

# **OSU – Marion Internship / Co-op Handbook**

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### **Career Services**

The Ohio State University at Marion  
1465 Mount Vernon Avenue  
Marion, Ohio 43302-5695  
(740) 389-6786

# Internship / Cooperative Education Program

The Ohio State University at Marion Internship / Cooperative Education Program allows students to receive academic credit (or non-credit) for working part-time in their field of interest while enrolled either as a full or part-time student. Employers represent various organizations in private industry and government.

- Step 1.** Decide if you want to have your experience appear on your official Ohio State University Transcript. If yes, proceed. If not, visit with the Coordinator of Career Services to discuss your options.
- Step 2.** Decide if you meet the following pre-requisites:
- Enrolled Ohio State University student
  - At least a rank 2
  - Successfully completed at least two quarters of full-time study – at least one at OSU – Marion
  - Possess a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5
- Step 3.** Decide if you want to receive two hours of academic credit for your experience or not. If yes, proceed. If not, go to step 5.
- Step 4.** Enroll in ASC 489.01 and pay the necessary fee to receive two academic credits (repeatable up to eight credits) for the experience. It will be your responsibility to select and arrange to be supervised by an OSU faculty member. With the faculty member, define your individual academic requirements: journal, paper, additional readings, research, etc.

The student's Co-op / Internship experience must provide the opportunity to combine the work situation with the appreciation, perspective, and deeper understanding of what was learned in the classroom. The student will enhance his/her theoretical understanding of the work involved, apply concepts and skills developed through classroom education, and develop new skills, as well as a better understanding of the world, the work place, and the individual's relationship with them.

Realize that you will work a minimum of 60 hours for every two credit hours awarded.

Both the student and employer will submit evaluations of the experience to the Coordinator of Career Services. (See Evaluation Forms that follow). Evaluations of the student's performance will focus on a mix of the student's success in applying theoretical knowledge already gained and the acquisitions of new knowledge from the experience.

Once this agreement and information form have been completed and returned to Career Services, obtain from the Registrar an OSU Course Enrollment Permission Form with the call number for the appropriate ASC course and schedule the course through the regular registration procedures and pay the appropriate fee. The course should be added by the first Friday of the quarter. This course is graded S/U.

- Step 5.** To participate in a non-credit experience, enroll in ASC 489.02 and pay the necessary fee. Submit a written proposal stating your objective and a minimum of five expectations including the knowledge you expect to gain from the experience to the Coordinator of Career Services. Work hours are to be arranged between you and the employer.
- Step 6.** Obtain the proper signatures:
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <u>ASC 489.01</u> (for academic credit)         | <u>ASC 489.02</u> (for non-credit)              |
| a. your signature                               | a. your signature                               |
| b. your faculty supervisor's signature          | b. your cooperating employer's signature        |
| c. your cooperating employer's signature        | c. the coordinator of career services signature |
| d. the coordinator of career services signature |   |

**Step 7.** Acknowledge and agree to the following:

- By signing this agreement you authorize Career Services to release your current transcript and all subsequent grade reports to interested employers.
- You are responsible for obtaining your own co-op / internship employer. Career Services can provide leads about known experiences but the student will be ultimately responsible for making contact and arranging the details. It is suggested that you pre-register for full-time course load in case you do not obtain a position.
- If you receive any type of financial aid, you must see a financial aid advisor to learn how co-op will affect your aid package. You must do this prior to accepting a co-op position.
- Once you have accepted a co-op / internship position, you must notify the Coordinator of Career Services and discontinue your search.
- Prior to each co-op / internship agreement, you must register for Arts and Sciences 489.01 for credit *or* 489.02 for non-credit and pay the necessary fees.
- Courses taken at another institution during your working quarters must have the written approval of your academic advisor.
- At the end of each co-op work agreement, submit a written evaluation detailing what you gained from your work experience. Failure to do so will result in an “Incomplete” or “Unsatisfactory” grade on your transcript.
- You are to inform Career Services of address and telephone number changes each quarter.
- Co-op work/study schedules are arranged between you and the employer based on the employer’s needs and your academic schedule. You are, therefore, expected to abide by the work schedule established between you and your employer. Any changes must be discussed with your employer and approved by the Coordinator of Career Services.
- In the rare event where a change in employer is approved by Career Services, you must submit a letter of resignation to your employer and send a copy to Career Services at least three weeks prior to your next work agreement. Note: You must resign before seeking another co-op position.
- Your co-op employer may, but is not obligated to, offer you a permanent position after completion of your co-op agreement nor are you obligated to accept such an offer if it is made. Inform the Coordinator of Career Services if you are made an offer and are considering accepting.
- As a co-op student, you are considered a temporary employee at your site and cannot by law file for unemployment compensation for those quarters you are not working at your site.

Student:

Your signature below attests to your acceptance of the above conditions for participation in the Cooperative Education / Internship Program.

Upon signing and obtaining the signatures of an Ohio State participating faculty member (*only if taking Arts and Sciences 489.01 for credit*), and the co-op / internship supervisor, return this form with the attachments listed below to the Coordinator of Career Services **before** you begin the co-op / internship experience. A copy of this agreement will be kept on file in Career Services.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ohio State Faculty Supervisor (needed for credit option only)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Co-op / Internship Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Coordinator of Career Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Attach: 1) Information form      2) Outline of learning objectives      3) Resume      4) Job Description

Return: Completed documents to the Coordinator of Career Services before:

- 1) Beginning a co-op / internship
- 2) By the deadline imposed by the university for adding classes.

# Internship / Cooperative Education Program

## - Information Form -

**1. Please check one:**

Autumn Quarter       Winter Quarter       Spring Quarter       Summer Quarter

**2. Student information:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
First and Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Social Security Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address

**3. Co-op / Internship Information**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Business Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone and extension

**4. Enrollment Information**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Major / Minor

\_\_\_\_\_  
College

\_\_\_\_\_  
Academic Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduation Date

**5. Type of Experience** (*check those statements which apply*)

Paid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour - *or* - Stipend: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per quarter

Unpaid

Credit through ASC 489.01 Faculty supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-credit through ASC 489.02

I will be enrolled in other OSU courses during my co-op / internship experience. Number of hours: \_\_\_\_\_

I am currently receiving Financial Aid (including loans)

# Internship / Cooperative Education Program

## - Student's Evaluation -

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Social Security Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Co-op Job Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Academic Rank

\_\_\_\_\_  
Major / Minor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Quarter

\_\_\_\_\_  
Business Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Business Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, & Zip

On a scale of 1 – 5 (1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent), evaluate the following aspects of your experience.

Rating	Comments
_____ Appropriateness of job expectations	_____
_____ Quality of supervision	_____
_____ Working conditions	_____
_____ Staff collegiality	_____
_____ Compensation	_____
_____ General degree of satisfaction	_____
_____ Educational/Career enhancement	_____

Briefly explain how you located, applied for, and got this cooperative education agreement

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the duties involved in your position

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What should a prospective co-op/intern know about this experience (high points, difficulties, etc.)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you intend to register for a co-op / internship next term?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, ASC 489.01 for academic Credit      \_\_\_\_\_ Yes, ASC 489.02 for non-credit      \_\_\_\_\_ No  
If yes, remember to complete the appropriate agreement forms, inform the coordinator of career services that you will register for one of the two and add the appropriate course.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*(Return to the Coordinator of Career Services by the last day of the regularly scheduled classes)*

# Internship / Cooperative Education Program

## - Employer's Evaluation -

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Business Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Quarter's Worked

\_\_\_\_\_  
Business Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State & Zip

On a scale of 1 – 5 (1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Good 5 = Excellent), evaluate the student's performance in the following areas:

Rating		Comments
_____	Relations with others	_____
_____	Judgment	_____
_____	Learning ability	_____
_____	Attitude / Enthusiasm	_____
_____	Dependability	_____
_____	Quality of Work	_____
_____	Attendance / Punctuality	_____
_____	Overall Performance	_____

Please describe the student's duties:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How successfully did the student fulfill these responsibilities? Please describe specific strengths and weaknesses you noticed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Additional comments:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please review this evaluation with the student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Employer: Please comment on the services and/or assistance you would like to receive from Career Services at OSU – Marion.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Return with the "Activity Report" to:

Coordinator of Career Services - Ohio State University at Marion - 1465 Mount Vernon Avenue - Marion, OH 43302



# Internship Information

**Internship:** *A temporary, hands-on working and learning experience designed to prepare you for a particular career field.*

Today's employers not only fear costly hiring mistakes, but also demand instant productivity of new recruits, which usually means job experience, is a necessity. Internships are the answer to the dilemma: *Want a job? Get experience. Want experience? Get a job.*

In a concise but thorough approach to today's internships, this all-purpose guide reveals the facts you must know to maximize your learning working experience.

## Prepping for Careers

Interning is job hunting, new millennium style. Studies show that about half of new hires have internship experiences. Businesses compete for capable, bright people who learn quickly. Many interns do such impressive work that after graduation, their employers invite them back.

The computer giant Hewlett-Packard makes job offers to some 70% of their interns. Arthur Anderson, a leading accounting and management firm, hires about 80% of theirs. And 70% of the college graduates that microprocessor magnate Intel hires are required to be former company interns. Not all interns head for such lofty heights as HP, Anderson and Intel. Some work in tiny —even single-person — firms, nonprofit organizations and government agencies.

So popular is an internship as an entree into the working world that one third of college students have one or more internships on their resumes. Newly recognized as hot toeholds in the job market everywhere, internships permit students to sample career fields, taste the realities of working life, and develop the soft skills needed in the workplace.

## Why Interning is Popular

The reason college students join the interns' parade is clear: Students fear being slapped upside their career after graduation by an unfriendly and competitive job market. A college degree by itself no longer commands a quality job. It's a new fact of life: A good internship lays the foundation for a good resume.

Employers jump on the internship bandwagon to avoid expensive hiring mistakes or to bolster staffs made anemic by downsizing actions.

The returns for internships vary. Some internships pay cash, others don't. Cash is always welcome but the indirect pay may be even more valuable. Not only will interns rub shoulders with knowledgeable professionals but will gain good contacts who can usher them through doorways to great jobs. And interns acquire the short-term experience needed to go after full-time employment.

Depending on the arrangement with your college, internships may even be a triple treat - offering school credit, along with pay and learn experience. Regardless of the precise benefits, it's apparent the intern craze is skyrocketing. From law firm to movie sets, from car rental offices to political foundations, interning has become an employment force to be reckoned with.

## What's Tried, What's True, What's New?

Your parents' generation used internships as career exploration devices. "See if the job is right for you," their career advisers urged. "You never really know how a career field fits until you try it out."

It was good advice in peaceful days when good jobs were so plentiful that beginners could afford the luxury of worrying about whether the work was satisfying and self-actualizing.

In today's pitiless job market of corporate cutbacks, fewer jobs and fast moves, the operative S-words are *starting out* and *surviving*. While internships still confirm if the work you've chosen is satisfying and self-actualizing, having one or more internships — or cooperative education experience or relevant student jobs — has become a critical prerequisite to getting many full-time jobs.

*Need a job? Get experience. Need experience? Get a job.* This classic circular dilemma is more challenging than ever. You can't get a job without experience. You can't get experience without a job. And the typical novice job seeker has neither.

How can you avoid this predicament? Internships. These working stints upgrade your resume and provide you with the experience you need to propel you into that first job, if not lead you directly into it.

## The Interning Nitty Gritty

An internship is a training experience with clear objectives for learning. The classroom in which you learn is a business, government agency, or other organization. The lesson plan from which you learn is drawn from the nature of the work you do — ideally, putting classroom theory into practice. The instructors who help you learn are supervisors, co-workers, and, if university-connected, faculty members.

Internships can be part- or full-time, paid or unpaid. The arrangement can last up to a year, but most internships are for three to six months.

How can an internship launch your career?

Why should you spend your school summers working, say, as a research assistant in a think tank instead of watching baseball games or sipping margaritas on a beach? Here are a few examples of the benefits internships bring.

- **Internships allow you to gain marketable experience in your area of study.** In the classroom you read about it; in an internship you do it. Learning how to apply your education in a working environment is the objective of any internship.
- **Internships Identify Potential Career Paths.** By observing the workings of an organization from the inside, you can discover titles of specific positions that interest you, determine the best educational route necessary and employ steps to reach those positions.
- **Internships Test Career Options.** Suppose you're majoring in civil engineering, but you have a hunch you might like genetics more. An internship allows you to test your hunch in a genetics laboratory. Nothing beats a sneak view of a career field before making a long-term commitment.
- **Internships Clue Strong Interests.** Try journalism or public relations. Sample health administration during an internship, investment banking the next. Work for the Consumer Federation of America or the Fund for Animals or *Wired* magazine. Explore! Sample! Encounter Interning helps broaden your horizons exposing you to a wide spectrum of experiences. In these uneven economic times, it helps to know there are many ways to earn a living.

- **Internships Enhance Resumes.** Internships always add muscle to a resume. They demonstrate to potential employers that you have focus, commitment, and practical experience to quickly and productively launch yourself into a job. Internships also show you understand enough about your career objectives and the current job climate to have foreseen the need for this experience and were resourceful enough to get it.
- **Internships Promote Contacts.** Meeting people who have the power to assist your career progress, known as “networking,” occurs in any internship. The people you contact during an internship can boost your knowledge of the career field, and give you good references and job leads in the future.
- **Internships Boost Job Offers After Graduation.** Employers often give first crack at job openings to their interns and former interns. For instance, a study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers found that 35 percent of the 624 companies surveyed view interns as their first choice for new full-time employees. Companies always appreciate an intern who has a working knowledge of their organization prior to arrival.
- **Internships Improve Focus on Class Schedules.** Internships can show you which subjects are most important in the working world. You can use your newfound knowledge to select courses likely to give you the best preparation for your future career.
- **Internships Ease Transition from School to Real World.** For many graduates, the sage from college student to college grad is a bumpy ride. The days of not having to show up in the outside world until your first class 2 p.m., jumping out of the sack five minutes before class, throwing on some sweats, and trudging off for a two-minute commute to class are history. As one new California graduate said, “...a shocker when the time of just-get-good-grades is over and it’s time to make a living.” Leaning the ropes of the post-college world and what employers expect you to contribute and how you are expected to perform on the job makes transitioning easier.
- **Internships Help Develop Transferable Skills.** In the business revolution upending our world, the number one career issue is skills. Focus on accumulating transferable skills that cross career fields and office functions.

*Cover Letters for Dummies* (IDG Books) covers the topic of skills in detail. If you are a student, think of it this way: In an internship, you acquire skills that give you something besides your education to transfer to a full-time job. If you are a career changer, an intern allows you to leverage your existing workplace skills into a new career field.

- **Internships allow you to Improve Social I.Q. Skills.** Surviving in the working world involves more than just book knowledge and an intimate understanding of word processors.

Lessons in life also involve social skills, including teamwork, chumming with co-workers, and knowing when to shut up and when to speak up.

Do you have any idea how to handle conflict resolution when your knowledge of a subject is more current than your supervisor’s? Do you know what to do when a clueless co-worker becomes unreasonable? Internships can give you a head start in learning day-to-day social skills on the job.

## School Sponsored Internships

Most interns are college students, especially juniors and seniors, or graduate students. A growing number of students in high school and even junior high are interning to gain supervised practical experience. Increasingly, mid-career changers use school-affiliated internships to reinvigorate or redirect their career paths.

One reason interns like to deal through schools is the arrangement is likely to be legal. Generally speaking, you shouldn’t offer to work for free at a company to show your worth and hope you’ll be hired after an audition of a month or so. The advice to work for free is given by several career advisers and is particularly addressed to mid-career people who just can’t seem to find a job. The practice is illegal.

To protect workers from unfair exploitation by employers, the federal Fair Labor Standards Act prohibits anyone from working purely for the pleasure of it and places guidelines on the nuts and bolts of internships when you work

without pay. Specifically:

- **The Work Must Relate to Intern’s Education.**  
Learning objectives must be clearly identified and followed. The intern must be trained in equipment and processes used in the occupation.
- **The Training Must Primarily Benefit the Intern, Not the Employer.** This symbolic arrangement usually ends up benefiting both parties.
- **The Intern May Receive Educational Credits:**  
Typically, educational credit serves as “payment” for unpaid internships.
- **The Working Environment is Clarified by Both Parties.** The intern and employer know that interns are not entitled to wages during the internship (unless otherwise agreed) and that interns are not guaranteed a job at end of the internship (although they may be hired at that point). If cash is paid, it may be a lump sum stipend to apply toward their job expenses and school tuition.
- **The Intern Does Not Replace a Real Employee.** According to federal guidelines, the intern should do no more than half the work of regular employees, and should not be used as regular employees, nor take their places.

State and local government guidelines may even more stringent than their federal counterparts. For specifics regarding the laws in your area, inquire at your state department of labor and at the corn attorney’s office.

## What Interns Do

Like the guild apprentices of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, interns learn tricks of the trade from elders who have mastered a craft, or at least have a pretty reasonable idea of what they are doing. As you might expect, the responsibilities of interns vary tremendously, from field to field, from company to company, from office to office.

Some intern jobs are definitely in the grunt camp making coffee, taking the boss’ dog for a walk (cleaning up afterward), replenishing toner in a copy machine, and stuffing envelopes, for instance. Others offer substantial work, such as spreading the labor union message, creating computer databases, apprenticing in hospital emergency rooms, and writing press releases.

Internships can be divided into two broad categories: *passive* and *active*.

**Passive internships** - Interns chiefly observe and handle low-level tasks. Much of the intern’s training relies on an educational form of osmosis - immersion in the professional environment that leads to learning for alert interns. Their responsibilities often are supporting full-time employees (including the usual “gofer” duties), handling simple tasks the regular employees have no time to do, or assisting core employees to finish professional projects.

This duty sample for an intern in the House of Representatives illustrates a typical passive assignment:

- answer telephones
- enter data – clerical tasks
- respond to constituent requests
- attend Congressional hearings
- assist with constituent casework
- assist with legislative research

While congressional interns do not directly help with such tasks as drafting legislation or planning campaign strategy, their bird’s eye view allows them to observe how such work is done. Most, but certainly not all, passive internships are found in such non-technical areas as business, human service, government, and research organizations including think tanks and policy institutes - where interns provide administrative support or act as research assistants in the

completion of various projects.

**Active internships** - interns actually do assigned tasks within the field, rather than simply being immersed in the working environment, doing odd jobs and observing. The active interns are given much greater responsibility than their passive counterparts. At times it may be hard to differentiate them from full-time employees.

Although somewhat vague because of the proprietary nature of the work, the following duty samples for an intern in the computer security department of a large engineering firm illustrates a typical active assignment:

- make security information available on a variety of different computer platforms (Windows, Macintosh, Unix)
- screen and train clients to use the company's computer security system
- document new and existing project designs
- develop appropriate computer program design flowcharts
- assist in the development of new corporate databases
- develop World Wide Web company pages, including writing directions for forums and creating the frequently asked questions feature.

Active internships are often found in technical organizations. Newspapers and other publications fall into the active category, giving their interns substantial responsibility in researching, writing, production and procedures development.

## Looking for Internships

Now that you have an idea of what you do in an internship, the next concern is where you can find listings of the best internships for you.

### College Career Centers

Start to search at your campus career center for experiential education opportunities. You'll find several telephone book sized directories, internship locations with tips on extracting every benefit from your experience, and listings of internship position openings. You may spot new inform on a daily basis. Most campus career center connected to the Internet, another search tool.

### College Offices

Your search activities should include the departmental office for your major. The departments of business or communications, for instance, often keep their own internship information. Larger universities suffer from what some leading scientists call the-left-hand-doesn't-know-what-the-right-hand-is-doing syndrome, causing the college departmental office or school and the campus career center to occasionally act independently of each other. And they may receive different information from intern-recruiting companies.

### Libraries

Besides posting local internship opportunities on their bulletin boards, libraries often subscribe to numerous newspapers and magazines where you can research national internship advertisements. Scour libraries, too, for such directories like *Dun's Employment Opportunities Directory* which lists companies that offer internships by career field (life sciences and physical sciences, for instance).

### Job Fairs

College career centers periodically arrange job fairs, inviting companies to send representatives to recruit full-time job candidates and interns. You can meet the representatives, distribute your resume, ask questions, and even arrange interviews. Separate academic departments of colleges and universities may also arrange job fairs to target special disciplines.

### The Internet

Most colleges and universities identify internships on their Web pages. Many large corporations and think tanks have developed World Wide Web sites. Visiting these can reveal the fields the organization encompasses in its upcoming projects, and its internship opportunities. Additionally, many organizations offer Web sites specifically designed to describe their internship programs; these sites often include an e-mail address so you can easily request more information.

You can find college Web pages, corporate Web pages and internship clearinghouse Web pages by using an Internet search engine such as, Alta Vista ([www.altavista.digital.com](http://www.altavista.digital.com)) or a directory, such as Yahoo ([www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com))

You can also view a number of top internships on commercial sites that woo young customers. An example is the site maintained by American Express ([www.americanexpress.com/lstudies/moneypit/getjob/interintern.html](http://www.americanexpress.com/lstudies/moneypit/getjob/interintern.html))

On the American Express site, you'll find links to internships offered by such luminaries as the Academy of Television and Screen, All Bell Lab, Brookfield Zoo, Central Intelligence Agency, Ford Motor, Lucasfilm/Lucas Digital, Microsoft, Sony Music, and the White House.

At this writing, unlike sites advertising full-time jobs, internship-specific sites are sparsely stocked with job openings. Search anyway; the Internet is growing exponentially by the day.

### **Alumni Directory**

Visit your campus alumni office to get lists of alumni in your field who might be willing to discuss internship opportunities with you. If they can't help you, they may refer you to someone who can.

### **Books**

Several dozen books discuss interns in varying degrees of detail. A number include job banks, giving comprehensive details you can use to apply for the internships of your choice. See the "Suggested Readings" section for a list of books.

### **Newspapers, Magazines, and Trade Journals**

Internship openings may be advertised in the classified sections of newspapers, popular magazines and trade journals.

## **Creating Your Own Internship**

When you can't find the internship you want, why not initiate a self-designed research project to uncover internship leads?

Research methodology is beyond the scope of this concise guide, but most job hunt books describe the process of identifying the companies and organizations that can hire you to do what you want. (See the research chapter in my book, *Job Interviews for Dummies*.) Apply the directions found in job hunt manuals to internship employment.

After you've developed a list of 20 or 30 potential employers, you may be able to create your own self-designed internship. Approach these employers by mail. Address your cover letter and resume to an executive in the organization, whose name you have obtained in advance from directories, telephone calls, and networking (networking is discussed below). Human resource departments rarely have the authority to make internship decisions. Create a self-marketing package of samples of your work and letters of recommendation. Don't send the package with your cover letter and resume, but hold it in reserve for a job interview. Expect experienced internship employers to ask for a school transcript if you're a student.

Along with making direct application, try to network your way to your targets' attention. Your networking can be done person-to-person or via the Internet.

In personal networking, you contact Sally who introduces you to Bob who connects you with an employer. "Hello. This is [name]. Bob suggested I call you..." (See the book *Dynamite Net working Dynamite Jobs* by Drs. Ronald and Caryl Krannich Impact Books, at bookstores or call (703) 361-7300).

You can contact people by the Internet approach too - hundreds or more at one time.

Personal networking can be thought of as a system of job finding, and Internet networking a wholesale system.

Personal networking wins for being the effective technique because someone the employer knows refers you. Internet networking (which I call the “ultimate networking”) wins for being the most wide-ranging because you are exposed to vast numbers of people who can refer you to potential employers.

The internship search experience itself is highly valuable: You learn to market your skill and other qualifications that somewhat matches the needs of businesses.

You also become more polished in contact managers who’ve never heard of you, boosting crucial interview skills.

Perhaps most importantly, you gain experience in selling an idea - in this case, hiring you as an intern. To succeed throughout your entire work life you will have to sell your ideas (persuade others to do what you advise), no matter which career fields you call home.

Tip: Work in conjunction with your academic advisor to be sure you get all you can from the experience, including, if offered, academic credit.

Get a written agreement with a faculty member as to what you are expected to learn through your internship; how you will communicate during the internship; the readings you will do before, during or after the internship; and how you will demonstrate what you learn for evaluation and academic credit.

Remember that the fact that a company does not advertise an internship program doesn’t necessarily mean the company doesn’t have one — or won’t create one for you.

## **Beware of Internship Pitfalls**

Some internship programs seem designed merely to give the teenage children of employees something to do over the summer. Others appear to exist for purely public relations purposes, offering little substantive, challenging work. Still others are at the mercy of full-time employees who consider interns a nuisance and blow them off.

A reader of my *Careers* newspaper column wrote to me about the downsides of internship:

“As a former intern, I conducted an informal survey among 12 intern friends. One third feel very positive about their experiences, another third are positive with reservations, and another third are quite negative.

“Some of those who had to relocate in large urban areas were forced to live in substandard housing in dangerous neighborhoods and faced financial crisis. After paying for housing, transportation and living costs, there wasn’t much left over for their future educational expenses.

“The most common complaint spotlighted the lack of time interns could spend with their supervisors, the people they hoped to emulate. But nearly all said they learned a great deal from the clerical support people.

“Apart from disenchantment with menial duties, some interns felt they were given tasks for which the companies, to save money, were unwilling to assign fully qualified professionals.

“My own experience as an intern was generally negative, but it looked very impressive on my resume and was helpful in landing several job offers, concluded the former intern.”

My correspondent makes valid points. The internship process is not perfect. But, with its cooperative education relatives, internship is the best system yet devised to ease transition from school to work.

Knowing that it has become difficult to break into the job market without an internship or work experience in your background, consider location when you choose a college.

When your college is a haven in a small town, expect to hock your socks for city internship living. A few colleges maintain urban resident halls for interns - ask about this possibility before enrolling.

Anticipate the change, if any, an internship will make on your student aid eligibility status. Avoid a financial aid shutout by writing a letter about your internship plans to your college's financial aid officer. The aid officer has the power to recalculate your de facto income.

An internship is an investment that is supposed to pay mutual dividends. After a couple of weeks if you have doubts about the payoff for you, ultimately contact your academic advisor for help in upgrading the experience.

The trick is to become aware of the intricacy of internships, plan ahead, and choose wisely.

## **What Constitutes a Good Internship?**

Low marks for any single criterion is not necessarily a knockout punch, but there should be compensation in another criterion. For example, the resume - enhancing prestige associated with internship at the *Los Angeles Times* or the "Late Show with David Letterman" more than count balances quibbles about busywork.

### **- Good Internship Samples -**

#### **Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum Smithsonian Institution**

Contact: Intern Coordinator, Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, 2 East 91st Street,  
New York, NY 10128

Majors: art, art history museum studies, architecture, design, related fields

Location: New York City

Eligibility: College undergraduate and graduate students; requires resume, college transcript, two letters of recommendation, a 1-2 page essay describing career goals and areas of interest

Deadline: Summer: March 31 Fall and Spring: Inquire

Term: Mid-June to mid-August for summer internships; varies during the academic year

Pay/Benefits: Both paid and unpaid internships available  
Some summer internships pay \$2500 for the 10-week summer term

#### **United States Department of State**

Contact: Intern Coordinator, U.S. Department of State 1 800 N. Kent St., Arlington, VA 22209

Internet: [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov) (go to "careers" link)

Majors: All majors

Location: Varies; over half are in U.S., chiefly Washington, D.C.; others are at embassies and consulates worldwide

Eligibility: College juniors, seniors, and graduate students; must undergo background check for security clearance

Deadline: Summer: November 1; Fall: March 1; Spring: July 1

Term: Minimum 10-week commitment

Pay/Benefits: Both paid and unpaid internships available (majority are unpaid); pay depends on position, education, and civil service regulations; pay starts at level GS-4; assistance provided to find housing overseas

#### **Tennessee Valley Authority Land Between the Lakes**

Contact: Intern Coordinator, 100 Van Morgan Road, Golden Pond, KY 42211  
(502) 924-2075

Majors: Forestry, Biology, Environmental Engineer, Recreation, Civil Engineering, Photography, Marketing, History, and Communications

Location: On the border of western Kentucky, Tennessee

Eligibility: College juniors and seniors  
Deadline: Varies, those interested in summer internships should apply by January  
Term: 10-12 weeks  
Pay/Benefits: \$100/week. Housing provided

### **Ruder-Finn, Inc.**

Contact: Intern Coordinator, Ruder Finn, 301 E. 57th St., New York, NY 10022  
(212) 593-6332  
Majors: Not major specific; need writing skills and interest in public relations industry  
Location: New York City and Washington, DC  
Eligibility: Recent college graduates hoping to break into public relations; submit application, resume, writing sample, college transcript; complete 2 writing tests; interview required  
Deadline: Summer: April 1; Fall: June 1; Winter: November 1  
Term: Summer: June to September; Winter: September to January;  
Spring: January to June  
Pay/Benefits: Pay commensurate with \$15,000 year salary; intensive orientation with classes, seminars on writing, media relations, and presentations; field trips to media outlets.

## **How Can You Identify Good Internships?**

### **Quality of Work**

Will you get to do meaningful, useful work, or will your project supervisor be Mr. Coffee as you keep the caffeine flowing? Will you actually learn some of the ins and outs of your career field? Will you meet people who can further your life's aspirations? How you actually spend your interning days is an important question in determining the value of the internship to you, your education, and your future career.

### **Perspective of Staff**

Many of the best internship programs pair each of their interns with a full-time employee or senior staff member who acts as a mentor. What do previous holders of the internship say about the willingness of regular status employees to welcome neophytes to the team? Is it likely that, rather than being accepted as a young and potential peer, you'll be treated as a resident nuisance - a bottom feeder on the company food chain?

### **The Company's Contemporary Culture**

Will you work with equipment on the cutting edge of your occupation, or toil with yesterday's tools? As an example, will you use an electronic typewriter or the latest Windows version? The equipment you use goes on your resume as a transferable skill. How can you know? Just ask, "What resources would I be working with?"

### **The Company's Reputation**

Is the company name well regarded? Even if the company is small and lacking name recognition value, does it enjoy high regard among vendors and customers?

### **Payment**

While most internships are unpaid, some employers compensate interns with an hourly wage, small salary, stipend, or expense allowance. A number of internships pay relatively well from \$700 to \$1,100 a week, for instance. As you might expect, paid internships come with greater responsibilities and a much heavier workload.

### **Hours**

Unpaid internships usually have flexible hours, since employers know that interns need to eat, too, and should have time to hold a second, paid job. Occasionally, an internship program will help interns find off-hour jobs to support themselves.

### **Paid Internships are Usually Rigid Hours**

Paid interns work the same hours as regular status employees.

### **Help with Housing**

The organization offering the internship program may assist in solving housing problems.

### **Possibility of Full-Time employment**

The organization's track record in offering regular employment to its interns is yet another criterion. Many companies see internships as de facto probationary periods for prospective employees.

### **Help With Job Search**

What is the company tendency to help interns it does not hire to find jobs elsewhere? Potential employers may wonder why, if you are such a strong performer, were you not offered full-time employment. A recommendation and introductions from your internship supervisor go a long way to quell this conflict.

### **College Credit**

You may be able to get pay and academic credit, but if you work at an unpaid internship, you certainly want academic credit. Expect to pay for academic credit. A typical format: You pay your college to work for free. Think of it as tuition for moving off dry land into the career stream.

## **What Employers Want in an Intern**

Just as every employer wants the perfect job candidate for regular status employment, every employer wants the perfect job candidate for interning. Here is an employer's wish list:

### **Grade Point Average**

Generally, the first thing an employer notices is your GPA. Is it high? Is it high enough? If not, why not?

This is standard stuff, but if your GPA is nothing to brag about, don't let it get you down. Remember that this is a wish list.

Your academic advisor can plead your case and you can make a strong application based on research about the company.

### **Leadership**

Are you an officer of a campus organization? Church group? Club? Highlight instances where you have been placed or assumed leadership positions and be ready to explain how you successfully handled your responsibilities.

### **Written Communication Skills**

Identify on a separate sheet of paper your best research papers and writing projects. Bring the sheet and samples of your work to the interview.

### **Oral Communication Skills**

Be ready to discuss and possibly defend your research papers as a test of your oral communication skills.

### **Solving Problems**

Pop quiz: The room is dark and you need light to read a book. Do you: (a) find a light switch and turn on the light; (b) build a bonfire in the center of the room for light; or (c) try to read in the dark? Okay, maybe you won't be asked by the interviewer to solve problems like this, but you may be asked to think on your feet and give a demonstration of problem-solving skills.

### **Dealing with the Public**

Employers prefer people who exhibit social skills rather than reclusive natures. Note your extracurricular activities and clubs on your resume.

### **Team spirit**

An estimated eight out of ten employees are now involved in some kind teamwork. As an intern, you can show you are a task-oriented team member who sees the vision and goals of the team as paramount.

### **Self-directed**

Once you know the vision and goals of the team, you can demonstrate that you do not need constant supervision to get the task accomplished.

## **Throwing Your Name in the Hat**

An application form specially designed for internship positions may be provided, but more often you will be asked to submit a resume and fill out the employer's standard application form.

Some internship programs require that a faculty member nominate you, or that you write an essay.

Concerning resumes, student interns should keep in mind that the more skills, accomplishments, honors, activities, and related experience you identify the more likely you will win the internship. Include a summary of your education, your extracurricular activities, and your worthwhile goals.

A student's internship resume is not unlike a graduate's full-time job resume except that the student document tilts slightly toward the personal profile side.

The skills you offer as a student count heavily, of course. An internship applicant to most offices needs computer skills, for instance. But for young and unproven students, there's more. You're an unknown quantity. The employer sees you as a blank canvas upon which to paint the employer's company culture.

And before committing to this, the employer wants to know what kind of person you are.

- Are you a team player with a cooperative attitude?
- Are you an orderly thinker?
- Are you adequately committed to benefit from the internship experience?
- Are you likely to become a candidate for full-time employment after graduation?

In contrast to a student intern, a career-changing intern's canvas is already imprinted. Each work experience will brush dabs of cultural paint across the applicant's picture of workplace life.

The employer may not know what kind of person you are, but probably assumes you have qualifications and social intelligence or you would not be so purposeful in attempting to gain an internship as a tool to refocus your career. Additionally, you probably networked your way to the internship application - rather than coming in "off the street" and will have someone to speak highly of you, praising your personal attributes.

In brief, if you are an older internship applicant, your resume should include a few hints of your personality, but emphasize portable self-achievements that suggest a superior performer, and flexibility to adapt to new environments. For more information on the strategies of resume construction, read resume guides such as *Resumes for Dummies*, or Yana Parker's *Damn Good Resume Guide* or Martin Yate's *Resumes that Knock 'Em Dead*.

If your resume and application result in an interview invitation, the same concepts you used in your written self-marketing materials apply in the face-to-face meeting.

## Tie-up Loose Ends

Once you land the internship, pay attention to the fine print of the internship process. At some institutions, you merely notify an internship coordinator or appropriate professor. At others, you may have to remind the employer to send the school a letter formally requesting you for internship.

The employer typically is asked to complete a college form for you to receive full credit, but not always.

Will you be away from campus for a full-time internship? Make arrangements with your academic advisor to determine the degree of contact required when you are away.

Some schools require only a final report at the end of the internship, but others ask for more frequent reports or visits. Be sure you understand both the basis of your work evaluation and the logistics of how your employer will report it to your school.

Watch deadlines! If any arrangements fall through the cracks, you will be the one with the most to lose. Take responsibility for the whole situation by keeping everything on track.

## Non-profits Can Be Profitable

Non-profits and community organizations, whose purpose is to accomplish missions rather than earn financial profit, are rich sources of internships.

If you hope to make a career on the non-profit landscape, this option is perfect. But what if you are 100 percent capitalist-minded? An internship in a non-profit organization can also beef up your resume.

A non-profit experience may be the only practical way both young students and career changers can get hands-on experience and enter competitive fields. Moreover, a stint at a hospital or charitable group creates a favorable image.

Employers want skills. Where and how you obtain them usually is not the chief concern. Although most non-profits can rarely afford to pay interns, they do pay compensation in the form of experience and the chance to acquire an inventory of problem-solving skills.

To uncover internship opportunities with non-profits visit the Internet site: Contact Center Network ([www.contact.org](http://www.contact.org)).

Contact Center Network (CCN) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that exists to “promote communication and cooperation among people, communities and organizations around the world, in a spirit of generosity and mutual respect.” CCN’s *Directory of Non-profit Websites* now links more than 7,500 nonprofit organizations in 90 countries. The directory is easy to use. You choose the topic and country - or browse - and the names of non-profits appear; click your mouse on those that interest you and the organization’s home page comes to your screen.

Even more relevant is CCN’s interactive clearinghouse, a fully searchable database (not just a collection of Web links) that permit nonprofits to enter, describe, and update detailed information about their internships and job openings. CCN clearinghouse is a recent addition to the site. As it develops, it holds great potential to vastly simplify your search for internships at nonprofits.

## International Internships

As the world’s economy globalizes, the international experience makes job candidates more salable. Some educators believe overseas internships will become the norm in the future.

Students at a number of colleges have a foreign internship built into the curriculum. At some colleges, liberal arts students are expected to study a foreign language, and master the history, politics, and economics of a region. They create a research project connected with the region. The college helps them find an assignment in that region. At the graduate school level internships can be very exciting. A graduate business school student at a Texas university helped start a bank in Nepal, a developing nation. The grad student analyzed the commercial banking market, produced a business plan, set up a computer system, and assisted in training of local workers. He returned to his campus to graduate. Impressed with his Nepal experience, a giant corporation snapped up the new MBA and shipped him off to analyze markets in South America.

Whether you are an undergraduate or graduate college student, or mid-career changer, you can aim for an international internship in one of three basic ways:

- *school-affiliated programs*
- *self-direct search, and*
- *third-party services*

### **School Affiliated Programs**

This approach is like a guided tour; it offers structure, relative security, and a place to call if something goes wrong when you are far from home. Your school probably has a study-abroad office that takes care of all details for a price. School-based study and work programs almost always cost students, not employers.

Exceptions occur when the internship is corporate or government-sponsored. Most opportunities for paid work overseas only occur at the graduate level.

International accountancy and consulting firm KPMG Peat Marwick is an example of American corporations that send students to work in their overseas offices. Cities where KPMG sends interns include Beijing, Budapest, Sao Paulo, Dusseldorf, Paris, Tokyo, and Brussels. KPMG assignments can take up to a year, can be renewed, and pay an adequate salary.

Not all American companies operate their internship programs solely in conjunction with college and universities, but the schools are a good place to start looking for opportunities.

### **Self-Directed Search**

You can look at books and search the Internet for leads to international internships.

Many programs listed in the annual *Vacation Study Abroad* (published by the Institute of International Education), available in many libraries, include an internship component.

The *International Employment Hotline* newsletter, edited by Will Cantrell, is a reliable source of information about overseas job openings. Internship opportunities are reported chiefly in the fall and spring. To subscribe, contact: International Employment Hotline, P.O. Box 3030, Oakton, VA 22124; (800) 291-4618 or visit their web site at <http://www.internationaljobs.org/monthly.html>

By searching on the Alta Vista engine ([www.altavista.digital.com](http://www.altavista.digital.com)), with the keywords *internship+international*, you'll find thousands of opportunities offered or processed by such groups as International Center for Research on Women and CDS International Internship Program (training opportunities in Germany). Government agencies turn up, such as the Agency for International Development Internship. A large number of university international studies homepages are listed as well.

Try other Internet search engines and directories, too. Each may bring fresh information to your computer screen.

### **Third Party Services**

You can also arrange for international internships through private and non-profit organizations. The organizations usually do either placement or paperwork processing (work permits, visas).

In arranging for paperwork processing, beware of firms offering black market documents - forgeries that invalidate your internship. The processor should be a service approved by the federal government in your native land, which in turn will have working arrangements with the government of your host nation.

Here is a sampling of third-party services:

*Council on International Educational Exchange* is a huge worldwide organization that offers U.S. college students and recent graduates an opportunity to work legally in a foreign country. The work experiences last three to six months.

The jobs pay a modest amount and most are not true internships. CIEE makes placements and publishes a virtual library of books and pamphlets. Contact CIEE at 205 E. 42nd St., New York, NY 20017; (212) 822-2699; Web: <http://www.ciee.org>

*Internships International* is a private firm headed by Judy Tilson, a former college study-abroad specialist. The firm is a placement service for non-paying, full-time, quality internships in all fields in London, Paris, Florence, Budapest, Santiago, Stuttgart, Dublin, Madrid, Melbourne, and Mexico City.

Open to recent college graduates and graduate students, the internships last between six weeks and six months. This is a program for individuals who are ready to become professionals focusing on their adult careers. The selection process requires a resume, transcripts, two recommendations and a focused, concise statement of purpose, followed by an interview in person or by telephone.

There is no academic component and the purpose is to build the intern's resume through a high quality work experience to make the person more competitive in the job market. The \$500 fee does not cover travel costs, housing, expenses or work permits in certain locales. Some interns have been offered full-time, paying jobs.

Contact: Internships International, 1116 Cowper Drive, Raleigh, NC 27608; (919) 832-1575; e-mail: [IntIntl@aol.com](mailto:IntIntl@aol.com) web: <http://www.rtpnet.org/~intintl/>

*Association for International Practical Training*, among other services that promote practical training exchanges between nations, is a nonprofit approved paperwork processor for visas and work permits. Processing fee ranges from \$50 to \$150.

Contact: AIPT, 10400 Little Patuxent Parkway, Suite 250, Columbia, MD 21044; (410) 997-2200; web: <http://www.aipt.org>

*International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience* finds internships for students with technical majors in Asia, Europe and Australia.

Contact: Same as AIPT above.

## **Not Quite Internships**

When you take a short-term job working on a ranch, teaching customers to sail the Greek islands, volunteering for archaeological digs and other interesting life experiences, the gig may not qualify as an internship.

Why not? Here's why: The work is a job – not an internship. Your learning objectives are not clearly identified and when you do not learn skills and processes but instead are used as cheap or free labor.

Additionally for students, the work is a job - not an internship - when the work is not related to your educational course work. Nor is it an internship when you do not report your work experience to faculty supervisor, or when a supervisor at the employer's workplace does not monitor you. You may be offered a job after the internship or graduation, but you should not be promised a job as you enter the internship.

All these rules were set up to protect workers from being exploited. This doesn't mean that work experiences that are not quite internships can't be of immense value in jetting into a career field.

The MBA Enterprise Corps, for instance, does consider its activities an internship program because participants, second-year graduate school of business students and recently graduated MBAs, are sent abroad for a year with expenses and stipend paid by the U.S. government and private sources.

Two current developments may make you look twice at internship-like jobs if formal internships are impractical: the upgrading of entry-level requirements, and the rapid spread of new electronic recruitment technology.

1. A recent study by the Cambridge Hun Resource Group reports that 58 percent of companies surveyed say they have upgraded entry-level jobs - requiring more significant work experience.
2. Employers specify words (keywords) describing qualifications, particularly experience qualifications. Your resume must contain matching keywords or job computers will screen you out.

Not-quite internships may be the easiest or the only way to go where you have never gone before.

## **Skills Management**

At root, an internship is about accumulating skills you can market and transfer in the future. During your internship, keep a journal of the formal list of skills you acquire or improve. Employers want people who can bring skills to the job immediately. Skills are the hot tickets that get you hired.

## **Seize the Moment**

Interns sometimes think that because they are not paid, or paid very little, they are not really in the workplace. That is a big oops.

As a student intern, consider the changing realities. In school, if you do not feel like going to a lecture, you cut it; you deprive only yourself of the event. At work, if you cut a day, you deprive your entire team of your efforts. If you fail to study for an exam only you suffer the results; at work, if you do not deliver on a project, your whole team suffers.

Not only is an internship "something to put on your resume," but it is the source of powerful recommendations and new contacts in the business world. Cut your job like you cut class and you'll lose these contacts.

An internship is your window of opportunity to get inside new structures. Make it count. Pretend that you are being paid \$100,000 a week. Bring six-figure value to the job even when you're earning zero.

## **Working Involved**

The best reward in life is the opportunity to work hard at something that matters to you. Work you do at the top of your game is deeply gratifying. Work gives you a reason to exist.

But when you don't value your work, you get little from it. You are stranded in the middle of barren landscape and no one knows your name. Another writer, remembered by author Jo Coudert in *Seven Cats and the Art of Living*, says the involvement in your work makes all the difference.

Unfortunately, we have become brainwashed with the idea that work is what you do the least possible to earn a living. We have almost forgotten the engineers, plumbers, physicians, customer service reps, computer programmers and anyone else passionately busy in making, repairing, caring, organizing, discovering and creating can find themselves alone in rooms, at the center of the own universes, lost in work. Choose an internship that introduces you to work you think you might like - work that will lead to your being happy alone in your room, lost in your work.

## Students' Action Plan

- 1. Analyze Purpose of Internship**
  - Specific area of knowledge
  - Resume enhancement
  - Bridge to full-time job
- 2. Decide Type of Experience You Need**
  - Type of employer, geographic location
  - Paid or unpaid, academic credit or no credit
  - Part-time, full-time, or summer
- 3. Visit Career Services for List of Opportunities**
  - Use InterCenter.Com
  - Subscribe to Internship Listserv group
  - Read books
  - Surf Internet
- 4. Write Internship Resume**
  - Skills, accomplishments
  - Education, experience
  - Extracurricular activities, honors
- 5. Write Core Letter of Inquiry**
  - Why you are writing, your goal
  - Benefits you can offer
  - Action you will take  
(follow-up with phone call)
- 6. Develop Internship Leads**
  - Internship Directories
  - Business directories
  - Newspapers, Trade Journals
  - Internet
  - Job Fairs
- 7. Network**
  - Family, relatives, friends
  - Professionals, i.e., bankers, doctors, lawyers
  - Faculty, student groups
  - Civic organizations
- 8. Work Your Plan**
  - Contact employers
  - Remember deadlines!

## Career Changers' Action Plan

- 1. Validate Career Field Interest**
  - Review research on industry outlook.
  - Reassess your interest in industry
- 2. Identify Transferable Skills**
  - Relate portable skills to new field
  - Beef up weak skills
- 3. Consider University Auspices**
  - Visit with academic advisor and other college officials
  - Scout continuing education
  - Scout internship within other academic departments
- 4. Identify Intern Employers**
  - Read internship directories
  - Read business directories
  - Read job ads
  - Surf Internet
  - Network
  - Check trade organizations
- 5. Prepare to Self-Market**
  - Write resume; talk skills
  - Write cover letter; talk skills
  - Practice interviewing; talk skills
  - Polish telephone self-selling skills
- 6. Contact Intern Employers**
  - Research the company
  - Make the contact
  - Connect your skills with employers' needs
- 7. Review Students' Action Plan**
  - Adapt useful tips listed below
- 8. Work Your Plan**
  - Follow-up each contact
  - Interview
  - Write thoughtful thank-you letters
  - If necessary to pay bills, work second job

## Suggested Readings

These books can be obtained at any bookstores or on-line at Amazon.Com

### *Director of International Internships*

Charles Gliozzo and Vernicka Tyson  
209 International Center  
Michigan State University  
East Lansing, MI 48824-1035  
(517) 355-2350

### *The Broadcasting Internship Guide for College Students*

R.A. Publishing  
P.O. Box 740635; Arvada, CO 80006-0635

### *The Journalism Internship Guide for College Students*

R.A. Publishing  
P.O. Box 740635; Arvada, CO 80006-0635

### *Directory of Internship Opportunities for the Liberal Arts Major*

Resource Continuum  
1245 Farmington Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06107  
E-mail: Mtcontin@aol.com

### *The National Directory of Internships*

Gita Gulati and Nancy R. Bailey;  
The National Society for Experiential Education  
3509 Hayworth Drive, Suite 207, Raleigh, NC 27609  
(919) 787-3263

### *The Princeton Review Student Advantage Guide to America's Top Internships*

*The Internship Bible*; by Mark Oldman and Samer Harnadeh  
Random House, Inc., 400 Hahn Road, Westminster, ME 21157  
(800) 793-2665

### *Internships*; Peterson's Guides, Inc., 202 Carnegie

Center, P.O. Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543  
(800) 338-3282

### *The Access Guide to International Affairs Internships in the Washington, D.C. Area*

Bruce Seymore II and Matthew T. Higham  
Access: A Security Information Service, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, 1701 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 223-7949

### *National Directory of Arts Internships* by Warren Christensen

The National Network for Artist Placement  
(music, dance, film, theater, art design, fine arts)  
935 West Avenue 37, Los Angeles, CA 90065  
(213) 222-4035

## Author

Joyce Lain Kennedy

Ms. Kennedy writes the national syndicated column, CAREERS.  
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# Employer Information Regarding Internships

Properly structured and supervised student internship experiences provide significant benefits to everyone. First, the intern is exposed to a professional work environment and to an organization that may be considered as a viable career choice. In addition to the work performed during the internship, students influence other students and their faculty as a result of what they learn in a real-world work environment.

Second, because of the internship experience, the faculty and administrators of the academic institution will have a greater understanding of your organization and the range of occupational specialization within the field. This knowledge will result in improvement at the academic level in both *what* is taught and *how* it is taught.

Third, organizations that provide internships will benefit in several ways. In addition to the direct benefits of having energetic and creative interns, the organization will become more aware of the resources available from Ohio State University at Marion. A win-win partnership is created.

## What is an Internship?

An internship is an educational experience that integrates classroom study with a planned and supervised work experience. It allows students to acquire practical skills and to experience some realities of the working world. Internships create opportunities for personal and professional growth as students test theories and acquire new information.

An internship within an organization exposes a student to the profession of his/her choice and perhaps bringing to light other career choices that may never have been considered. One important value of an internship experience is that it allows a student to define what the organization is about and to consider it as a career option.

A meaningful internship program should involve:

- interaction among the faculty, intern, and the supervisor
- establishment of internship requirements,
- measurement of performance, and
- work-site visits by the intern's academic coordinator.

The length of the internship is typically determined by the academic department in which the intern is majoring and is generally defined by the academic calendar. The college determines the credit a student received depending on the amount of time spent at the internship.

## Employer Benefits

- Access to highly motivated, enthusiastic, responsive and adaptable workers.
- Assistance with special work projects of short-term nature.
- A chance to preview potential full-time employees.
- An opportunity to assist in the professional preparation of young adults.
  - An alliance between the academic and business communities promoting communication and mutual respect.

## Getting Started

Before bringing an intern aboard in your organization, you should address the following:

- Define the internship project. Be sure that the work is meaningful, challenging, and stimulating. Be prepared to offer an experience that will not only allow the intern to further develop skills but also meet your organization's need to accomplish worthwhile programs and projects.
- Explain the benefits of the project to the intern.
- Determine who will supervise the intern. Since supervising an intern can be time consuming, be sure to assign a staff person who is willing to spend the time and is receptive to the idea.
- Plan ahead. It frequently takes time to locate and hire an intern. Remember, you are competing with other organizations for talented individuals.

## Where to Find Interns

Contact Career Services at, (740) 389-6786 ext -6344, to post an available internship and make inquiries.

## Helpful Ideas for Working with Interns

- Find out all the details from those who eventually supervise the intern, such as the number of hours/credits related to the internship program as well as the expectations of the organization providing the internship experience.
- Seek and interview candidates whose background and goals fit the assignment.
- Be prepared to spend time with the intern. Provide background material, resources and supervision.
- Develop a relationship with the academic advisor. Discuss your expectations of the intern and the advisor's role. Confer with the advisor and the intern regularly.
- Agree upon specific projects, goals, and timelines for the intern. Make sure expectations are realistic and can be accomplished in the timeframe that defines the internship experience.
- Make interns feel they are important and a part of your organization. Give them a space where they can work and provide them with necessary supplies and reference materials. Introduce them to other staff members. Assign one contact person the intern can ask questions and get further information. Knowing that someone is available to answer questions will make the intern feel more comfortable.
- Prepare a written schedule of orientation activities and assignments, at least for the intern's first few weeks. Although you must spend time to orient the intern, it's equally important to ensure that the intern can begin working immediately on substantive projects. Don't overlook the importance of orienting the intern not only to the functions of the organization but also to the characteristics of the organization's mission.
- Encourage creativity and productivity. Urge the intern to review proposed assignments and suggest ways to improve methods, designs, and/or productivity. Stress the fact that you are as interested in outcomes as you are in the process through which they are achieved.
- Explain your expectations to the intern. Discuss job responsibilities, the importance of the work, how performance will be measured and the frequency of the appraisals. Stress the importance of the standards you expect the intern to meet.

- Encourage dialogue between the intern and the organization supervisor. If the intern perceives open channels of communication where goals are clearly understood, a positive work climate will be created, and the intern will continue to be effective throughout the internship.
- Write a letter of recommendation for the intern if the individual performed well. Be sure that the intern has some “products,” such as a newsletter, magazine article, education program brochure, etc. for his/her professional portfolio.
- Assuming that the intern has met your expectations, encourage the intern to refer to your organization as a reference when seeking a job.

## Evaluating the Experience

Just as you evaluate professional staff on an ongoing basis, you should evaluate the intern periodically during the internship, not just at the end of the experience. However, once the process is complete, a meeting with the student and the faculty advisor to evaluate the internship experience is crucial.

Use this meeting to find out if the orientation was adequate, if the internship met the student’s expectations, if the assignment schedule was realistic, and if the college would likely send students to your organization in the future. This wrap-up is an ideal opportunity to discuss ways to improve the staff/intern/advisor relationship.

You should provide documentation to the college so that the intern’s advisor can assign a grade. The college will provide you with the evaluation forms you need to complete in order for the student to receive credit.

## To Pay or Not to Pay

Whether an employer must pay an intern for their work depends on the experience they will receive. Although the Fair Labor Standards Act requires employers to pay at least the minimum wage to employees, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has developed six criteria for identifying which learners/trainees may be unpaid. Apparently, the DOL's use of "learner/trainee" is equivalent to the commonly used term of "intern."

The criteria:

1. The training, even though it includes actual operation of the employer's facilities, is similar to training that would be given in a vocational school.
2. The training is for the benefit of the student.
3. The student does not displace regular employees, but works under the close observation of a regular employee.
4. The employer provides the training and derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the student. Occasionally, the operations may actually be impeded by the training.
5. The student is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the training period.
6. The employer and the student understand that the student is not entitled to wages for the time spent training.

Other criteria that have been questioned are the payment of wages and the expectation of a job after graduation. In many cases, the employer pays a stipend to students for their meals and lodging or to assist with tuition. This is not considered payment of wages for the purpose of determining whether a student is an employee. Likewise, the fact that the employer may ultimately hire the student does not make the intern an employee as long as there was no promise of a regular full-time job made to the intern prior to or during his/her internship.

Nearly all interns prefer paying jobs. Thus, the primary benefit of offering a salary is that it simply attracts more applicants from which to choose. Moreover, not paying the intern in return for his/her work is exploitive and makes the effort seem less important. If you are able to make the investment in the intern, you can expect the intern to be more committed as well. However, if you are not able to pay a salary you might consider paying the course credit hours for the internship and possibly even expenses.

Consider offering a salary, rather than an hourly wage. Because interns are not eligible for full-time benefits, a salary will at least provide for paid holidays and sick days. And consider allowing the intern to list work with your organization as a “salaried” position on their resume.

## **Intern/Employee Benefits**

Consult with the intern’s academic department to determine the appropriate levels of compensation and other benefits for interns. Typically, the benefits provided will vary with individual employers. The range is from a minimum that includes some or all of the following: worker’s compensation, tax withholding, paid sick leave and holidays, reimbursement for business travel expenses and vacation accrual, to a fully comprehensive program comparable to full-time employee status.

The greater the similarity between an intern and a full-time employee in the area of benefits the greater the intern’s identification with the organization and sense of belonging.

Your perception of the value of the internship program as a source of future employees can be a primary determinant in the benefits package decision.

## **Legal Issues**

Most colleges expect interns to be regarded as employees rather than independent contractors. For tax and/or other legal matters you should contact your organization’s legal counsel and the college registrar’s office for specific details.

## **Source**

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