

### Introduction

Even though internal audits weren't my favorite part about being a quality manager, I understand the fundamental necessity of performing them and I respect their results. I hope that the tips below might get you just a little more excited about your future internal audits

Source: <https://blog.getqwerks.com/blog/8-tips-for-your-next-internal-audit>

### 1. Set expectations early and often

It's imperative to get everyone on the same page. In instances where you need to split audit duties up, you'll thank yourself for making sure people know what is expected of them. Whether your audits are spread across months, days, or hours, make sure the audit team is on the same page with a kick-off meeting. At the end of this meeting the audit team should have a crystal clear vision of what their directive is.

### 2. Use a cross-functional team

Using a cross-functional team has many benefits, including exposing members of other departments to quality, gaining a perspective outside of the quality team, and having others audit the work of the quality team. It's a good practice to involve different personnel each time you perform an internal audit, and make sure that you include experienced team members as well as those who are less familiar with auditing.

### 3. Identify your future auditor(s)

It's important to the success of your internal audit to know who will be auditing you in the next year, and to include their requirements in your internal audit. In general, the FDA is always on the list of potential auditors for the upcoming year, but you might add SQF, BRC, clients, or other third parties to this list as well.

### 4. Audit the system

Many auditors are now focused on a system based approach, whereby auditors investigate the reason for observations as opposed to just documenting violations. For example, if an associate isn't wearing the proper GMP attire we may look at GMP training and see if there's a reason the associate isn't following the written procedure. The object here is to prevent future or multiple occurrences of the same finding.

### Internal Audit



### 5. Also Look where the system is working

Audits have a negative connotation because many times all we think about are the corrective actions. It doesn't have to be like this! Look for areas where the team is excelling and recognize them. It's very helpful to understand what's working, as this might help provide methods to improve areas that are struggling.

### 6. Take Pictures

These days almost everyone has a camera in their pocket, and you may be reading this blog post with it right now! Photos are important evidence when trying to correct an audit observation, and they provide proof that there was an observation in the first place. In an effort to reduce the amount of clichés I use, I won't mention, "A picture is worth a thousand words." (See what I did there?)

### 7. Interview folks you are observing

I've always found it helps to understand the thought process of associates I'm auditing. Talking to them and asking questions about training, the process they're following, and why they are acting a certain way can provide a lot of feedback that observation can't.

### 8. Ask Questions

Internal audits can be complicated, take up a lot of time, and cause confusion, so it helps to make experts available to answer questions and provide guidance to the team during the audit.