



Class of 2010 Interns More Likely to Have Job Offers (5-20-2010)

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SUBJECT Class of 2010 Interns More Likely to Have Job Offers

BETHLEHEM, PA—New graduates who took part in an internship program are more likely to have received a job offer than their peers who decided to forgo the experience, according to a new study from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE).

NACE's *2010 Student Survey* shows 42.3 percent of the seniors who had internship experience and applied for a job received at least one job offer. Conversely, only 30.7 percent of seniors without internship experience who applied for a job received an offer.

The study also found that those who had an internship were more likely to accept the offer—and have a job to go to following graduation. More than one-quarter of the intern group with offers accepted them; less than 20 percent of the non-intern group did so.

One possibility for interns' higher acceptance rate: a higher salary than the average offered their non-intern counterparts.

"Results of our study show the median accepted salary offer for seniors with an internship was \$45,301—nearly 31 percent higher than the \$34,601 median accepted salary offer to non-intern seniors," says Marilyn Mackes, NACE executive director.

NACE expects to release additional highlights from the *2010 Student Survey* throughout the month. A final report on the study's finding will be available later this year.

About NACE's 2010 Student Survey: NACE polls students about their job search, career plans, and other issues related to employment on an annual basis. The *2010 Student Survey* was conducted February 9, 2010, through April 30, 2010. More than 31,470 students representing more than 400 colleges and universities nationwide took part; more than 13,000 of those were graduating seniors. Information in this release is based on data gathered from graduating senior respondents.

About NACE: Since 1956, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) has been the leading source of information about the employment of college graduates. For more information, visit www.naceweb.org. NACE

How to use LinkedIn to find internships (by a college undergrad)

April 22nd, 2009

[**Ed. note:** *This belongs to our series of posts featuring tips for recent grads from LinkedIn users. Jeffrey Anderson is a junior accounting student at the University of Washington with a passion for business. He is without an extensive professional background yet manages to find great career opportunities]*

Finding a good internship was difficult and frustrating for me. Student resources and other web options were just not enough. I wanted to know: what made a good internship, how I could set myself apart from thousands like me, and how I could find those opportunities some people are able to find? I was able to answer all of these questions by using LinkedIn and a little enthusiasm.

Here are four things LinkedIn helped me do:

1. Gain knowledge of an industry: The question & answer function was a great tool to ask for advice or any specific questions for a specific industry or job. The first time I asked a question I received seven answers. One of these answers gave me a contact which lead to a recent interview I would have never found otherwise.

2. Research companies: When choosing which company is right for you, LinkedIn's company tab is a great place for research. I like to look at present or former employees' profiles and send them messages or get introduced to learn more about the company or to develop a good recommendation.

3. Utilize contacts: To increase my chances of landing a job, I looked through my contacts to see if I could find people who were in a relevant company, in a prominent position, or even shared similar interests. Remember, it's not what you know but who you know!

4. Increase exposure: Let contacts come to you. A great way to do this is to join groups that are in your desired industry and ask intelligent questions and build relationships. I saw a sudden influx in my page views and contacts days after.

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Quintessential Careers: Making the Most of Your Internship(s)

by Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D.



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Career counselors, employers, and others have long touted the importance for college students to work one or more internships during their college years, and a recent study released by the Vault.com shows that college students are listening: almost 9 out of 10 (86 percent) college graduates reported completing at least one internship, and more than two-thirds (69 percent) reported completing two or more internships.

So, knowing that you will have one or more internships during college, what are the keys to making the most of your internship? What follows are the 12 keys to internship success. Follow these guidelines and you should be well on your way not only to a successful internship, but to a successful career.

1. **Set Personal Goals.** While some internships are very structured, others are not, so you need to spend some time before you start the internship setting goals that you want to accomplish. Maybe it's deciding on what area within marketing that you want to specialize, or learning new skills, or building your network. Whatever your goals, you will feel a greater sense of accomplishment once you achieve them. Hint: Setting unrealistic goals could make even a good internship seem bad, so make sure your goals are realistic and attainable in your internship.
2. **Have Regular Meetings with your Supervisor(s).** Sound obvious? Well, maybe, but you may get a supervisor who never schedules meetings with you or travels quite a bit, so you have to make sure to have regular meetings where you can share experiences and lessons learned -- both good and bad -- as well as give progress reports. Hint: While you want to keep your supervisor abreast of your accomplishments, remember to also be a good listener and learn as much as you can during these meetings.
3. **Tackle all Tasks with Enthusiasm and a Positive Attitude.** In just about every company, the new hire/intern is going to have to "pay his or her dues." You will undoubtedly be given some grunt work to do, such as making photocopies, but the key is to complete all your work assignments with the same level of enthusiasm and professionalism. Hint: You might also consider working extra hours (beyond the required number for the internship) to show your work ethic to your supervisor(s).
4. **Avoid Negativity.** The quickest way to kill a good internship is being negative. So, avoid complaining, being rude, disrespecting coworkers, arriving late, leaving early, being closed-minded, missing deadlines, appearing arrogant, wearing improper attire, acting unprofessionally, appearing inflexible, and taking part in office politics. Hint: A common mistake among interns and new hires is treating secretaries and clerks as being

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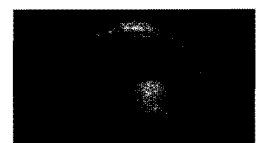
beneath them – avoid this behavior at all costs.

5. **Never Shun a Chance to Learn More About the Company/Industry.** Take every opportunity presented to you to attend company or industry meetings, conferences, and events; participate in training workshops; and read all company materials. Hint: Meetings may appear (and actually be) boring to you, but they can often offer a good chance to increase your knowledge, network, and build relationships.
6. **Get as Much Exposure as Possible.** Some of the best internships rotate you among departments and supervisors, but if yours doesn't, don't let that stop you from tackling new tasks, meeting people outside your department, and attending company social events. The more you are exposed to new ideas and new people, the more you'll learn. Hint: Joining the company softball team (or other informal group) is a great opportunity to meet new people in a relaxed and informal environment.
7. **Don't be Afraid to Ask Questions.** Always remember that an internship is a learning experience for you. While the employer expects to get a certain level of work from you, you are not expected to know everything. Seek advice and raise questions whenever you encounter something that is not familiar to you. Be open-minded about new ideas and procedures -- remember that you don't know everything and that your professors didn't teach you everything. Hint: Smart people know that there really is no such thing as a dumb question, so ask before doing.
8. **Take Initiative.** Employers love employees who dive into tackling tough problems and who think "outside the box" in finding solutions. Just make sure you work with your supervisor(s) so you don't overstep your authority -- and make sure you share successes with her. Hint: There is a fine line between taking initiative and being perceived as a "know-it-all," and for interns especially, it is best to err on the side of caution.
9. **Find a Mentor.** A mentor is someone at a higher level in the organization that looks out for you and makes sure you are learning what you need to know and accomplishing what you need to do. A mentor can also shield you from office politics and be a good sounding board for you to discuss ideas, ask questions, etc. Hint: Your supervisor could be your mentor, but it could also be another person within the organization.
10. **Network, Network, Network.** One of the key tools of job-hunting is utilizing your network to find your next career step, whether another internship or a job upon graduation (and beyond). Build professional relationships with your supervisor(s) and other managers in the organization. These people are also a good source for getting other job-hunting advice and tips from their years of experience. Hint: Even if you have a bad experience on an internship, never burn your bridges because you never know when it could come back and hurt you. Always leave on good terms.
11. **Leave with Tangible Accomplishments.** One of your goals with any internship is leaving it with some tangible results - both for your resume and your career portfolio (if you use one). Maybe you developed a brochure, computerized an inventory system, organized a sales conference, met with clients, tracked industry trends, etc. Hint: Keeping a journal may help you remember all the things you accomplished on your internship.
12. **Enjoy Yourself.** Most internships are great experiences, so make sure you have some fun while you're working and learning. Don't be so uptight that you are perceived as something you're not. Hint: Just make sure you don't overdo the fun -- and avoid office romances.

Still need to find an internship? Want advice for turning your internship into a job? Check out all the tools and tips we offer in our [Internship Resources for College Students](#).

Questions about some of the terminology used in this article? Get more information (definitions and links) on key college, career, and job-search terms by going to our [Job-Seeker's Glossary of Job-Hunting Terms](#).

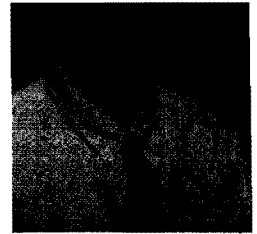
Dr. Randall S. Hansen is founder of [Quintessential Careers](#), one of the oldest and most comprehensive career development sites on the Web, as well CEO of [EmpoweringSites.com](#). He is also founder of [MyCollegeSuccessStory.com](#) and [EnhanceMyVocabulary.com](#). He is publisher of [Quintessential Careers Press](#), including the [Quintessential Careers](#) electronic



12/1/2009

Making the Most of Your Internship

newsletter, QuintZine. Dr. Hansen is also a published author, with several books, chapters in books, and hundreds of articles. He's often quoted in the media and conducts empowering workshops around the country. Finally, Dr. Hansen is also an educator, having taught at the college level for more than 15 years. Visit his personal Website or reach him by email at randall(at)quintcareers.com.



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A Complete Guide to Internships

By Derrick Dortch
 Special to washingtonpost.com
 Wednesday, March 12, 2003; 4:00 PM

If you want a great job after college you must do more than earn good grades and get involved in extracurricular activities. Good grades and extracurricular activities are looked upon favorably by employers but they are not enough. According to the 2001 Job Outlook Survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), employers say that the perfect candidate is a graduate who brings relevant work experience to the table. This experience is mostly gained through internships.

The purpose of this article is to provide you with information on internships and give you a starting strategy to get one.

What Is an Internship?

An internship is a structured learning experience in a work setting that gives a student the opportunity to learn about a career interest and gain valuable knowledge and experience in a particular field. In an internship, you work just like an employee but your purpose is to receive mentorship, supervision, and training. Internships are designed to assist students in the career exploration process to determine if that career matches their interests and skills.

Are Internships Important?

Internships are very important to a college student preparing for the world of work. It should be seen as an integral part of your academics. To get this relevant experience, students should intern with employers who are doing the kind of work they are interested in pursuing after college. Here are a few reasons why internships are so important.

Internships:

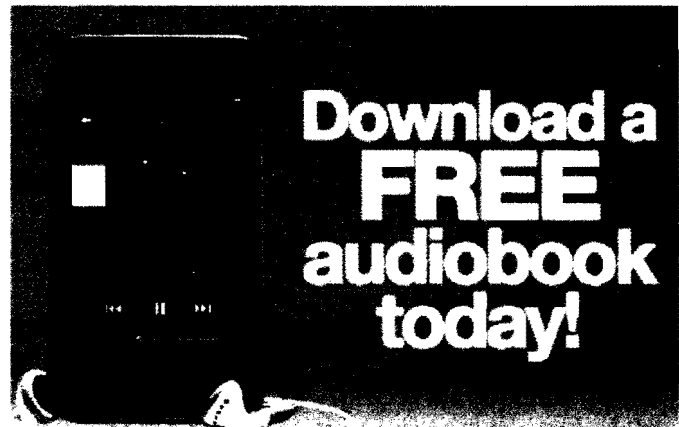
- Test your skills and interests.
- Provide insight into prerequisites needed for employment.
- Develop a network of professional contacts for future opportunities and references.
- Increase your awareness of the skills you need to develop.
- Provide valuable work experience such as workplace communication skills.
- Build a strong resume.

How Early Should I Begin Planning for an Internship?

Plan your internship as soon as possible. If you are able to intern your freshman year that is great but it should be a priority for your sophomore and junior years. Take your first semester in college and get

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acclimated but after you are settled, consider talking to your career center about internships and how to develop an internship search strategy. Even if you are not sure what you want to do, exploring various fields will help you decide on what career match your interests, passions, and goals.

When Are Internships Available?

The majority of internships take place in the summer but many are available year around. In Washington D.C. and other major cities, companies, government agencies and non-profit organizations will have interns working during the fall, spring, and summer semester.

How Early Should I Begin Applying?

Application deadlines vary from organization to organization. Summer internship positions in large organizations or very competitive internship programs sometimes have deadlines as early as October, November, or December. Others will have deadlines in February, March, or April. It all depends on the organization and their hiring process. During the beginning of the fall semester or even at the end of the summer begin planning where you want to intern in the summer. Check with the organization(s) about the application procedure and deadline. Remember proper planning and preparation are key to getting the internship you want.

How Many Hours Should I Work at an Internship?

Summer internships can be full or part-time positions depending on the organization. If you decide to intern during the fall and spring semesters, it is recommended that you work 10 - 15 hours a week maximum. Remember that your academic studies are a priority. Exceeding 15 hours at an internship during the semester/quarter is not recommended unless your class load is light and flexible.

Are Internships Paid or Unpaid?

Summer internships can be paid or unpaid depending on the organization and career field. The majority of summer internships are paid. If a summer internship is unpaid they may only require you to work part-time so that you will be able to get another job. Internships during the academic semester/quarter many times are unpaid but there are a few organizations where interns are paid. Some organizations will pay for travel to and from work so make sure you discuss this with the internship provider before accepting a position.

Do I Need to Do Anything Before Looking for an Internship?

Whether you are just beginning your career exploration process or if you're a veteran, there are some steps that are always helpful to follow. This process should begin with a self-assessment. Evaluate your interests, skills, and passions. Select the career fields that match you the best.

Where Do I Find Internships?

Your career center. The staff and resources of your college/university career center are available to help you find an internship. There are private career consultations and workshops. Most career centers also have a library and Web site with a number of books and online resources to help you find an internship. Career centers usually maintain internship opportunity listings online or in their resource area.

The Internet. Use the search engines on the Web and see what you discover.

Company Web sites. Most companies will list internships, summer opportunities and special programs in the employment or career opportunities section of their Web site. Look for Career Employment/Opportunities on the home page. This link is sometimes on the home page but if it cannot be found look in the site index, contact us, about us or search sections of the Web site.

Online internship listing services. There are a number of online internship search engines available for you to conduct your search.

Career books. There are a number of books published on internship opportunities. Two of the most popular are "The Internship Bible" published by The Princeton Review and "Peterson's Yearly Internship Book" published by Thomson Learning. Libraries and bookstores usually have a good selection of books on internships. Also online bookstores like Amazon.com are good resources as well.

Newspapers. Look in the employment section of newspapers. If you see a full time listing that interests you, contact that company and see if there are any internships available. Every spring, The Washington Post runs a section in the employment guide of internship listings.

Career fairs. Each university will usually have an annual career fair with companies, organizations and agencies looking for interns. Talk to your career center and find out when the career fair will be held and how to prepare it.

Alumni. Alumni can be a great resource for information on internship opportunities in their career field or place of employment. Contact Alumni Affairs/Relations office for alumni contacts in your field(s) of interest.

Network contacts. Networking is very important in your career development. Joining associations and attending professional events and job fairs will help you build your network. Use contacts to learn about opportunities that are available in your field of interest. Each career area has at least one association and newspaper or journal. Associations for various industry sectors and career fields (i.e. American Management Association, American Medical Association, etc.) may have internship listings in their publications or Web sites. Check out AssociationCentral.org for a directory of associations listed by industry or career field.

Professors/Professional staff. Many professors or professional staff will have contacts outside the university in organizations of interest. At many colleges and universities, a good number of professors are adjunct and maintain a professional job outside of teaching. They may have internships at their place of employment or know of organizations in need of interns. Talking with them about your interests may yield great contacts and opportunities.


Parents, family, and friends. Share your career interests with your parents, family member and friends. They may know of a contact who can help you get an internship in that area of interest.

Develop your own internship. You may know of a contact in a career field of interest. Talk with them about an internship in their place of employment.

Explore each of these options carefully and you will find that there are a number of internships available. Although there may be many opportunities remember there are many college students like you working to get the internship. Make sure you waste no time in sending out your sales package to assure

your candidacy. Now you know where you want to intern, go for it!

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Quintessential Careers: Internship Do's and Don'ts

by Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D.



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The value of one or more internships to college students cannot be overstated. Internships have simply become a must for all college students. Internships help you better understand your field, help cement (or at times change) your career goals, and give you the experience employers demand -- even of college graduates.

What follows are the key rules that you need to understand to make the most of any and all internships.

- **Do** try to obtain at least one internship during your college years. And **do** try to get multiple internships.
- **Do** set specific goals for yourself and each internship. Know what you want to accomplish with each internship.
- **Don't** expect all internships to be paid. We wish they all were, but many are not. And **do** at least consider accepting both paid and nonpaid internships; some of the best internships may not be paid.
- **Do** expect to be treated professionally. And **do** act professionally at all times.
- **Don't** expect internships to just be handed to you; internships must be earned, as with any job.
- **Do** utilize your network of family and friends to the fullest to get leads on internships.
- **Do** try and schedule regular meetings with your internship supervisor.
- **Don't** pass up opportunities to have experiences beyond the regular scope of the internship that lead to chances to learn more about the company or industry.
- **Do** get as much exposure throughout the internship organization as possible.
- **Don't** be afraid to ask questions. And **do** be open to learning new skills and methodologies.
- **Do** find a mentor within the organization, whether it's your internship supervisor or some other manager.

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- **Do** make sure you leave your internship with new skills, a better understanding of your field, and tangible accomplishments.
- **Do** take advantage of job and career fairs to scout possible internship opportunities.
- **Don't** forget to take advantage of the career services office at your college -- they typically have leads to numerous internship opportunities.
- **Do** be sure you have a dynamic cover letter, a superior resume, and polished interviewing techniques.
- **Do** send thank you letters to all people who interview you -- and all the people who help you find an internship.
- **Don't** ever give up in your internship quest. And **do** exhaust all possible internship leads.
- **Do** enjoy your internship -- even when you are doing the inevitable grunt work many interns do as part of "paying your dues."
- **Don't** burn any bridges -- even if your internship was not the best.
- **Do** keep in touch with key coworkers from your internships -- and do cultivate them to become part of your network.
- **Do** read our article, How to Find Your Ideal Internship.
- **Do** read our article, Making the Most of Your Internship(s).

Questions about some of the terminology used in this article? Get more information (definitions and links) on key college, career, and job-search terms by going to our Job-Seeker's Glossary of Job-Hunting Terms.

Dr. Randall S. Hansen is founder of Quintessential Careers, one of the oldest and most comprehensive career development sites on the Web, as well CEO of EmpoweringSites.com. He is also founder of MyCollegeSuccessStory.com and EnhanceMyVocabulary.com. He is publisher of Quintessential Careers Press, including the Quintessential Careers electronic newsletter, QuintZine. Dr. Hansen is also a published author, with several books, chapters in books, and hundreds of articles. He's often quoted in the media and conducts empowering workshops around the country. Finally, Dr. Hansen is also an educator, having taught at the college level for more than 15 years. Visit his personal Website or reach him by email at randall(at)quintcareers.com.

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How to Find Your Ideal Internship

by Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D.

Congratulations! By reading this article you are taking the necessary steps for achieving greater career and job-search success upon graduation from college. Internships are invaluable learning experiences for college students -- and almost a necessity for any college graduate. Employers are demanding that college grads have "real world" experience, and internships are one of the best ways for college students to get that experience.

So how do you find your ideal internship? It's a three-step process: Determine Your Internship Goals, Prepare/Polish Your Job Search Skills, and Find/Track Down Internship Sources.

Determine Your Internship Goals

Before you can even start thinking about finding an internship, you need to spend time reflecting on your goals for obtaining an internship. Consider these questions:

- *What are your specific career interests?* An internship is a great tool to help you define your career goals. For example, if you're majoring in history, but have an eye on a political career, you might consider an internship with a local or state politician. Or, an internship can help further refine your career goals. For example, if you're a marketing major but not sure whether you want to go into advertising or public relations, you should consider getting internships in both areas to help you decide which is best for you.
- *Why do you want an internship -- and what do you hope to gain from it?* There are multiple reasons for obtaining an internship, including answering the question above. Other possible reasons include learning new skills, gaining networking connections, adding work experience to your resume, and as an entry point that you hope leads to a full-time position with the employer when you graduate.
- *What type of organization are you interested in?* Organizations come in all sizes and shapes, from Fortune 500 companies to not-for-profit organizations. What are you looking for? Issues to consider include size, ownership, corporate culture, etc.
- *What industry would be best for your needs?* Even when you know exactly what you want to do, you can still be uncertain about the type of industry that best suits you. For example, if you are a natural-born salesperson, you really have the option of working in any industry, but pharmaceutical sales is quite different from selling insurance.
- *Where do you want to have your internship?* If your internship is during the regular semester, you obviously need an internship close to your college campus, but during the summer months you may wish to have an internship near home so you can save on expenses (and enjoy mom or dad's cooking/laundry service/etc.) or in a location where you hope to land a full-time position when you graduate -- or just to experience a place in which you have never lived before.
- *Will you consider both paid and nonpaid internships?* It would be great if all internships paid, but in reality a large number do not - especially in certain industries. So, you need to decide whether you can afford to not get paid during your internship. One more thing: while it is not always the case, paid internships tend to be more professional (and you do less grunt work) because the employer wants to get its money worth from you.
- *Do you want college credit for the internship?* Many colleges offer at least some college credit for internships. The plus side (besides earning the credits) is that there is usually an internship program with an established list of employers and internships available to you. The down side is that there may be more restrictions on the type and amount of work you can do based on the program guidelines.

Prepare/Polish Your Job Search Skills

As internships become more and more competitive, it becomes even more important for you to have a strong set of job-search skills.

We recommend you spend some time polishing these skills:

- Cover letter writing
- Resume preparation
- Interviewing strategies

Another good resource for you is all or part of our Student's Guide to Job-Hunting on the Internet, which has information and resources related to a number of the key issues discussed in this article.

Find/Track Down Internship Sources

Okay. If you've gotten this far, it's now time to find that ideal internship that perfectly fits all your goals and needs. So, where do you find internships? Try these resources:

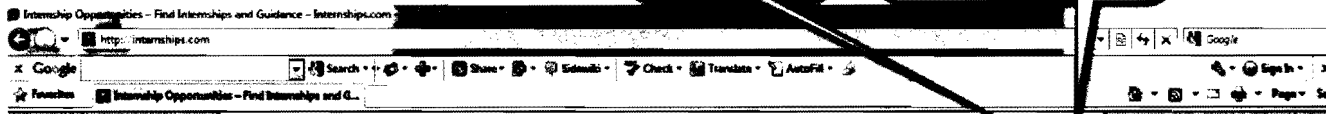
- *Career Services Office.* Just about all career services offices have a list of internship programs, important application dates, and other sources of internship information. This office is a great place to start your search. Some offices even have a special internship coordinator.
- *Major/Minor Department.* Major-specific internship programs are frequently maintained by the department office. One or more faculty members may specifically handle internships, so make sure you investigate these sources.
- *Networking Sources.* Tell everyone you know that you are looking for a specific type of Internship; these people should include your family, your friends (at school and at home), your family's friends, your professors, past employers, alumni, etc. Just as with job-hunting, networking may be one of your best sources for internships -- especially for competitive internships. Learn more about networking.
- *Internship and Career Fairs.* Most colleges (or college consortiums) offer at least one career fair during the academic year, and often one focuses specifically on internships. Even if you are looking for an internship in a different geographic location, go to the fairs and network with the recruiters. Many organizations have multiple offices -- and you may later change your mind. Read our article, The Ten Keys to Success at Job and Career Fairs.
- *Alumni Office.* Many (if not all) colleges now ask alumni if they would be willing to sponsor current college students as interns - and these alums are a great source for internships as well as a networking source for other internships. Take advantage of this resource! This information may either be found in the career services office or the alumni office.
- *Company Websites.* If you have already identified a specific set of companies where you would like to intern, you should consider going straight to the source by visiting the career section of each company's Website. Try our Quintessential Directory of Company Career Centers.
- *Internship Websites.* There are a few general internship Websites, as well as a number of industry-specific Websites. A good resource, but internship sites have lagged behind the development of job sites, so don't depend too much on these resources. Where do you find the best internship sites? Go to our Internship Resources for College Students.
- *Books and Periodicals.* There are some great print sources of internships. First, there are annual directories of internships, which you can find in our College Internship Books section. The other print source is trade magazines and newspapers published for your major or career field. If you are a member of a student organization, you may already have a subscription to at least one of them. Your college library should also have

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- www.spu.edu/cdc JobLink, site that searches all jobs and those targeting SPU students.
- www.spu.edu/internships SPU Career Development Center internship page.
- www.ielnet.org Washington Internship Institute (WII).
- www.monster.com Major online job board. Job postings, resume and job search tips.
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- www.hotjobs.com One of the major job boards with job postings.
- www.craigslist.org Free classified advertisements. Lots of local jobs.
- www.jobfox.com Like a dating service for jobs, it gives you an in depth assessment and then when jobs are posted it matches you on the dimensions of the job and your characteristics.

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- www.khake.com One of the most comprehensive sites available for career research.
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- www.wois.org Use site key bky437 to get started.
- www.jobhuntersbible.com Companion website to popular "What Color is Your Parachute". Contains a wealth of links for research.
- <http://online.onetcenter.org/link/summary/19-3032.00> O*net is the government standard job classification system. It is great for career research as it lists the knowledge, skills, and abilities for each job.
- <http://www.washjob.com/> Link to companies in Washington State by industry. The site marks the companies that are large employers.
- <http://www.vault.com/index.jsp> Excellent source of company and industry research.
- <http://www.bls.gov/oco/> Occupational outlook handbook is a government employment site with rich industry research.
- www.wetfeet.com
- <http://www.rileyguide.com/> One of the major portals to career and employment research. Full of information regarding career research, job hunting, picking a career, and employment agencies.
- www.spu.edu/jobsearch Networking, resume, job search assistance.
- http://www.lsorenson.net/job_hunt/index.htm Put together by Northwest University Research Librarian Lynette Sorenson. This site compiles job search boards, job and company research websites, self assessment tools, salary information, career tools, résumé and interview tips, and additional resources.
- www.quintcareers.com This site has a great amount of career information, and links to assessments and career tools.
- www.Glassdoor.com Employees anonymously post information about their company, salaries, and reviews. Get the inside scoop.

Professional Networking

- www.linkedin.com This is the premier professional networking site. It is also great for company research.
- <http://www.vistaprint.com/> Use this website for free and inexpensive business cards.

The Elevator Speech

How to develop and use it in your job search

If you've ever been on an elevator and between floors someone asked you the question, "What do you do?" even if your response was "I'm a student," you delivered an elevator speech.

The elevator speech is really important to a job search and should be developed, practiced and perfected, but not to the point of seeming rehearsed or canned. It should be second nature. Conversational yet concise is best but most importantly, short. Less than 30 seconds is all it takes. Not rushed, just short.

Think of it as a door opener or advertisement that draws in the listener by getting their attention and wanting to hear more. Communicate the value you could provide in a sentence or two and then try to open up the conversation. In the simplest sense, it may be just to communicate your availability and tell your story. You may need several variations depending on the situation such as for networking, interviewing, career fairs, or even casual social encounters.

Here are a few tips to help in creating yours:

1. Set the stage by introducing yourself. What is your career interest? Be a little creative and think about it from the listener's perspective. What might the audience want to hear about? Employers most likely want to hear about motivated people with relevant talents that can help them.
2. What is your key message? What special strength do you offer? How are you different? Tell your special story in a few words to set yourself apart and communicate your value. Give quantifiable information if possible, such as, "achieved a double major and graduated cum laude in three years." Facts make an impact.
3. Use emotion and avoid the yawn by making it energetic or even passionate. What makes you excited about your career? Action words can be helpful but use jargon or terminology sparingly if at all. Smiling when you speak can work wonders at helping to continue the conversation. Practice makes perfect.
4. Talk about how you could benefit an employer. If you are in Marketing, you may benefit an employer by helping to develop and sell innovative services. Culinary arts? Deliver delicious dishes that keep customers coming back. Teaching? How about you positively impact students and prepare them for academic success. The benefit statement is persuasive and powerful when well crafted.
5. Use a hook to make it memorable and extend the relationship. Good advice is to "Stroke the corporate ego" or in some way compliment the employer or interviewer. Genuine compliments are always well received as long as they are factual and not pandering. Handing out a business card or resume works wonders too. Try to exchange email addresses, phone numbers, links or offer up your social media profile if appropriate. Keep the door open.

Be prepared to explain, support or defend any part of your elevator speech. Think through questions or challenges that could arise and try to keep it open and conversational. Encourage interaction and discussion. Relax and have some questions ready to ask.

Here are a few basic examples:

- Hi, my name is Sarah Jones and I'm a recent grad of Optimal University with a bachelor degree in accounting seeking a position with a public accounting firm. I interned with Deloitte in the corporate tax department, already passed the first part of my CPA exam and have a real talent for communicating with clients. I work well with clients and deliver under pressure. I'd love to learn more about your company.
- Hello, I'm Jeff Snyder and a just got my degree in economics from Optimal University where I was also a pitcher on the baseball team. From class projects to sports, I've learned about how important teamwork is. I have a high energy level and strong analytical and technical skills that can help a company profit and grow. I'm in the process of searching for a position and a company where I can make a difference.
- My name is Mary Anderson and I'm seeking a position in customer service. For the past year I have worked in a technical support center, and have encountered just about every type of person or problem imaginable. I've realized that working with people and helping to solve their problems is what I'm best at and what I crave the most. I'm pursuing a certificate in IT at night to give me a broader technical skill set and to help improve my employer's service levels.
- Hi, my name is Tom Parker my classmates sometimes call me "The Excel Guru." I'll be receiving my degree in finance from Optimal University this fall. My passion is helping companies measure, make and save money using my finance and accounting expertise. I have a great foundation and a special skill for complex problem solving and am looking for an employer who can appreciate the uniqueness of what I have to offer. I'm eager to find someplace where I can be challenged every day.
- My name is Jane Smith and I'm graduating in May from Optimal University with a degree in nursing. My goal since childhood has been to be a nurse. Right now, I'm currently a part-time lab assistant at Optimal Hospital and I volunteer in their oncology unit as well. My eventual career goal is to work in pediatrics, preferably with cancer patients, but I'm open to other assignments as well, especially starting out. I'm ready to start!
- I'm Tim Warren and a recent honors grad from Optimal University. My major was Spanish, with a minor in Business Administration and I'm hoping to work in employee relations and human resources for an international company. I interned last year at a division of Optimal International and really enjoyed it. I'm multi-lingual, so ideally, I'd like to work overseas at some point or with a culturally diverse workforce here in the US. I can relocate anywhere for the right opportunity.
- I am Chelsea Morgan and my career goal is to help engineer affordable, renewable energy because I believe our environment is on a critical path. My environmental engineering degree from Optimal University and internship with Progress Energy has prepared me for the toughest of challenges in the field. Being on the forefront of change is exciting and rewarding. The opportunity of discussing needs at your environmentally conscious and progressive company would be greatly appreciated.

Also, here is a link to a virtual coaching session video that may be helpful:

https://www.optimalresume.com/OptimalVideo.html?typeVideo=upsell_coaching