

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Research

Internships are educational opportunities that provide students with direct career experience (Parris & Adams, 1994, pp. 1–3). Through internship programs, students not only gain firsthand work experience, but also understand the conditions and dynamics of the work environment in real life. This work environment provides a more realistic overview of employer expectations, professional habits, required skills, and the types of job training that are applicable in the professional field (Carnevale, 1990, p. 17). Along with the demands of professionalism in the workplace, college student interns are required to be able to adapt to the work systems, regulations, and organizational culture that apply at the internship site. Each institution or company has different policies and characteristics of the work environment (Potrebny et al., 2022). Therefore, the adaptation process is an essential part of the internship experience and is an important factor in supporting the success of college students during the program.

One of the main factors supporting the success of the adaptation process in a new work environment is professional communication skills (Baharum et al., 2023). Professional communication has different characteristics from daily communication, as it requires accuracy, clarity, and an attitude that is in line with the norms and work ethics that apply in an organization. According to Rozalena (2023), as explained in her book, the context of professional communication, ideas, feelings, and information conveyed through speech, writing, symbols, and gestures need to be organized systematically so that the message can be received and understood correctly by the recipient (p. 87). This statement emphasizes that professional communication does not only focus on delivering messages, but also on how those messages are packaged effectively and appropriately for the work situation. In the context of internships, the ability to accurately receive and understand every instruction from supervisors will help college students adapt more easily to the work

system and culture at their internship (Syafrudin & Purwanto, 2025). In addition to facilitating the adaptation process, good professional communication skills can also minimize work errors and reduce the potential for mistakes due to misunderstandings.

Furthermore, Gjini and Hernandez-Gantes (2025) found that internship participation among students is relatively high, with 78% of 920 respondents reporting that they had completed, were currently participating in, or planned to undertake an internship. The participation rate was particularly high among students from Africa/Sub-Saharan regions (92.3%) and Asia (84.6%). However, the study also revealed that internship engagement was not significantly influenced by most demographic or institutional factors, except for students in Computer Science and Civil Engineering, who showed higher participation due to program requirements. These findings indicate that, while internship access is generally equitable, higher education institutions still need to strengthen support systems to enhance students' internship adaptation and overall internship experience, ensuring that students are better prepared to face real workplace environments and professional demands. This finding suggests that many students may encounter difficulties when adjusting to unfamiliar work environments, especially when their internship roles differ from their academic backgrounds. Such challenges have the potential to create emotional pressure and stress during the internship process (Guo & Yang, 2026). In addition, college students are required to respond to workplace feedback, warnings, and professional challenges in a constructive and mature manner. The ability to respond professionally and wisely is important to help students learn from mistakes, maintain their motivation, and persist throughout the internship experience (Akefe et al., 2025). Therefore, college students need practical guidance and support to help them adapt to workplace environments and successfully navigate their internship experiences.

A book entitled "Internship Survival Guide" has been developed to help college students in facing the internship process (Anderson et al., 2023). However, in terms of content, the book emphasizes more on matters that need to be prepared and considered before applying to a company. Readers obtain information about

the first steps into the world of work, but the guide does not discuss in depth the adaptation process that must be undergone after being accepted as an intern. Therefore, there is a need to develop a new guide that specifically discusses strategies for adapting to a new work environment, especially for college students who are facing work experiences that are significantly different from what they have experienced before. Understanding and developing a professional identity is crucial for adapting to new work environments (Ibarra, 2023). The book “Survive Through Communication” is expected to provide practical guidance for college students in facing real challenges in the early stages of their internship, so that they become able to adapt professionally and effectively in a real work environment.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the research background, this study aims to address the following research questions:

- 1) How is the process of creating "Survive Through Communication" guidebook?
- 2) What was the feedback from experts and users on the “Survive Through Communication” guidebook?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions, this study aims to:

- 1) To describe the process of developing the guidebook “Survive Through Communication”.
- 2) To analyze the feedback of Applied Foreign Languages students to the guidebook “Survive Through Communication”.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research contributes both academically and practically. Academically, it contributes to the field of professional communication, particularly in the development of research-based communication training materials. In addition, this research enriches scientific studies by demonstrating the application of the Research and Development (R&D) method in professional communication studies and the process of adaptation to new jobs. This research also serves as a relevant academic reference for future research because it is able to connect theoretical foundations with practical implementation.

In practical terms, this research benefits students who are undergoing internships so that they are able to survive and adapt to new work environments. through the provision of systematic guidance, students can develop professional communication skills in a more focused manner. This guidebook serves as a strategic tool to help students adapt faster to the demands of work during their internship through effective and professional communication. With a research-based training approach customized to the needs in the field, this guide is expected to improve the quality of students' internship experiences in accordance with their respective fields of work.

1.5 Output of the Research

This research produces a guidebook entitled “Survive Through Communication” which is organized in a simple format that is easy for college students to understand. This guidebook is designed as a reference for college students with a practical approach, including case studies, exercises, tips and tricks, and step-by-step guides that are applicable. In addition, this guidebook also considers the use of multilingual content to expand the accessibility of information for prospective interns. By presenting comprehensive and practice-oriented material, this book aims to help students improve their professional communication skills and accelerate the process of adapting to new jobs during their internships.