How to be a Superb Intern

"Early is on time. On time is late. Late is unforgivable."
Nina Foch
"No plan survives contact with the enemy."
Von Motlke

Know the company you're interviewing with. Not just from their website, but a TON about the people and the work they have done.
Be early. 5 minutes is fine.
Remember, an internship is a three month job interview. You have to be, not just great, but "the best intern your boss has ever had."
When you enter the state of California, assume you know nothing about anything and be quiet for a while. Listen before speaking.
You are there to serve the internship. Not the other way around. Give your life to the job, and they'll remember you. If your mom flies out for dinner and your boss needs you to drive her home after work, you say, "What time?" and call your mom and tell her to take a book to dinner and you'll meet her late.
Ask the intern coordinator for a list of everyone, their job title, and assistant's name. Memorize it.
Learn things about the people you work with. Who likes comics? Who speaks French? The entertainment business seems casual. It is not. Treat the internship VERY seriously.
Dress nicely. No tee shirts or flip flops. Look good and you'll be asked to do more interesting work.
Leave your cell phone off. The company owns you all day long. You may not agree with that, but they agree with that. Guess what? It's their company.
Ask the assistant how the call sheet works, how to roll calls. Write it down. Do not drop a CEO's call.
Learn how things are done, both culturally and systematically, in your office and follow suit. Do not try to reinvent the wheel. Do not try improve processes.
Figure out ways to stay busy. Ask, "What can I do?"
Even if you haven't been assigned a task… find one. It doesn't need to be something monumental or life-changing. Organize a chaotic closet or the script library. Clean the kitchen. Make a list of office supplies your boss needs. Put together a binder of nearby lunch restaurants. Do a spreadsheet of the DVDs. ALWAYS be doing something to make yourself useful and valuable.
Be Prepared. When you ask what they want for lunch, have the menu in your hand.
Don't complain about anything. Don't complain about the fact that you can't complain. Don't be arrogant. Don't be a jerk. Why would they want to spend time with you?
Learn to do coverage. Learn to do GREAT coverage. Learn to do GREAT coverage, fast. Read screenplays that are at the office. Ask which are good ones and horrible ones. Read both. Read the trades, SlashFilm, deadline.com. Every day. Know what's going on. Everyone else does.
See lots of movies. Everyone else has. Have something to talk about!
Read The Mailroom by David Rensin, Save the Cat by Blake Snyder, and Your Screenplay Sucks! by William M. Akers. Understand & be conversant about story. It is everything.
Know a lot about what's on television. Not just "Breaking Bad," either.
No Facebook at work. The other interns will know and think you're a slacker.
Enter every office with pen and notepad. Always. Write down everything you are asked to do.
If you have a photographic memory, write it down anyway. It comforts people.
Get the instructions right. It's your fault if you don't. Know exactly what they want, even if you have to beat the information from them.
Be a detail freak. Check and double check everything.
Know precisely where you're driving before you leave the office. A GPS is better than iPhone.
A Thomas Guide can be better than a GPS. If it saves you once, having it in the car was worth the $.
Do not go on a date with anyone from work. Ever. Guess what, it may not turn out like you planned.
Read parking signs. Know what days they clean the streets. Parking tickets are insanely expensive.
When you’re asked to do something, the default timeline is that it’s urgent.
Check work email often. Know what's going on.
If you’re asked to mail something, always ask if it should be messengered, FedEx’d, regular mailed, etc.
Initiate conversations with the people just above you in the chain of command. No one higher.
Wear a wristwatch. A more subtle way to check the time than dragging out your cell phone.
Eat lunch at a different place every day. Soon you'll know more about where to eat than your boss.
Learn about the city. It's a great place. Be a tourist. Do interesting things on your time off.
Do a fantastic job even if you think what you're doing is stupid.
No such thing as a stupid question? Not really. But there is such a thing as too many questions.
Try to answer it yourself, first.
Ask the assistant first. Not the boss.
Be glad to do every job. Even if it is "below" you. Jellybean jar cleaner today, CEO later.
Let your boss know you'll be happy to baby-sit their children. You get to know the boss better.
Know who is important to your boss. Know who to interrupt her for.
A chore 95% completed is half-assed. Your boss will know.
Doing work fast is good. Doing work well is better. Doing work fast and well is best.
Make friends with everyone. EVERYONE. Be nice. Be friendly to one and all.
Have an opinion, on everything. Don't back down if your boss hates a movie you love.
If they will let you, listen in on phone calls. You'll learn a lot, especially after the call ends.
Do not be the kid who arrives late, leaves early, and checks personal emails at work.
Never ask anyone to read your script. If they want to read it, they'll ask. Then they'll read it.
Be prepared for a drive. An hour commute is normal. Don't whine. No one else does.
Network like crazy. Hang out with people. You will meet next to no one helpful in your hometown...
Go to every meet and greet. Leave every event with a new email address & phone number.
Late in the summer, when you know the higher ups at work, ask them if they have time to answer a few questions. They will be flattered by your interest and will tell you if they're busy.
Write thank you notes. It's not just your grandmother who adores them.
Run your spellcheck. Proofread. Print the document and proofread it again.
Stay in touch with people. Don't let them forget you. Send holiday gifts. Candy from your hometown!
Never tell anyone, ever, about what happened at work. You do not know the meaning of the information you have, and if you repeat it, you might sink a ship.
Make *every possible effort* for the internship to work for you. You WILL NOT get this chance again.

"Just work your ass off. An internship is two months to prove yourself to someone who will be able to get you a job."

"Will they feel like they owe you?"

"No one's throwing charity around. If you show up and do the job for free but act like you're being paid a million dollars, that person's not going to forget about you when you show up a year later and need a job and they know fifty people who need assistants."

"Sleep is for sissies."
Greg Beeman, Executive Producer "Falling Skies", "Smallville."