CONDUCTING AN EFFECTIVE INTERNSHIP SEARCH

Arts and Sciences Career Success Office

Steps to Follow

- ☐ Clarify Your Goals
- ☐ Conduct Research
- ☐ Prepare Your Application Materials
- ☐ Search for Internships
- ☐ Prepare to Interview
- ☐ Follow Up After the Interview

Clarify Your Internship Goals & Needs

- **What are your career interests? – Consider your personality, skills, and long term goals.**

- **What are you seeking to gain from the internship – Experience? Networking contacts? Testing career paths?**

- **What type of organization aligns with your values? – Large corporation? Small business? Nonprofit? Government?**

- **What industry sector would be the best fit for you? For example, you can pursue public relations in industries as varied as health care, manufacturing, or hospitality.**

- **Are you seeking a local internship, or are you targeting another city or region?**

- **Are you seeking a summer internship, or something part-time during the school year?**

- **Do you have the financial means to consider both paid and unpaid internships?**

- **Do you need or want internship course credit?**

Conduct Research

You may be tempted to simply apply to everything you find, but an informed internship search often produces better results. Furthermore, employers expect you to learn about their organization before you apply.

- **Learn about a company or industry you are interested in by going to websites such as Hoover's Online, LexisNexis, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (bls.gov), or Glassdoor.com. The OSU library system provides accounts for some of these sites that otherwise require subscriptions:** http://library.ohio-state.edu/search/m?SEARCH=Business%20and%20Economics

- **Study the "Career" section of an organization's website. Most businesses and agencies have a wealth of information available on their site.**

  - **Read about the company internship and entry level hiring programs**
  - **Look for press releases announcing new strategies or acquisitions**
  - **Browse the job openings to learn about career paths in your area of interest**
  - **Study the company culture and work environment**

- **Use social media sites such as LinkedIn or Twitter to join online networking groups, see how alumni are launching their careers, and capture breaking industry news and position openings.**

Prepare your application materials

Be ready when an internship opportunity arises. Realize that you may need to customize your resume and cover letter to match the skills and experience required of a specific internship.

- [ ] **Have Career Success review your resume and cover letter**
- [ ] **Contact people you seek to include on your List of References**
- [ ] **Gather writing samples, assemble design portfolios, summarize research experiences, etc.**
- [ ] **Download an unofficial transcript via BuckeyeLink in case it is needed**
- [ ] **Compile examples of challenges, achievements, and leadership experiences that can be elaborated upon during interviews**

Search For Internships: Search Strategy

- Start early – while some internships are available through spring semester, many begin recruiting as early as the beginning of fall term. The later you begin the process, the more limited your options become.

- Apply to multiple opportunities – don't just target a single internship and wait for the phone to ring!

- There is no universal, one-stop source for all internships, so be sure to apply a variety of tactics to find opportunities:
    - Online campus resources
    - External online and media resources
    - Social Media resources
    - Real world networking

Search For Internships – Online Campus Resources

All of the following resources are available through your Buckeye Careers Network/Handshake account which can be accessed through the career services website: asccareerservices.osu.edu. All Arts and Sciences majors receive an account upon declaring their major.

Always start with these resources when conducting an internship search and check back frequently since new positions are posted daily!

- Handshake
  - Employers use this system to post positions targeted specifically to OSU students
  - Some positions are associated with on-campus interviews or employer visits
  - Complete your profile, upload a resume, and begin browsing
- NACElink Extended Search
  - Aggregates college level opportunities from a broad range of industries at the local, regional and national level
  - Includes an international search engine
- Going Global/USA City Search
  - International and US search functions
  - Used by US citizens and international students
  - Learn which companies have sponsored H1-B visas in the past

Search For Internships - Social Networking Sites

Internship providers are increasing their use of social networking platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook to promote opportunities!

☐ Examples:

- Use LinkedIn to identify hiring managers or recruiters at an organization you are targeting. Once you have found a recruiter on LinkedIn, search for them on other social media sites, for example Twitter, and follow them. Follow targeted sites on all their social media platforms! If they post any jobs on the social sites that do not appear on their company's site you've found a hidden job!
- Google or Bing "Top Twitter users to follow in……" (fill in target industry or career interest).

Search For Internships - Networking

Most jobs are never posted anywhere. Up to 70% of opportunities are lurking in the "hidden market". Many students find their internships through extensive networking!

- On-campus Networking
  - Career fairs
  - Employer information sessions and student club/organization presentations
  - Academic departments, advisors, and faculty

- Off-campus Networking
  - Inform your friends, family, and previous employers about your interests and goals
  - Attend company open houses
  - Participate in Chamber of Commerce and civic young professional events
  - Talk to your contacts and ask questions to identify people who can potentially help you. Suggested questions include:
    - Who do you know that works in the career field, or with the company, that interests me?
    - Do you know someone with a lot of connections…a person who likely knows someone working in my field?
    - Are you aware of any mentorship programs in this field?

Prepare To Interview

- Do you have appropriate interview attire? Everyone planning to interview should have a business suit and accessories.

- Understand the position description and be able to articulate how your skills and experience qualify you for the job

- Know how to respond to typical interview questions such as:
  - • "Tell me about yourself"
  - • "What are your greatest weaknesses?"
  - • "Why do you want to work here?"

- Prepare for behavioral based questions that require you to describe past accomplishments, challenges, leadership roles, and problem solving experiences.

- Plan to utilize the research you conducted previously to be able to discuss the organization's mission, history, product or service offerings, career paths, and industry trends.

- Depending upon the type of position you are applying for, you may want to assemble a portfolio. For jobs where creativity is a necessary skill (e.g., graphic design, advertising), employers often expect candidates to bring portfolios to their interviews as a means of viewing work samples.

- Prepare 3-4 questions to ask the interviewer about the company and the position.

- The best way to know for sure if you are prepared is to conduct a mock interview with a career services advisor.

Interview Follow Up

- Reflect on your interview and make notes on:
  - Your general impressions of the organization
  - Your evaluation of the position based upon new information gathered during the interview
  - Your own interviewing strengths and weaknesses
- Write a formal thank you letter to the interviewer(s)
  - An email thank you should be composed within 24 hours
  - Reiterate your interest in the position and what you can contribute to the company and/or your qualifications
- Contact the interviewer if you don't hear back from them within the stated selection timeline