textbooks.

The first resource is *wisdom*. Wisdom transcends textbook knowledge. It is wisdom that makes a supervisor empowering and a leader remarkable. The differences between these two modalities reflect the differences between what can be instilled and developed in you (*intelligence/skills*) and what you must learn to develop through experience and commitment to a more visionary way of dealing with the work and the issues (*wisdom*).

THINK About It...

Your Supervisor as a Source of Wisdom

If your internship site and supervisors encourage and affirm a tolerance for ambiguity, an ability to intuitively understand and accurately interpret situations, and an ability to identify and frame a problem accurately, then they value both wisdom and intelligence. If you are interning at a site where empathy, concern, insight, and efficient coping skills are emphasized, again both wisdom and intelligence are valued (Hanna & Ottens, 1995). And, if you are being supervised to know and acknowledge your own limits, nod to others' points of view, and find ways to resolve opposing points of view, then wisdom is being demonstrated and valued (Grossmann, Sahdra, & Ciarrochi, 2016). Ideally, your supervisor possesses intelligence and wisdom and has modeled their importance for you.

The second invaluable resource is a combination of the *habits of reflectivity* (Schon, 1995), *Practical reasoning* (Sullivan, 2005), and *critical reflection* (Ash & Clayton, 2009) as ways of being. When professionals engage in their work using these approaches, they make a practice of reflecting deliberately as they consider circumstances and situations as well as the decisions; they constantly integrate and reintegrate theory and practice. Developing these engaged habits takes focus, practice, and conscious intent.

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10-7cBecoming a Civic Professional

As you continue to prepare for your professional field and develop knowledge, hone skills, and assimilate into your field's culture, you will probably find yourself thinking more and more about your civic responsibilities as an adult and as a professional. The goal of civic development is to prepare you to participate fully, responsibly, and actively as a member of a community or communities—what Sullivan (2005) refers to as a **civic professional**. *Active participation* refers to an engaged approach to the responsibilities and being an “owner” of the community's government instead of being a “consumer” of that government.

Your internship has provided you with an opportunity to learn about the public relevance and social obligations of the profession in which you are interning and how these social obligations are or are not carried out at your site. The internship has also provided you with an opportunity to think about yourself in relation to the community and what that means in terms of your civic learning and your preparation for civic effectiveness. Is more expected than simply voting in elections and obeying the laws? That is a question you will have to come to grips with yourself, for only you can determine what your place will be in your community. Nevertheless, during the Competence Stage of the internship, three areas of awareness tend to give interns reason to reflect as they realize the importance of the work and the field to society: the public relevance of the work they are doing, the site's commitment to the community, and their own preparation to live responsibly in a democracy.

The Public Relevance of the Work

Some interns work in organizations that serve the public and are publicly funded to do so. Other interns work in the private sector, where generating a profit is requisite to surviving and providing

products or services. Still others could be in private, not-for-profit agencies providing services to the public that are funded through a variety of sources of revenue. And yet others could work in foundations, where private monies are distributed for social benefits. Whatever the setting, and whatever the profession, your work as an intern has a purpose in the community and society at large, evidenced by a social contract for community betterment.

As mentioned in [Chapter 9](#), the purpose of your site in the community tells you a lot about the relevance of your work to the community. If you are in the helping professions, the mission of the organization—be it government, private, or not-for-profit—spells out that purpose and describes its relevance to the public good. If the organization is a government-administered operation, most likely its mission and its relevance are outlined in a statute that authorizes its existence and funding by tax dollars. By contrast, in a private organization that does not serve the public in such a way, the company probably has a statement of responsibilities to the public or the community, beyond maximizing profits and generating wealth (see [Chapter 9](#) for examples). If your internship takes place at the latter type of site, you might be impressed with the organization's operational philosophy, although you still find room for philosophical and political debate about its commitment to the community.

The profession for which you are preparing is replete with values about how the work gets done and the intent of the work. For example, fairness could be a value of your profession as it is in the helping professions, as could integrity, justice, beneficence, and so on. You should readily recognize those values at this point in your internship because you work with them each day at your site. You may be expected to uphold them in how you present yourself to coworkers and to the general public, to the community, and to clients, whether the intent is to provide services to military families, make the community greener, or build safer bridges.

The Site's Civic Stance

You may already know what is expected of the professional workforce at your site in terms of providing service time to the community each year, whether sitting on boards of directors or advisory groups, picking up trash, or being part of river cleanups. What you might not be aware of, though, is the site's [civic stance](#) on eco-stability in the community and its commitment to a greener presence there. You also might not be aware of the site's policy about being part of the solution for identified social problems, even though your site is not part of the problem. For example, perhaps the site has a commitment to employing a percentage of the immediate or neighboring community, or perhaps it contributes financially and with in-kind donations to a local shelter for battered women (Sullivan, 2005).

A Civic Commitment

Your Internship Site!

It's *your* internship site that is being featured in this entry, and you are writing it! We suggest you begin the process by reflecting on the [public relevance](#) of your site in the immediate, regional, national, and global communities it touches, and its stance on its *civic commitment*. Then, think about the following issues:

- The social obligations the site has to the communities it affects or serves

- The ways you see the professional workforce carrying out those obligations to its communities
- The ways in which interns have been engaged to carry out the social contract and interns' reactions to being included (or not)
- If your site is a corporate organization, the ways in which its associated foundation is carrying out those obligations and whether interns are involved
- What most impresses you about how your site is meeting its social obligations
- Why your site would be worthy (or not worthy) of this entry in the book

Your Civic Readiness and Competence

When you think about being prepared through your education to meet the responsibilities of the democracy in which you live, what comes to mind? Do you think in terms of your knowledge of civic issues, such as public problems, the causes of social problems, the challenges that individuals face on a daily basis, or government laws and institutions? Or do you instead think in terms of the civic skills you are developing, such as communication competencies, organizational analysis, or advocacy for change in the workplace? Or do you think in terms of the civic values that you see put into practice, such as being a good neighbor, involving minority opinions, or fulfilling your obligation to the common good (Battistoni, 2006)? Whether it is the skills, attitudes, values, or knowledge needed to develop your civic learning, your internship is nurturing your [civic readiness](#) so that you are prepared to contribute in direct ways to your community.

Perhaps you wonder whether you have the basics in place to grow into a civically effective individual. Most likely, you have been laying the groundwork for that role for some time now. Being politically informed is important to civic effectiveness, as is sensitivity to diversity issues, having leadership know-how and awareness of social responsibilities, taking academic coursework in basic civic knowledge, and developing personal competencies to work with others in the community. How you learned those basics—through studying, employment, a previous career, volunteer work, or this internship—is not important. Instead, what is truly important is that you are aware of how your decisions and judgments can make a difference, now and in the future; it is that ability to make good choices that is the essence of civic effectiveness (Howard, 2001; McKensie, 1996).

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10-8Slipping & Sliding ... *In the Midst of the Ride*

LO 10.6

If interns are not challenged to maximize their potential in the Competence Stage, they could feel somewhat disengaged from their internship—almost as if they are just going through the motions. To prevent a slide into further disengagement or even disillusionment, you need to deal with the

need for greater challenge by bringing it to the attention of a supervisor. Waiting for the supervisor to figure it out won't work; supervisors expect you to take responsibility to recognize your needs and seek to have them met in proactive ways.

If you are or become disengaged enough when approaching the issues discussed in this chapter, your whole feeling about the internship will shift, and not in a good way. Engagement in the internship ebbs and flows, but sometimes an intern can disengage to a point of apathy. The high levels of morale and investment that characterized the internship up to that point may be replaced with complacency and boredom. The aspirations that once steered you to high levels of achievement may be replaced by a need to “just get by.” The standards of excellence that once guided the internship may slip to standards of “good enough.” The intern may look and act disempowered by the changes that have occurred.

Remember mega-bumps? They can happen in the Competence Stage as well, for any number of reasons including achievement anxiety. Those circumstances may or may not be related to the internship, but they can affect your ability to remain invested at the same level and continue to perform in the same ways. When you hit a mega-bump, you may realize that you are not using your resources to ground yourself as you have in the past.

Whether it is a mega-bump, habitual and progressive disengagement, or both, what you feel is the onset of a crisis. If the crisis is clearly related to the internship, then it usually is a [crisis of capability](#) to continue on and complete the work at the high standards that have been a source of pride to you in the past.

Such a crisis can change you in dramatic ways. The aspirations that once inspired your high levels of achievement may be replaced by indifference. The commitment to the role/profession and associated identity that has developed may be replaced by cynicism. During the throes of a crisis, you may look, act, and feel disempowered by the changes swirling around you. The frustration and anger that are being experienced and most often directed at the internship are complicated by the reality that “the dream” that has powered this internship since its beginning—or even before—seems to have slipped into a whirlpool, the vortex of disillusionment.

The question becomes whether the dream is retrievable. We know that it is, and that discovery is the opportunity that comes with this crisis. We also know that much concerted effort is needed on your part to make that happen. But you have made it this far, so you know that you have what it takes. Now to get the dream back! The advanced tools in [Chapter 8](#) will guide you in doing just that.

A Stage Story

Meet Marty

At the end of the Competence Stage, Marty recounted what the experience was like. As you read Marty's story, think about how your experiences and Marty's are similar and how they are different. Is it possible that what is different could be indicative that some pieces didn't quite come together for you in this stage? If so, how can you create a plan to bring those pieces into place as you move forward into the Culmination Stage?

This is what I signed up for and even more! Everything seems to be coming together. It's really very satisfying. I have a purpose at the site, and the work I am doing is real work, which I am very proud of. I find myself not settling for anything less than excellence in what I am doing, and I am someone who is usually satisfied with "good enough." I am able to work a great deal on my own; I feel like a member of the staff and less like an intern, and I am making a difference at the site and in the community. My opinion matters—people want to know what I think! I am continually challenged, and it feels so good. I am doing everything that is being sent my way, and I love it! I don't always succeed, I don't know everything I need to know, and I do have setbacks, but I'm learning that's okay. I realize that I am beginning to see that there are many sides of an issue, there are gaps in what I know, and I know things I didn't realize I did. One exciting thing is that I am starting to see new layers of the organization and the work—things that I didn't know to even know about! I don't see my supervisor as much as I did in the beginning, when I used to ask, "What do I do now?" Now, I am just doing it! I still have weekly supervision meetings on Friday mornings for an hour, and I feel like I am becoming a professional. But then there is my personal life, and I've been so exhausted from the internship and my part time job that all I want to do is crash at night and then sleep. It is time to take back the life I had before the internship.

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Chapter Review

10-9aConclusion

I was given the opportunity to prove to myself that I could do it. This alone has allowed me to feel competent. I tested out my skills and got a professional feel about them. Now I have the key in my hand. I feel ready to move on. I am still not quite sure which doors this key will open, but I am sure that whatever I face I will deal with as best I know how.

—Student Reflection

As you join others in embracing the Competence Stage, keep in mind that interns have different ways of expressing their emotions. While you may experience this stage as a subtle, yet profound, shift in feelings, others may experience it as a positively giddy swing in emotions. Also, keep in mind that interns do not get to this point all by themselves. Along the way, there have been people who have been there for you, who have believed in you, who have given you the benefit of the doubt even when you might not have earned it. Perhaps it was a professor or staff member on campus, or your campus/program or site supervisors, or your seminar peers who made all the difference in being where you are today and feeling as you do. It could be a loved one, a colleague in a previous job or career, or someone who said something in passing that made all the difference in the path you have chosen. At this point in the internship, it is important to take the time to reflect on what you've been given by others and to think of ways to let them know how they made a difference in your internship experience or how you can do the same for someone else.

The rewards of this long journey in experiential learning are finally realized when you enter the Competence Stage. Although hardly without its concerns and challenges, this stage is one in which you can indulge yourself and enjoy the emotional rewards of finally reaching your goals. The transformations in development that you are experiencing and the sense of empowerment that you are realizing are evident not only to you in how you feel and go about your work, but also to those around you.

As you continue to develop competencies and a sense of professional identity, you will begin to realize that you also are developing awareness of the behaviors of professionals in general and of your coworkers in particular. This awareness tends to take the form of curiosity about politics and staff actions and their effects on the quality of the work that, up to this point, did not seem to be imbued with the importance that you now perceive. Your new status as an emerging professional has a consequence: knowing your profession's social obligations and your responsibility to **civic readiness** and future competence. In addition, you have the responsibility of an awareness of the professional, ethical, and legal issues common to the workplace. That awareness is the focus of the next chapter.

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Chapter Review

10-9bWhat Does This Mean to Me?

Select your most meaningful entries for reflection.

Checking in: Getting It Right

On a piece of paper, jot down all the factors you can think of (including the ones mentioned in this chapter) that are important to your internship (positive and negative). Then, next to each factor, indicate the amount—"too much," "too little," or "just right"—for each one. Chances are that what's "just right" leaves you with the greatest feelings of satisfaction. Once you've completed your inventory, think about what you need to do to reduce or increase amounts to reach "just right" levels across the board.

Experience Matters (For the Experienced Intern)

You've had to deal with many transitions to reach the point where you are today in your education. The "crunch" and the "balancing act" are two that you've probably had plenty of experience learning how to manage. In contrast, the "cruising" effect may be something that you have not experienced in the past. If that's so, which questions did that experience raise for you and why? If that's not the case, which transitions are most challenging and why do you think they are?

Civically Speaking

How are your feelings of achievement and success affecting your understanding of the social obligations of the profession in which you are interning? What are the implications of that understanding as you begin to prepare for your career?

Personal Ponderings

During this stage of the internship, you are navigating more of the work on your own and finally doing what you went to the site to do. You've taken charge of your internship, which means you are the one who determines the pace of your learning and, to a large degree, the shape of your learning. As you think about your learning, which tasks and experiences do you want added to the Learning Contract that you consider either important to your knowledge base or something you want exposure to? What has been most challenging for you to manage in determining the pace of your internship and why might that be?

If you are not enjoying the success you are achieving in the internship...

Here's a checklist to help you sort through the possible issues that are getting in the way.

1. **Is deep learning occurring in the internship?** The learning that must take place in an internship is expected to facilitate your growth and development as well as skills and knowledge.
 - Is the internship designed to allow you to process and organize experiences so that experiential learning *can* occur? (See [Chapter 1](#).)
 - How does the design of your internship measure up to one of the experiential learning frameworks (Kolb or Shulman)?
 - If it doesn't, then what do you need to change so that it does?
2. **Are you investing your time in "worthwhile work"?** This is a good time to review what makes work worthy: *accomplishments, acknowledgments, opportunities for self-determination and self-actualization, and the work being intrinsically rewarding* for you.
 - Are the accomplishments *purposeful* in nature? *Constructive? Challenging? A source of pride?* Do they reflect *responsible goals*?
 - Is your work *recognized* and *respected* by your supervisors? If you have gone above and beyond what is expected of an intern, were you so acknowledged?
 - Do you have the *freedom to create* and *carry out tasks* in autonomous ways?
 - Does the work provide possibilities for *creative expression* and *personal growth*?
3. **Are the relationships you cultivate "responsible"?** By now, you should clearly recognize the importance of responsible relationships for enjoying success. Think about these questions:
 - Do the relationships disappoint you? If so, what can you do to change that? If not, what makes them so good?

- Do they meet the criteria for being “responsible”? Are they *genuine*, *cooperative*, and *mutually satisfying*? If you answered “no” or “not quite,” then think about what needs to change so that they are and how you can make that change happen.
4. **Who “owns” your internship?** This has to be *your* internship. Take time to think about just whose internship it really is. Not sure how to do that? Spend time with these questions:
- Who wanted this internship to happen, and why are you doing it?
 - What do you really want to achieve in this internship?
 - Just how good a match is this internship with your goals personally, professionally, and as an engaged citizen?
 - Are you investing your time in work you really want to do?
5. **What affirms you in your internship?** Not feeling affirmed in your work in the internship or in your experiences with coworkers can undermine feelings of success in achieving your goals.
- Think about what you need that is missing from the picture: Acceptance? Respect? Approval? Recognition? Validity? Support?
 - Ask yourself *why* those needs are important to you and how not having them met affects you. Think about what can be done to have those needs met in different ways.
 - Identify when you feel supported and when you don’t in the internship experience.
 - Identify areas in your internship that you would like to see strengthened and brainstorm ways to make them happen.
6. **Just whose definition of success are you living?** Success must be *self*-defined or else it will not be experienced emotionally for all it can be. It’s all about your choice—and your choice alone. It may not be the best thing for you, and the choice can and does change over time.
- Is this a *conscious choice* on your part, deliberately thought through?
 - Do your ideas about success reflect your own goals—goals that you freely chose, not what someone has wished for you, no matter how much they love or care about you? (Other people may have wished for those goals and you may have accepted them, but you must emotionally embrace the goals as yours.)
 - Can you say that you have come to your definition of success as a result of being fully engaged in the process of making that decision?

Seminar Springboards: Being a Professional

Your understanding of what a professional is has been affected by your internship. In which ways has it changed since you began your internship and why do those changes matter? How do you

measure up to your current description of a professional? Which aspects of being a professional do you plan to work on next? If your description of a professional includes having a civic responsibility by being in the profession, which aspects of that responsibility will be most challenging for you as you begin your career? And if it doesn't, why is that?

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