

## Developing a Summer Work Plan

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In the first week or so of your summer internship, you should collaborate with your research mentor to develop a work plan for your summer research project. This work plan essentially lays out a roadmap and time table for your summer activities, and notes key benchmarks or intermediate deadlines when specific phases of your work should be completed.

Your work plan should be one-to-two pages long, and may include a graphic representation of your project time line. (For example, you might want to use what is called a “Gantt chart,” a type of bar chart that illustrates a project schedule.) Here are several things to keep in mind as you develop your work plan:

- Briefly describe the project and how it will be accomplished and by whom
- List specific tasks you will perform in the order in which they will be completed
- Include a time table of key tasks and deliverables
- Remember that multiple tasks can occur at any one time, and they can overlap with each other
- Note which aspects of your project may require or depend on the work of others
- Factor in issues that may affect your work (e.g. your mentor is out of town for a week)
- Your work plan should dovetail with the Communication Workshop schedule
- Be realistic: anticipate a bump or two in the road, so build in some time as a “fudge factor”
- Be ready to adapt to changing circumstances: a research project is a journey into the unknown, with surprise opportunities and perhaps a dead end or two.