

# How to Find an Internship

## WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

The best internships are supervised on-the-job learning experiences related to a career interest. Interns usually have a designated set of responsibilities or a job description and are actively supported by a supervisor or mentor. A solid internship provides the opportunity to learn about the field while allowing the intern to make a contribution to the organization's work. Internships may or may not be paid experiences.

## ASSESS YOUR INTERESTS & NEEDS

Some questions for you to consider as you begin your search process:

- When and where do you want your internship to take place?
- What type of work would you like to do?
- What do you hope to gain from the experience?
- What types of skills do you possess? What are you good at?
- What are your strengths, and how can they apply to an internship experience?
- What type of skills would you like to develop?
- What population, issue, or product would you like to work with?
- Do you need a paid internship or can you take part in an unpaid experience?
- How many hours a week do you want to work?
- If you're working during the academic year, which hours can you work?
- What modes of transportation do you have available to you?

## RESEARCH YOUR OPTIONS

Check both on-line and print resources. Ask fellow students, faculty, friends, and family. Generate a list of internship options that initially meet your needs, interests, and timeline. Then research each listed option in detail. Read everything available on-line, then contact the organization to ask further questions. See if you can contact a previous intern to assess your fit for the particular opportunity. A good place to start your research is with some of the directories and web sites available through the Career Center.

## PRINT RESOURCES

The Career Center Library houses over 25 **directories** listing internships of interest to students in every major. Stop by to check these resources out.

## WEB RESOURCES

- ▶ The HSU Career Center web site [humboldt.edu/~career/](http://humboldt.edu/~career/) lists internships in three places.
  1. "Springboard" is a searchable database that lists internships, paid and volunteer as well as other career-related experience. Just register and search.
  2. "Career Specific" links in the Resource section sorts internship links by major.
  3. Internship Peer Advisors (IPA's) website under "Search Links".
- ▶ Explore with a broad web search. Key-in a phrase such as "geography internship" on a meta search engine such as [metacrawler.com](http://metacrawler.com) which searches a combined pool of 7 engines, including Google and Yahoo! Search.
- ▶ General on-line internship directories are numerous and cover a wide range of interest areas. One available through the Career Center is Internship Series Online [internships-usa.com/](http://internships-usa.com/), a site providing information on over 2,800 organizations offering internships and summer jobs. Click on the link that says "The Internship Series On Line". At the prompt enter the following: user name is "interns" and password is "learn".

## **DEVELOP SKILLS TO PRESENT YOURSELF TO EMPLOYERS**

### **► NETWORKING**

Develop a tag line about yourself to use when contacting organizations for information. Decide ahead of time the information you plan to use in your introduction. Be sure to include your name and why you are making the contact. Also choose other information that may help orient the person you are approaching. Consider including school, year, major, area of interest, and previous experience.

Practice your tag line and be sure to develop a phone version as well as one for face-to-face.

### **► RESUME**

Taylor your resume and cover letter towards your internship interest area. Be sure to get feedback from the Career Center staff before you finalize your resume. Information on writing a resume and examples of internship resumes are available at the Career Center.

### **► INTERVIEWING**

Prepare answers to questions and practice your answers ahead of time as you may be asked for an interview in person or over the phone. Send thank you letters within 24 hours of the interview.

Always inquire about the hiring timeline so you can follow up. Lists of typical questions are available at the Career Center.

## **CONTACT / APPLY / FOLLOW UP**

If at all possible, make contact with or visit the organization before you even apply. This will allow you to see if the internship and employer is really a fit for you and will make it possible to better focus your resume and cover letter. Check for deadline dates early in your internship search. Deadlines can range from “ongoing”, where it is possible to obtain the internship immediately after you apply, up to 8 months before the start of the internship. Make sure your application is in well ahead of the deadline. Contact the employer to see if your materials were received. It’s okay to inquire about the status of your application. If you do not obtain the internship on your first try, always inquire to find out the reason why. This may provide valuable information for later applications.

## **DON'T LIMIT YOUR SEARCH TO WHAT YOU SEE IN PRINT OR ON-LINE**

Many organizations offer internship experience but do not post them on internship web sites or in directories. Explore organizations that interest you, check their websites for internship information or contact them to inquire about possibilities. You may be able to work with an organization to **create an internship** opportunity that matches your interest with their needs.

## **INTERNSHIP SEARCH ASSISTANCE**

If you would like assistance as you explore, select and apply for internships, let your Career Center help. From listening to your thoughts, brainstorming internship ideas, suggesting resources you hadn't thought of before, to resume, interviewing, networking, and application help, we want to support your search. Just ask! Appointments that fit your schedule are available with an **Internship Peer Advisor (IPA)** or a **Career Counselor** from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00. **Walk-in Hours** (15 minutes without an appointment) are available 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Call 826.3341 or stop by NHW 130.