



National Consortium on Leadership and Disability for Youth

## **INTERNSHIPS: THE ON-RAMP TO EMPLOYMENT**

**A Guide for Students with Disabilities to Getting  
and Making the Most of an Internship**

Andraea N. LaVant







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The National Consortium on Leadership and Disability/Youth (NCLD-Youth) is a youth-led resource, information, and training center run for and by youth and emerging leaders with developmental disabilities. The program is housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership alongside its sister center, The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability/Youth (NCWD-Youth), the primary author of *Paving the Road to Work: A Guide to Career Focused Mentoring for Youth with Disabilities*.

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## Introduction to Internships

**B**y choosing to use this guide, you are making a very important choice for your future. For young people with and without disabilities, internship involvement is a very important step toward getting an ideal job in your career field of choice. Participating in experiences like mentoring programs, job shadowing and internships are great ways to make you stand out among other job applicants. Deciding to seek out and complete an internship will help you as you decide what type of career you want, do better in school and ultimately allow you to make more money when you get out into the working world!

### What is an Internship?

An *Internship* is an opportunity to expand and connect classroom learning in a full-time/part-time supervised, work-based setting. Internships are based in experiential learning, meaning they provide opportunities to learn by actually completing specific tasks. There is generally an emphasis on reflection, or thoroughly thinking through what has been gained and learned. Internships are intended to provide the intern with hands-on professional experience in an occupational career field he or she is considering.

Many employers see job applicants who have internship experience as a cut above the rest because they have demonstrated that they have a desire to work and grow. The internship experience can also serve to get your foot in the door with prospective employers who would like to have you do a trial run before they hire you permanently. It also provides the opportunity to grow your network or list of contacts by meeting employers who may be able to help you find permanent employment when you leave school and are ready for the workforce.

Even research has proven that participation in internships leads to permanent employment. One study found that regardless of the type or severity of the disability or need for accommodations, approximately 77 percent of young people who finished a standard work-based internship program in high school were offered jobs at the places where they completed their internships. The companies had actually made no prior commitment to keep the interns after the internship was over, but chose to anyway. At the college level, results are quite similar. The National Association of Colleges and Employers released a *2009 Student Survey* that found that of the 2009 graduates who had internships, 23 percent had successfully landed a job by graduation. Meanwhile, only 14 percent of the other students without internships had found jobs. In other words, of the students who had jobs by graduation, more than 2/3 had had internships.



Other benefits associated with internships, specifically for young people with disabilities, include:

- Learning skills, including computer skills, directly related to jobs in your career field of interest;
- Gaining self-confidence;
- Earning a paycheck and learning how to manage the money you've earned;
- Gaining an understanding of the benefits of work and how individual effort contributes to a common goal;
- Gaining an understanding of how what you are learning in school is relevant to the world of work;
- Learning to use public transportation or to travel independently;
- Developing a resume and obtaining recommendations;
- Learning about the importance of punctuality, appropriate attire and professional behavior;
- Establishing relationships that may lead to other internships and permanent or future employment;
- Meeting people who are successful in your career field of interest;
- Learning accommodation needs in the work world;
- Connecting with employees who have disabilities;
- Obtaining credit towards graduation requirements as appropriate.

There is really no downside to participating in an internship and adding it to your list of experience and qualifications as you prepare for a career. For a student with a disability, not only are there opportunities to gain the benefits already mentioned, but also internships provide an opportunity for an employer to realize the benefits of hiring a person with a disability. This includes seeing how a person with a disability can work independently and as a part of a team.

Ultimately, the goal of an internship is education, for both the intern and the employer. An internship is not free or cheap labor, nor is it a job. Although interns are rarely paid, if you view it from the perspective that you are making an investment in your future, you will be ready to take full advantage of this career prep experience.

All that being said, the purpose of this guide is not just to tell you the basics on how to get an internship. In fact, the main purpose is to equip you with the tools you need to have a competitive advantage over others who also recognize the benefit that participating in an internship provides before going into the world of work.

# Chapter 1 Investigating Your Options

## *Exploring Your Interests and Experience*

**W**hile deciding to pursue an internship is a big step, figuring out what type of internship you'd like to complete may be an even bigger one. This means taking time to figure out what your interests, skills and knowledge bases are. It also means really thinking through the type of career you want when you finish school. For some, especially those finishing college or other programs after high school, you may have a very good idea of the type of job you want. For others, thinking about an internship might also be your first time thinking about employment. Either way, seeking out an internship is the ideal time to visualize and plan for your future.



The good thing about an internship is that you have the opportunity to figure out the kind of work you do and don't enjoy without making a permanent commitment; however, you will want to make every effort to make sure that you look for an internship that will enable you to use what you know and are good at, and will enable you to build upon those skills and abilities.

Before thinking more in-depth about the career you desire, simply think through the interests, skills, goals and experiences you have that will help you get an internship. Activity 1A, "Examining My Interests," in the Resources section at the end of this chapter has a list of thoughts for you to consider to make the process a bit easier. After completing this, you will have a clearer idea not only of what type of internship to go after, but you will also have a good list of skills and experiences to help you create your resume and make yourself marketable to potential internship coordinators or employers.

## *Examining Career Opportunities*

As mentioned, another step in figuring out what internship you want to complete is considering the actual career field you would like to enter. This can be a bit tricky because new careers are emerging every day. However, getting a general idea of the type of career you want to pursue will help you narrow down your options and help you think about the path you should take (including education) to get into that field.

Activity 1B, "Written Interest Assessment: Coding Interests," in the Resources section of the chapter will help you consider how your interests line up with different careers. It will also give you some ideas of potential careers that may be a good fit for you.

After thinking about the career you'd like, you should think more in-depth about the career opportunities available to you, specifically if you plan on living in a specific area. For example, as much as you might desire to be a marine biologist, if you do not live or do not plan on living near the ocean, this is probably not a good career option for you.

From here you must determine what skills, including those you already have, are necessary for the job. This includes figuring out what technical/computer skills, analytical/research skills, leadership skills, etc. will be required. It is highly unlikely that you will have every skill needed to enter the career you want at this point in your journey, so don't fret. Figuring this out now will help you find out areas where you need growth so that you can think about the ways that you might gain these skills. This might include taking classes specific to the skill area or finding someone that is already strong in that area and asking them to mentor you. As mentioned, much of the purpose of an internship is to develop the skills necessary for you to get the job you want.

You will also need to figure out what type or level of education is typically required for people that work in your field of interest. For example, while many employers do require some level of college education for computer specialist positions, often this may not mean a bachelor's degree from a four-year college. Instead, this could mean receiving an associate's degree from a technical college, along with any certifications necessary to complete specific tasks (i.e. the A+ certification that certifies you as a computer technician and covers topics like hardware, operating systems, and networks). On the other hand, if you plan on pursuing a career in law, medicine, or even in higher level management or education, just to name a few, you should most likely plan on getting a graduate degree after your bachelor's. When looking for in-depth information about a specific career field, visit the [O\\*Net Resource Center](#), a website sponsored by the US Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration. The site is a great place to learn about career fields, specific skills required for them, and even has assessments you can take to figure out what career best fits your interests.

**You will also need to figure out what type or level of education is typically required for people that work in your field of interest.**

Although money should not be the sole factor you consider when pondering over the type of career you would like to pursue, it should be one of the factors you think about alongside the educational requirements, skill set needed, and your overall passion for the kind of work involved. Consider the lifestyle you desire or are most familiar with. Would you be willing to forego luxuries for a career in a field that, in comparison to others, doesn't pay as much? Then again, as you consider salary, also consider the time commitment. While a surgeon that is generally on-call may make a significantly large salary, a position like this requires many years of schooling and even after finishing often means working long days with little time off. Those in teaching careers, however, generally get to take advantage of their students' school schedules, including holiday and summer breaks.

Finally, when thinking about your career options, which will ultimately help you decide the type of internship to go after, you should consider the overall work environment that you may be working in. Are you the type of person that prefers to work in an office, outdoors, or a bit of both? Do you like to work alone or as a team? Would you like to travel for your job, or would

you rather stick with the area you live in when it comes to your work? Do you prefer a 9-to-5 work environment, where everyone comes in at the same time each morning and leaves in the same manner each afternoon, or do you prefer a flexible work schedule that allows you to work within a time frame that you select as long as you complete your tasks? Do you enjoy a more fast-paced environment where there are a variety of roles and responsibilities and always many projects to tackle? Or, would you rather work in an office where you have assigned daily duties that remain fairly consistent? Of course there are many variations when it comes to work environments, and often they may change simply based on the employer and not the career field itself. Again, these are just more things to think about when planning for your career.

### **Getting Support**

A final important aspect of figuring out the type of internship you want to look for is figuring out who and what can help you learn more about your career field of interest and maybe even help you get the internship you desire. First, consider the immediate network of people that you come into contact with frequently. Your family members and friends can generally be of help in more ways than one. Not only can they support you by helping you find information regarding the field you're interested in, but they might also be able to help you look for and identify specific internship opportunities. Sometimes family and friends may even be working in that same field or have a close connection with someone who does, and can serve as your direct point of contact for getting your foot in the door for an internship.

After consulting with those closest to you (your inner circle), share your interest in getting an internship with others that you encounter who might be able to point you in the direction of the ideal internship. This group would include those at your school, place of work, and volunteer/extracurricular activities. In thinking about your volunteer activities, you should also consider any student/professional organizations that you are a part of. The "Support Network" sheet in the Resources section at the end of the chapter will help you think more strategically about who these people are and how to address them.

Finally, consider getting information from people and places whose specific role is to help you with your employment needs. These include One-Stop Career Centers, university career centers, and internship/career fairs. Although these places are typically used by people coming to ask about permanent employment, they're great places to go to find out who you can consult about your particular career field of interest. Often they have listings of internships along with their employment lists.

**One-Stop Career Centers** provide job seekers with a full range of assistance under one roof. One-Stops operate in all 50 states offer training referrals, career counseling, job listings, and similar employment-related services. To find the One-Stop in your area, visit [careeronestop.org](http://careeronestop.org).

## Conducting Informational Interviews

One of the most beneficial ways to learn more about a particular field and learn about potential internship opportunities is by leading informational interviews. The term itself was created by career counselor and author Richard Bolles and is a very simple concept, as it just involves talking to people about their jobs and asking them for advice. It is also a good way to find out more about a particular organization in which you may be interested. An interview should include the person who wants to learn about a career (that means you) and a person working in that field. Typically they last between 20-30 minutes.

A key aspect to keep in mind about the informational interview is that the purpose is **NOT TO GET A JOB!**

When considering who you'd like to interview, consider contacting the same network that you have already tapped into when you first explored your career options. This may include family, friends, teachers, career centers and school alumni associations. In addition, consider researching professional associations that are affiliated with your field of interest. For example, if you are interested in working for a non-profit organization to help raise funds, consider contacting the Association for Fundraising Professionals. To find a listing of associations that may be of interest to you, visit websites such as [www.asaecenter.org](http://www.asaecenter.org), the site for the American Society of

Association Executives, which has a membership of 20,000 association professionals. Find out whether they have membership directories or other means of contacting association members in your area that you might conduct an interview with. Ultimately, you could also just call an organization you're interested in and ask to speak with the person in the department that you'd like to learn more about. Generally you should try to meet with a person who has the same level of responsibility that you would have if you entered the field. This means that if you would start out in an entry-level position such as a program assistant or coordinator, you should request an interview with someone at this level.

A key aspect to keep in mind about the informational interview is that the purpose is **NOT TO GET A JOB!** This is the same message that you should relay to the person you would like to interview when you request the meeting. Generally people have no problem sharing information about their careers and experiences when they know that the person seeking their advice simply wants to learn. There are three main ways to ask for an informational interview: through a mutual contact, by letter, or by phone.

**Mutual contact** – As mentioned, starting by asking your contacts who they know in your field of interest is a great way to initiate an informational interview. This may mean asking them to make the initial request for the interview, or you could ask your contact if you can mention his or her name when you make the request for the interview.

**Letter** – Sending a letter is another way to request an informational interview. Interviewees often prefer letters because it allows them to review their schedules before committing to a particular meeting time. A letter should include who you are, the purpose of the meeting, and how long you expect the meeting to take. Also be sure to mention any mutual contacts you may have, and that you will follow up with a call within a few days to set up a time to meet. (See Sample 1D in the resources at the end of the chapter for a sample letter). When you send the letter, **DO NOT** enclose a resume. Remember, you are not applying for a job.

**Phone** – You may also choose to set up an informational interview by directly calling a potential interviewee. A phone call like this should include everything that you would put into a letter, including providing an introduction, sharing how you received his or her information, and giving your purpose for calling.

Just as can happen with a request for a job interview, there is a possibility that you will speak with someone who is not willing to participate in an informational interview with you. If the opportunity presents itself, try asking whether it would be more convenient to hold a phone interview. If the person still opposes, ask if they could recommend another person that you could speak with about the occupation. If none of these tactics yield positive results, kindly thank them for speaking with you and move on to your next potential interviewee.

Before heading to your interview, you should do some general research about the company to familiarize yourself with its work. You should also develop a list of questions that you would like to ask the interviewee that will help you learn more about his or her occupation. It is also important to ask questions that address any assumptions you have about the field to make sure they are accurate. For example, if you're going to speak with an attorney, speak with them about any expectations of long days, along with challenges in preparing for law school exams like the LSAT. Your questions should ask about job tasks, working conditions and specific steps that you should take to prepare for a career in that field. Check out the sample informational interview questions included in the Resources section at the end of the chapter.

When it's time for the interview, remember to dress to impress.

When it's time for the interview, remember to dress to impress. Although the interview is not as formal as an actual job interview, it still presents the opportunity to make a good first impression. A good rule of thumb is to wear something that you would wear on a day at work when you have some important meetings to attend (not too formal, but no jeans). Also bring a notepad and pen so that you can take notes. Overall, it is important to show your interest during the interview. This will make the person you're interviewing more willing to share as much as they can.

Be sure to watch the time and politely bring it to a close unless the interviewee feels otherwise. At the close of the interview, end by expressing your gratitude to the person for taking time out to speak with you. Then be sure to ask the following two questions: Can you suggest other people that I could speak to? May I mention your name when I speak to them? After, do your best to send a follow-up note or letter to thank the person once again.

Finally, it is important to process and reflect upon the information you learned at the interview. What would you like about the career? What would you dislike? Do you like the overall work environments? How can you apply the advice you received as you prepare to look for an internship or begin to work? Would you be happy in this field? With all of your thoughts, make sure you don't base your opinions on one interview. Conduct more than one to make sure that the information you receive is consistent across the field and not unique to one situation. The "Informational Interview Assessment" in the Resources section at the end of this chapter has a form you can use to assess the outcome(s) of your informational interviews.

"Conducting Interviews" section adapted from [www.bls.gov/opub/oog/2002/summer/art03.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/opub/oog/2002/summer/art03.pdf)

# Chapter 1

## Resources



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## Activity 1A Examining My Interests

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### Interests, Skills, and Abilities

In my free time, I like to:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I am very good at:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I would like to be better at (or learn to):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

---

### Extracurricular and Work Experience

Some jobs I have already held include (paid, unpaid and/or volunteer):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

While participating in specific volunteer/extracurricular experiences, I participated in (teams, activities and/or projects):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Career Goals or Areas of Interest**

Some jobs and careers I would like to learn more about include:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

For each job list any training, education or accommodations you may need to consider to achieve your goal.

**Goals and a Plan of Action/Study**

<u>Goal: "I want to learn, do and/or get..."</u>	<u>Next Steps: "So, I need to..."</u>	<u>Due Date: "I will do this by..."</u>	<u>Status: "So far, I have..."</u>

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## Activity 1B Written Interest Assessment: Coding Interests

### Instructions

- In the table on the following page, circle any activities that are of interest to you.
- Count the number of circled activities in each column (identified by category such as R-Realistic) and write the totals in the spaces provided.
- If there are not two main areas that interest you, ask yourself if the non-chosen activities are “interesting” or “very interesting.”
- Keep going until the top two areas of interest have been identified.
- Compare your code to the definitions on the following page.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>A</b>	Fix mechanical things	Work on a scientific project	Sketch, draw or paint	Work as a volunteer for a charity	Operate my own business	Operate office machines
<b>B</b>	Take a Woodworking class	Study the stars through a telescope	Play in a band or orchestra	Help others with their personal problems	Serve as an officer of a group	Computer business figures
<b>C</b>	Take an Auto Mechanics class	Solve a mathematical problem	Create photographs	Work as a speech therapist	Supervise the work of others	Take an Accounting class
<b>D</b>	Work outdoors	Investigate a crime scene	Take an Art class	Work as a nurse	Lead a group to accomplish a goal	Take a Commercial Math class
<b>E</b>	Operate motorized machines or equipment	Read scientific books or magazines	Act in a play	Teach children	Read business magazines or articles	Work in an office
<b>F</b>	Build things	Do a lot of thinking	Design fashions	Teach or train others	Meet important people	Write a business letter
<b>G</b>	Work alone	Use a microscope	Design interiors	Lead a group discussion	Give a talk or speech	Use a computer
<b>H</b>	Tend/Train animals	Do complicated calculations	Read fiction, plays or poetry	Play a team sport	Sell things	Keep accurate records
<b>I</b>	Pitch a tent	Understand physics laws and theories	Attend concerts, the theater, or an art exhibit	Help others resolve a dispute	Promote or spread an idea	Be responsible for details

	1	2	3	4	5	6
J	Solve mechanical puzzles	Interpret formulas	Work on crafts	Participate in a meeting	Win a leadership or sales award	Type or use word processing software
K	Plant a garden	Learn about a new subject area	Work according to your own rules	Are good with words and talking to people	Take on a lot of responsibility	Work with numbers
L	Read a blueprint	Use computers	Use your imagination to do something original	Work with young people	Participate in a political campaign	Be very well organized
M	Play a sport	Perform lab experiments	Write stories and poetry	Plan and supervise an activity	Convince people to do things your way	Set up a system for doing something and stick to it
	R _____	I _____	A _____	S _____	E _____	C _____

## Activity 1B (cont.) Coding Interests Explanations

The two columns with the most items circled will indicate what your codes are.

R_____	I_____	A_____	S_____	E_____	C_____
Realistic	Investigative	Artistic	Social	Enterprising	Conventional

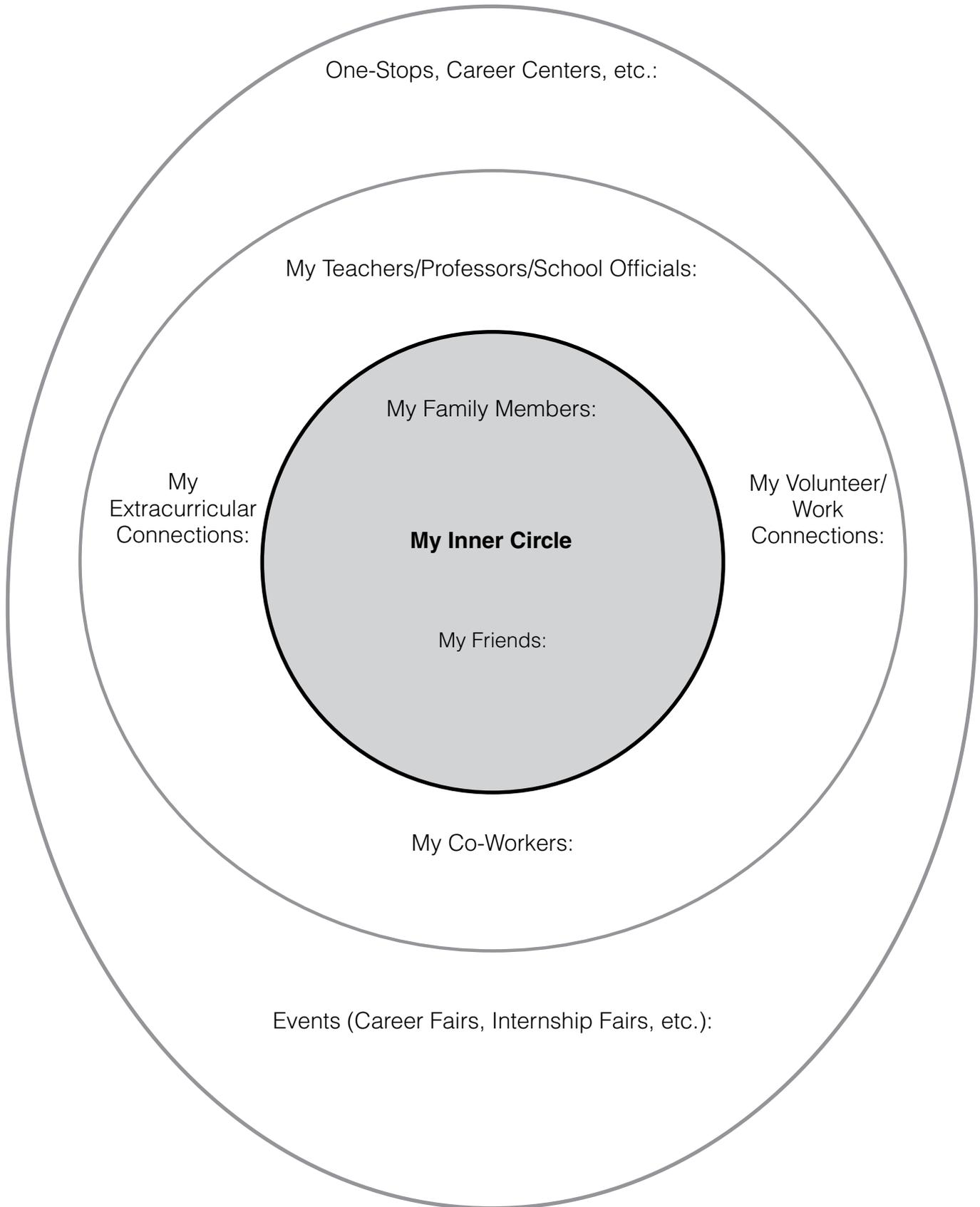
According to the RIASEC system, we all have a mixture of interests with one or two types usually dominating. Use the table below to find out more about your codes and some sample occupations that may interest you. Remember, these are just a few of the occupations for each type – there are many more in the O\*Net™ Career Exploration Tools Interest Profiler <http://www.onetcenter.org/tools.html>.

RIASEC Type	Description	Sample Occupations
<b>R</b> <b>Realistic</b>	Mechanical and athletic abilities; like working outdoors with tools and objects; prefer dealing with things rather than people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carpenter</li> <li>• Truck operator</li> <li>• X-Ray Technician</li> </ul>
<b>I</b> <b>Investigative</b>	Math and science abilities; like working alone and solving complex problems; like dealing with ideas rather than people or things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chemist</li> <li>• Microbiologist</li> </ul>
<b>A</b> <b>Artistic</b>	Artistic ability and imagination; enjoy creating original work; like dealing with ideas rather than things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Musician</li> <li>• Interior Designer</li> <li>• Actor</li> </ul>
<b>S</b> <b>Social</b>	Social skills; interested in social relationships and helping others solve problems; like dealing with people rather than things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselor</li> <li>• Clergy Member</li> <li>• Elementary Teacher</li> </ul>
<b>E</b> <b>Enterprising</b>	Leadership and speaking abilities; like to be influential; interested in politics and business; like to deal with people and ideas, not things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lawyer</li> <li>• Retail Store Manager</li> <li>• Financial Advisor</li> </ul>
<b>C</b> <b>Conventional</b>	Clerical and math ability; prefer working indoors and organizing things; like to deal with words and numbers rather than people and ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production Editor</li> <li>• Bookkeeper</li> <li>• Data Processor</li> </ul>

**Source:**

America’s Career Resource Network. (n.d.). *Career Decision Making Tool*. Retrieved October 20, 2009 from <http://cte.ed.gov/acrn/decision.htm>

## Activity 1C Building Your Support Network



## Sample 1D Informational Interview Request Letter

March 22, 20XX

Ms. Glenda Lane  
Revolutionary Marketing, Inc.  
7432 Windside Lane  
Portland, OR 97201

Dear Ms. Lane:

I am a student at Oregon State University, beginning the first semester of my senior year. I am a marketing major and have become very interested in the online marketing industry since taking an internet marketing course last year. Your firm has an outstanding reputation in this field.

As I prepare to graduate in the spring, I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you briefly to discuss your firm's work in the online marketing arena. I am especially interested in your views regarding email marketing and effective web design and development strategies. Any further insights you have would be greatly appreciated.

I will contact your office the week of April 5 to set up a mutually convenient time for this informational meeting. The meeting should take no more than 30 minutes.

Sincerely,

Devin Thompson

## Sample 1E Informational Interview Questions

The questions below can be used during an Internet search, an informational interview or a job-shadowing visit. It is not necessary to use all of these questions. Consider the criteria that's most important to you in a job/career and adapt these questions to get the information you need.

- On a typical day in this position, what do you do?
- What training or education is required for this type of work?
- What personal qualities or abilities are important to be successful in this job?
- What part of this job would you find most satisfying and most challenging?
- How do you get this job?
- What opportunities for advancement are there in this field?
- What entry-level jobs are best for learning as much as possible?
- What is the salary range for various positions in this field?
- How will jobs in this field be changing in the future?
- Is there a demand for people in this occupation?
- What types of training do companies offer persons entering this field?
- What are the basic prerequisites for different jobs/positions in this field?
- Which professional journals and organizations would help me learn more about this field?
- How does the experience I've had apply to my entering this field?
- What are the problems in working in this field?
- With my education, skills and experience, what other fields or jobs should I research before making a final decision?
- How does my resume correlate to this career? Are there any gaps or problem areas? What can I do to improve my resume for this career?
- Whom should I talk to in order to learn more about this career?

**Source:**

Adapted from Wisconsin Jobs Center. (2002). *Informational Interviewing*. Retrieved October 20, 2009 from <http://www.wisconsinjobcenter.org/publications/9407/9407.pdf>

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## Activity 1F Informational Interview Assessment

Use the following questions to figure out how your informational interview can help you determine the type of internship you'd like to pursue. You may want to copy this form so that you can use it for each interview you do.

The best thing about this career/position is:

The worst thing about this career/position is:

The most interesting thing about this career/position is:

One thing I didn't know about this career/position is:

I would like to know more about the following as relates to this career/position:

I could/could not see myself in this career/position because:



There are also internships that may be necessary for completion of your college degree, which may require assistance from your university to both find the internship and ensure you receive appropriate college credit.

## Chapter 2 **Gathering the Pieces**

### *Deciding on the best type of internship*

**I**nternships come in various forms and some even offer opportunities to be paid for the work you complete. Some are just for one person to come and complete a predetermined set of tasks. Other internships are run through programs like the American Association of People with Disabilities Congressional Internship Program, which places college students with disabilities into congressional offices in Washington, DC during the summer months. (See “Ch. 10 – Resources and Publications” for links to the American Association of People with Disabilities internship programs and other internship programs designed specifically for people with disabilities.). Although employers will typically have a set of goals and tasks that they would like you to complete, the ideal internship is one that will allow you to create your own goals and work with your supervisor to see how these can be incorporated into your daily activities.

There are also internships that may be necessary for completion of your college degree, which may require assistance from your university to both find the internship and ensure you receive appropriate college credit. You should explore all of these opportunities with your career counselor, teachers and family members to gain a full understanding of what might be best for you before deciding what type of internship you should pursue. You may also find that you can benefit from more than one of these options.

Throughout your school experience, both in high school and in college, you may hear a variety of terms used in reference to internships. These terms are based on the type of experience you are looking for. The following are the six most common types of internships. Use these descriptions to help with your search and help you decide which type would be best for you. Then, talk over your thoughts with your support network:

**Cooperative Education (co-op)** – A co-op is a three-way partnership between a student, an employer and a teacher/professor or college. It allows the student to gain work experience related to their area of academic study for credit. For example, if you are interested in studying animal behavior or zoology, a co-op might mean getting a part-time job at your local zoo. Many colleges support co-ops by partnering with employers to provide opportunities related to specific careers.

**Field Experience** – Also called fieldwork, this type of internship is typically for students pursuing careers in science or sociology. The goal of these experiences is to develop research skills by observing, recording, mapping and interpreting data. The actual research portion may be limited to one subject, such as male penguin behavior or cross-cultural interaction, or it may mean examining a variety of different topics.

Quite often fieldwork is said to be one of the best ways to apply the knowledge and theories that you learn in the classroom to a practical test. The best fieldwork experiences bring together supervision and education (lecture, note-taking and observation by the teacher/professor) with independent research practice (creating a research method, collecting and recording data, and drawing conclusions that prove the hypothesis is either correct or incorrect).

**Practicum** – A practicum is another internship model that provides the opportunity for students to apply their academic experience to a real-world project. Students work in teams or individually under the supervision of both an employer and a school advisor.

A sample practicum might assign a group of business students to a semester-long project in an accounting firm where they are supervised by a faculty member.

Setting up a practicum usually requires meeting with your academic advisor or department chairperson to discuss options of places that would meet your personal, educational and career goals.

Setting up a practicum usually requires meeting with your academic advisor or department chairperson.

**Service Learning** – In relation to an internship, service learning allows you to work on organized community service project(s). This type of experience might be organized by your school or college, or through a specific service program or non-profit organization.

When organized alongside classroom curriculum, generally a service learning internship includes an outline of goals and objectives for your term of service, performing the actual service work, and presenting conclusions/reflections based on analysis of your experiences.

Potential service learning projects could include assisting with a local library's literacy program, working at a shelter for battered women, restructuring a community playground or running a tutoring program at a local elementary school.

**Externship** – Externships are unique because they are usually very short-term assignments. Generally students spend around one to three weeks observing and working with professionals in their career fields of interest. This provides an opportunity for students to experience a typical day on the job and observe the work environment and demands of the career.

Externships are most common in legal and medical professions. Pre-med students typically complete externships, which involve shadowing a medical doctor in places like an emergency room or very busy clinic. First-year law students often complete legal externships, which are often brief clerkships wherein they handle documents and file petitions.

**Apprenticeship** – Apprenticeships are generally offered for trades that take quite a bit of skill. These include culinary arts, graphic art, clothing design, electronics technology, etc. Apprenticeships provide both practical experience and in-school training. They are paid and wages increase as the apprentice gains experience. Apprenticeships can last anywhere from one to five years. (WetFeet, n.d.)

### ***Getting outside of your comfort zone***

Deciding to participate in an internship program is a big step and an important decision in gaining an advantage when entering the world of work. It can also be a major step outside of your comfort zone and can vary greatly from the school environment. Many students use their internship as their first professional work experience, and often the new and fast-paced work environment is something they're not used to.

Getting outside of your comfort zone can be a great feeling. It generally proves that you are ready for work and have the desire to gain the skills to be a self-sufficient individual. It can also be a bit intimidating because you may be unsure of what lies around the corner or if you will be happy where you go to work. You might feel nervous about working with people you don't know and being trusted with important responsibilities. However, remember that these feelings are normal, and that over time, these experiences will strengthen your character and make you better prepared for the world of work in the future. Occasionally you will have to put yourself in a situation that you are not used to and take a risk so that you can prove your own ability to yourself.



### ***Building a proper resume***

When building a great resume, it is important to remember to make sure that it is both relatable to the internship that you are applying for and outcome-oriented based on what you have been able to accomplish thus far in your life. If you are applying for an internship wherein you will be working as an assistant to an accountant, on your resume make sure to include any bookkeeping or class work that is relatable to such a position. It is always helpful to show that the skills you already have match well with the responsibilities of the internship you're applying for. Do not discredit any of your experiences, even if they weren't specifically gained at a job that you've already had. If you have worked on a project, completed class work or even served as a volunteer with an organization that would be relevant to the internship area, include this information on your resume.

Depending on the scope of your experience, there are two types of resumes that you should consider. A chronological, or "experience-based" resume, outlines what you've done based on the places where you've worked and the length of time you were there. A functional, or "skills-based" resume, focuses on your overall skills that you have developed over the years, including leadership experiences, special projects and positive personality traits. A functional resume is generally a better choice for those who don't have as much work experience, or who haven't been able to stay at jobs long due to school and other schedule commitments.

## ***Chronological vs. Functional Resumes (Rhodes, 2007)***

### **Chronological/“Experience” resumes may include**

- name, address, phone/fax numbers, e-mail address;
- career objective;
- education (dates, institution, city, degree/major specialties);
- employment (dates, company, city, job title, details of position, description of accomplishments—include internships and volunteer jobs!);
- summary of qualifications;
- languages;
- computer skills (programs you can operate);
- awards received;
- interests/activities; and
- references (supervisors and teachers).

### **Functional/“Skills” resumes may include**

- name, address, phone/fax numbers, e-mail address;
- career objective;
- functional skills summary (includes skills from school, positive personality traits, grades if good, special projects, etc.);
- volunteer experience (dates, locations, city, details of position, description of accomplishments—include in-school jobs!);
- languages;
- computer skills (programs you can operate);
- awards received;
- interests/activities; and
- references (from supervisors and teachers).

No matter which resume style you choose, it is important to make sure that your resume is clear, concise and leaves no question about the work and accomplishments that you have already made. Another important part of your resume should be any volunteer work or awards/recognition that you have received. Employers want to bring well-rounded individuals onto their team and you should show on your resume that you are a good fit. Remember, before you can even get into an interview to “sell” yourself and explain to an employer why you are the best person for the internship, the employer must first believe that this is a possibility simply by reading your resume. Examples of both chronological and functional resumes can be found in the Resources section of this chapter.

**No matter which resume style you choose, it is important to make sure that your resume is clear, concise and leaves no question about the work and accomplishments that you have already made.**

## *Using your career services and disability support offices*

Your university career services office is an excellent tool that you should use to gain skills toward finding employment. These centers were created to assist you in improving your interviewing skills, building your resume and finding internships, among providing many other tools and resources. They also have many community connections and can assist you in getting in contact with an employer early so that you can start working toward your internship.

Your disability support office is also a great tool for gaining a deeper understanding of your disability and what effect it may have in the employment setting. As a student, you are most likely accustomed to the types of accommodations that are used in the classroom; however, those same accommodations are not always available in the workforce. Generally, there are parallel accommodations that can be made. Your disability support office can also assist you in preparing for the time(s) when you will need to let your employer know about your disability. They also may have employment or internship listings that may be interest to you.



## *Finding an internship*

The process of finding the right internship can seem like a job within itself, but there are many sources that you can use to find the right internship for you. It can often be time consuming to look for various resources, find contacts, customize resumes and cover letters, and participate in interviews. Here are a few places and people to consider when searching for an internship:

- 1. Career services and disability support offices** – Both of these offices at your school are great places to begin because they typically have career counselors, listservs and employer connections to assist students in finding internships.
- 2. Major/minor departments and professors**– Lists of internships specific to a particular area of interest are often maintained by university departments. Specific faculty members may be responsible for internships, so be sure to check with them. In addition, many employers seek out professors for recommendations of possible interns.
- 3. Alumni office** – Often alumni will inform their alma maters of internship opportunities in their networks. Some colleges even ask their alumni to sponsor an intern, which is a great way to be introduced to an organization.
- 4. Internship/Career Fairs** – Most colleges, and even cities as a whole, sponsor career fairs at least once a year. These fairs bring recruiters and potential employers together into one setting to provide information about available positions and their organization as a whole. Even if you aren't ready to begin an internship at the time of the event, it is an ideal opportunity to familiarize yourself with specific organizations that you can later apply to for an internship. To find out about internship/career fairs in your area, visit your local college/universities' websites, or visit [www.nationalcareerfairs.com](http://www.nationalcareerfairs.com) and [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com),

5. **Member organizations/associations** – You should also look into organizations of which you are a member or associations that are a part of the industry that you would like an internship in. As mentioned in Chapter 1, a great place to look for associations is [www.asaecenter.org](http://www.asaecenter.org).
6. To find out more about other member organizations, utilize a search engine and type in key words relevant to your field of interest along with the phrase “membership.” For example, a person interested in accounting could go to a search engine like Google and type in “accounting + membership.” Such a search yields information about the American Accounting Association and a host of other groups.
7. **The Internet/company web pages** – The Internet will also open many doors to possible internships, just as it will when you are searching for full-time jobs. Many companies post their internship information on their websites and have them listed on job search pages.
8. **Government Internship websites** – Interning with the federal government is a great way to gain experience and find out more about the inner workings of the government. There are variety of government funded programs and departments that bring on interns throughout the year. The Federal Internship Directory is a great place to begin looking for government internships. It can be accessed by visiting <http://www.makingthedifference.org/federalinternships/directory>. A few other places to look include [www.students.gov](http://www.students.gov), [www.usajobs.com](http://www.usajobs.com), [www.dcjobsource.com/fedinterns.html](http://www.dcjobsource.com/fedinterns.html), [www.careers.state.gov/internships/](http://www.careers.state.gov/internships/), and [www.whitehouse.gov/about/internships](http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/internships).



## ***Writing a cover letter***

After you have decided where you would like to apply for an internship, you then must write a cover letter relevant to the position to which you're applying. Cover letters are important because they serve as your opportunity to tell the potential employer why you're applying for the internship and to sell yourself and your qualifications beyond the resume. You should not create a generic cover letter that you use for each internship you apply for. Instead, you should tailor each letter for the position. Although it may seem time consuming, writing a specialized letter will not only demonstrate your writing ability, but will highlight your relevant experience that will be most beneficial to the organization. The cover letter is the time to highlight your uniqueness, and even to explain things that your resume can't (Hansel & Hansel, n.d.). For example, if you had a gap in employment or it has taken you a bit longer than normal to complete your degree, the cover letter is the time to explain this, but in a positive manner. In general, the purpose of a cover letter is to make a potential employer or internship coordinator want to know more about you and invite you to complete an interview. Cover letter examples can be found in the "Resources" section of this chapter.

### ***In general, use the following format for writing your cover letter:***

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name:

**Opening paragraph:** State why you are writing; how you learned of the organization or position, and basic information about yourself.

**2nd paragraph:** Tell why you are interested in the employer or type of work the employer does (Simply stating that you are interested does not tell why, and can sound like a generic letter). Demonstrate that you know enough about the employer or position to relate your background to the employer or position. Mention specific qualifications which make you a good fit for the employer's needs. (Focus on what you can do for the employer, not what the employer can do for you.) This is an opportunity to explain in more detail relevant items in your resume. Refer to the fact that your resume is enclosed. Mention other enclosures if such are required to apply for a position.

**3rd paragraph:** Indicate that you would like the opportunity to interview for a position or to talk with the employer to learn more about their opportunities or hiring plans. State what you will do to follow up, such as telephone the employer within two weeks. If you will be in the employer's location and could offer to schedule a visit, indicate when. State that you would be glad to provide the employer with any additional information needed. Thank the employer for her/his consideration.

(Virginia Tech Career Services, 2010)

### *The “cold” resume and cover letter*

It may seem that the most practical way to apply for or get an internship would be to submit a resume and cover letter based on a position announcement that you’ve either seen or heard about. In some circumstances, companies and organizations choose not to advertise their internship positions. This may be because they prefer to bring in interns that already have an affiliation with the company (i.e. a family member of an employee) or like to receive direct recommendations from employees and colleagues. Some companies just prefer that potential interns seek them out as opposed to releasing a position announcement. This is an immediate way to recognize someone’s ability to take initiative. Moreover, sometimes companies or organizations may not even have a formal internship program, but may be willing to bring one in for a semester or more because they are impressed by an applicant’s skills and abilities.

Because this is a possibility, if there is a company or organization that is of particular interest to you, it definitely does not hurt to send them a resume or cover letter. Begin by asking your teachers, professors, advisors, and even family members and friends whether they have any connections with your company of interest. If you do find someone who can assist you in getting your foot in the door, ask them to help guide you through the process, whether by telling you who to submit your resume and cover letter to or even requesting that they set up an interview with the appropriate person at the company. If you are unable to find anyone that has a connection to the company, begin by finding a general phone number or even the information for the hiring manager. Call to find out to whom you should address a cover letter. If you are interested in interning in a particular department, when you call, be specific about the area in which you wish to apply.

Your conversation could go something like this:

### SCENARIO 1:

**Receptionist/Hiring Manager:**

Good morning. Thank you for calling XYZ. This is Sheila. How can I help you?

**You:**

Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm calling to find out whether XYZ is currently accepting internship applications. I'm interested in applying for an internship in the marketing department.

**Receptionist/Hiring Manager:**

I do believe the marketing department is currently accepting applications for a summer intern.

**You:**

Great! Will you please tell me who I should address a resume and cover letter to for this position?

**Receptionist/Hiring Manager:**

Yes. Address it to...

**You:**

Thank you so much! Have a great day.

### SCENARIO 2:

**Receptionist/Hiring Manager:**

Good morning. Thank you for calling XYZ. This is Sheila. How can I help you?

**You:**

Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I was calling to find out whether XYZ is currently accepting internship applications. I'm interested in applying for an internship in the marketing department.

**Receptionist/Hiring Manager:**

I'm actually not sure whether we are currently looking for interns. As a matter of fact, I don't think we typically have interns here at XYZ.

**You:**

Ok. Would you mind telling me to whom I would address a resume and cover letter in the marketing department, just in case they would be willing to bring on an intern for the summer?

**Receptionist/Hiring Manager:**

Sure. Sue Davis is the marketing director. The address is...

**You:**

Thank you so much for this information. Have a great day!

## Chapter 2

# Resources



Begin by asking your teachers, professors, advisors, and even family members and friends whether they have any connections with your company of interest.

## Sample 2A: Chronological "Experience" Resume

**PERRY JAMESON**

1515 Stanley Drive #62  
Hometown, KS 66202  
perry.jameson@dbplanet.com  
(913) 555-1938

**OBJECTIVE**

To obtain knowledge of the day-to-day workings of a communications, public relations, or publishing firm through a summer internship.

**EDUCATION**

Completed three years at Hometown High School.  
Graduation date: May 2011.  
G.P.A. 3.85. Top 5% of class.

**EXPERIENCE****Newspaper Staff Member**, Hometown High School

- **Aug 2009 - present.** Features editor of campus newspaper.
- **Aug 2007 - Aug 2009.** Researched information for news articles using library and Web sources. Composed and edited informational articles, columns, editorials, and advertising copy.

**Yearbook Committee Member**, Hometown High School

- **Aug 2009 - present.** Editor-in-chief of yearbook staff. Leader of design and publication teams from initial layout through finished product.
- **Aug 2007 - Aug 2008.** Yearbook staff member. Experience taking photographs, designing layout, and writing captions and sidebars.

**RELEVANT HIGH SCHOOL STUDIES**

Technical writing; advanced composition; debate; video production; computer classes providing knowledge of word processing, desktop publishing, and Web software.

**HONORS, AWARDS, AND MEMBERSHIPS**

- **U.S. Media Association Scholarship recipient**  
Scholarship based on academic achievement, community service, and campus participation and leadership in high school communications projects and studies.
- **2010 Best High School Newspaper Design winner**  
Central State Regional Communications Contest, sponsored by the Communications Department, State University.
- **President Future Communicators of America (FCA), 2009 - present**  
Member, 2003 - present.

**Sample 2B: Chronological/"Experience" Resume****Danielle W. Silva****Current Address:**

115 Slusher Hall, Virginia Tech  
Blacksburg, VA 24061  
(540) 232-3456  
[dwsilva@vt.edu](mailto:dwsilva@vt.edu)

**Permanent Address:**

1234 Forest Lane  
Frederick, MD 20872  
(301) 555-6677

**OBJECTIVE**

Cooperative Education internship related to manufacturing

**EDUCATION**

B.S. Mechanical Engineering, Expected graduation as a coop: May 2012  
Minor: Statistics  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University (Virginia Tech), Blacksburg, VA

**COMPUTER SKILLS**

Software:	Languages:		
AutoCAD	MiniTab	Fortran	PowerC
TK solver	Mathematica	Visual Basic	C++

**EXPERIENCE**

**Waiter**, Boudreaux's, Blacksburg, VA Fall 2010 – present

- Work 20 hours per week to help fund college education.

**Self-employed**, Lawn care business, Frederick, MD Summer 2009

- Solicited business through cold calls and visits.
- Increased customer base through referrals for quality work.
- Performed all necessary equipment maintenance and repairs.
- Covered all expenses and yielded net profit of \$4000.

**Server**, Family Restaurant, Frederick, MD, 2005 – 2008, High school & summers

- Trained on and used excellent customer service practices in fastpaced, work environment.
- Participated in corporate program to increase sales; achieved all sales goals.
- Worked 40 or more hours per week in summers; worked 15 hours per week during school year.

**ACTIVITIES**

Student Engineers Council (SEC), Membership Committee Chair, 2008-09  
Symphonic Band, Virginia Tech, 2007-present  
Big Brother, Big Sister Program, 2007-2009  
High School Varsity Volleyball Team, 2005-2007

**HONORS**

Maryland Distinguished Scholar, Honorable Mention, 2010  
Scholar Athlete Award, 2009-2010  
Merit Award, Honorable Mention, 2008 Media Festival, Photography Division

**Sample 2C: Functional/"Skills" Resume****ALEXANDER M. MATTHEWS****Local Address**

123 Turner St. #5  
 Champaign, IL 61820  
 (217) 961-2469  
 Email: [alexmatthews@illinois.edu](mailto:alexmatthews@illinois.edu)

**Permanent Address**

4097 Back Creek Rd.  
 Chicago, IL 60604  
 (312) 512-3167

**OBJECTIVE** To obtain a position in the design field, with emphasis on continuing development of technical and computer skills.

**EDUCATION** **Bachelor of Architecture**, May 2011  
 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, IL  
 GPA: 3.1/4.0 Dean's List last 3 semesters  
**Chicago Architecture Consortium**, Champaign, Illinois, Summer 2010

- Extensive studies of architecture within the urban environment
- Construction site visits to Chicago historic restoration projects

**European Study Abroad Program**, Fall 2009

- Traveled through 10 European countries exploring a wide variety of cultures
- Studied architecture through photography, painting, and sketching

**COMPUTER SKILLS** HTML, AutoCAD R14, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Pagemaker, Adobe Illustrator, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint

**DESIGN SKILLS** Sketching, modeling, photography and darkroom procedures, photographic manipulation, wood and metal shop experience, graphic printmaking, pottery

**EXPERIENCE** **STLV Architects**, Chicago, IL, Summer 2009

- Worked on design development for Ramp Control Tower, Chicago/O'Hare Int'l. Airport
- Drafted site plans, floor plans, sections, and elevations
- Created site and building models for presentations

**Brown Residence Renovation**, Champaign, IL, Summer 2008

- Worked with owner to create new design for house renovation project
- Created a model of the new design for owner

**Crittenden & Associates**, Chicago, IL, Summer 2006, January 2007

- Produced drawings and colored renderings for a wide variety of projects
- Responsible for altering red-lined construction drawings, as well as creating new construction drawings from on site measurements.
- Created a proposal which won a major new commission for the firm

**Chenoweth & Co.**, Champaign, IL, Spring 2006

- Assisted in the creation of advertising campaigns
- Produced layouts and graphics for printed advertisements

**ACTIVITIES & AWARDS** American Institute of Architecture Students  
 Habitat for Humanity Volunteer  
 Gamma Beta Phi National Honor Society

## Sample 2D: Functional/"Skills" Resume

### RITA GRAND

2349 Retner Street  
Berkeley, CA 94704  
(510) 399-0102  
Email: [rgrand@gmail.com](mailto:rgrand@gmail.com)

### Objective: Internship as a Physical Therapy Aide

#### SUMMARY

- Volunteer for four years, gaining experience with disability issues.
- Completing course work in human anatomy and human physiology
- Creatively resolved everyday problems faced by disabled patients.
- Familiar with a wide range of disabilities, both visible and hidden.
- Long-term goal to practice as a registered Physical Therapist

#### VOLUNTEER WORK HISTORY

2009-present **Teacher's Aide** – HARDWOOD DAY SCHOOL, OAKLAND, CA

- Assisted with speech therapy in classroom for language...children, as a volunteer, and occasionally as a part-time paid assistant.
- Helped customize a speech therapy program for students.

2008-2009 **Instructional Assistant** – PUBLIC SCHOOLS, Eugene & Springfield, OR

- Assisted in supervising recreation activities of children and adults with mental health needs, as volunteer at city-sponsored specialized recreation program

2006-2008 **Developmental Assistant** – EASTER SEAL SCHOOL, Eugene, OR

- Served as a physical volunteer working with students with significant disabilities
- Performed basic physical therapy routines to promote physical development

#### EDUCATION & TRAINING

**B.S. Physical Therapy**, Expected graduation: May 2011

**Minor: Physical Education**

University of California, Berkeley

### Sample 2E: Cover Letter Sample

2343 Blankinship Road  
West Lafayette, IN 24060  
317/275-9305  
StacyLeeGimble@purdue.edu

January 12, 2011

Ms. Sylvia Range  
Special Programs Assistant  
Marion County Family Court Wilderness Challenge  
303 Center Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46278

Dear Ms. Range:

This semester I am a junior at Purdue University, working toward my bachelor's degree in family and child development. I am seeking an internship for this summer 2011, and while researching opportunities in the field of criminal justice and law, I found that your program works with juvenile delinquents. I am writing to inquire about possible internship opportunities with the Marion County Family Court Wilderness Challenge.

My work background and coursework have supplied me with many skills and an understanding of dealing with the adolescent community; for example:

- 10 hours per week as a volunteer hotline assistant for a local intervention center. After a 50-hour training program, I counseled teenagers about personal concerns and referred them, when necessary, to appropriate professional services for additional help.
- Residence hall assistant in my residence hall, which requires me to establish rapport with fifty residents and advise them on personal matters, as well as university policies. In addition, I develop social and educational programs and activities each semester for up to 200 participants.

My enclosed resume provides additional details about my background.

I will be in the Marion area during my spring break, March 6-10. I will call you next week to see if it would be possible to meet with you in early March to discuss your program.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(handwritten signature)

Stacy Lee Gimble

**Sample 2F: Cover Letter Sample**

March 14, 2010

Ms. Charlene Prince  
Director of Personnel  
Large National Bank Corporation  
Roanoke, VA 24040  
cprince@largebank.com

Dear Ms. Prince:

As I indicated in our telephone conversation yesterday, I would like to apply for the marketing research position (#031210-528) advertised in the March 12th Roanoke Times and World News. With my undergraduate research background, my training in psychology and sociology, and my work experience, I believe I could make a valuable contribution to Large National Bank Corporation in this position.

In May I will complete my B.S. in Psychology with a minor in Sociology at Virginia Tech. As part of the requirements for this degree, I am involved in a senior marketing research project that has given me experience interviewing and surveying research subjects and assisting with the analysis of the data collected. I also have completed a course in statistics and research methods.

My experience also includes working part-time as a bookkeeper in a small independent bookstore with an annual budget of approximately \$150,000. Because of the small size of this business, I have been exposed to and participated in most aspects of managing a business, including advertising and marketing. As the bookkeeper, I produced monthly sales reports that allow the owner/buyer to project seasonal inventory needs. I also assisted with the development of ideas for special promotional events and calculated book sales proceeds after each event in order to evaluate its success.

I believe my combination of business experience and social science research training is an excellent match for the marketing research position you described. Enclosed is a copy of my resume with additional information about my qualifications. Thank you very much for your consideration. I look forward to receiving your reply.

Sincerely,  
Alex Lawrence  
250 Prices Fork Road  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
(540) 555-1234  
alex.lawrence@vt.edu

Resume attached as MS Word document

## Chapter 3 Making way for the Interview

### *Researching the organization*

**Y**ou have submitted your resume to the company or organization that you would like to complete your internship with and they have asked you to come in for an interview. Congrats! However, there's still quite a bit to do.

First things first, you need to have an understanding of the organization that you are interviewing with. When you are in the interview, you are going to be asked a lot of questions. It will be important to be able to relate the answers you provide with things the company or organization has or is doing, as this is a great way to show those with whom you are interviewing that you are engaged and have a great understanding of what they do.



You should also know about the division or team that you could be working with and, if possible, know who the interviewers will be. Just like in school, homework is important. The more that you connect with the people who are interviewing you and the more that you know about the internship that you want to participate in, the more the organization or company will feel comfortable with you.

Research of the organization should generally begin with thoroughly reading through each section of the website. Search the website, or even make a direct phone call to the organization, to inquire about receiving copies of specific publications. If calling directly, try connecting with the public relations office or person responsible for external communications. Tell that you will be interviewing soon and ask if they would send you any printed materials that would help you learn more about them, as well as prepare for an interview. Mention any of the following as the type of information you seek:

- **Annual Report** - summarizes the year's performance and accomplishments; includes financial statements, funding sources (for non-profit organizations), products and/or services, names of key personnel and a narrative.
- **Organization Chart** - shows all departments and how they report to and relate to one another; sometimes is included in the Annual Report.
- **10-K Report** - a detailed financial disclosure required annually by the U. S. Securities and Exchange Commission for publicly traded companies.
- **Recruiting Brochures** - produced primarily by larger organizations for the purpose of attracting college graduates to the organization.
- **Other Publications** - in-house newsletters or magazines, brochures describing services to clients or customers, press releases, etc. (SUNY Fredonia Career Development Office, 2009)

The Career Development Office at Fredonia University also suggests using the following research methods for learning more about an organization:

- **Libraries** – If the organization (company, government agency, non-profit employer) is prominent enough to get news space, *The Reader's Guide*, *The New York Times Index*, and *The Wall Street Journal Index* can help you find stories about it. Also use InfoTrak, a computer database that surveys most newspapers, magazines and trade journals. Talk to the reference librarian for suggestions about specific publications that may be helpful, such as Dun and Bradstreet's *Million Dollar Directory*.
- **Career Services Offices** – Many career services offices house employer directories that contain information about products, services, size and location. Others keep recruiting literature and annual reports.
- **Professional or Trade Journals and Newspapers** – When you know the field you want to work in, make it a habit to read the related trade and professional journals. Many books on careers identify the primary professional associations for each field. Refer also to the Subject Index of the *National Trade and Professional Association Directory* (found in many career services offices). Make it a habit to read local newspapers for information about organizations in communities in the geographic region(s) in which you will be job searching.
- **People as Resources** – Sometimes people are the best source for the information you seek. This is especially true for small, local organizations, privately held corporations and some non-profit organizations. Before you ask someone for his/her time, however, be sure you have consulted the written sources so that you are not asking for information that can be easily obtained elsewhere.
- **General Internet Search** – When all else fails, make sure you complete a general Internet search by going on websites like Google or Yahoo! and typing in the name of the organization along with any other relevant keywords. (SUNY Fredonia Career Development Office, 2009).

### **Determining your goals**

Before you sit down for the interview, you should also take some time to think about the goals that you will have for yourself if you get the internship. These goals should be achievable and realistic for the position that you will be working in. Having these goals prepared before your interview is beneficial because it helps you anticipate the interviewer's questions and prepare responses accordingly. It is also a good way to reflect after the interview is over to consider whether the internship is really one that will help you achieve your goals. Sometimes after you interview for an internship, you will find that the internship duties are not what you really thought they would be. If you get accepted for the internship, you can also use this list of goals when talking with your boss about what projects you want to work on while you are there. It will show that you are determined to do a good job and provide results, which makes you a good investment for your employer. Most likely you will create more concrete goals once you begin your internship and have a better understanding of what you will specifically be working on, but preparing some prior to is a good place to start. Use the "My Internship Goals" worksheet in the Resources section of the chapter.

**Before you sit down for the interview, you should also take some time to think about the goals that you will have for yourself if you get the internship.**

## *Interviewing*

The two most common types of interviews that you will have for an internship are a telephone and/or in-person interview. It is typically more cost-effective for employers to hold telephone interviews when internship candidates are in a location far from where the internship will take place. If you are close to the internship location, the company or organization will typically ask for an in-person interview.

In-person interviews can be one-on-one or in a panel setting. This means that you may be meeting with either one person or a group of people during the interview. Whether your interview is in-person or by a telephone, it is important to make sure that you are confident and prepared to talk about yourself and what you will bring to the company. A good way to prepare is by completing mock interviews either with a career counselor at your school's career services office or with a teacher. These are typically done just as a real interview would be and will enable you to receive constructive feedback to help as you get ready for the "real thing."

If your interview is in-person, make sure to bring copies of your resume for the people who will be interviewing you. You can't presume that they will have a copy or have even seen your resume ahead of time. This also provides the opportunity to update your resume if something occurs in between the time when you initially sent in your resume and the day of the interview. If you are interviewing over the phone, you should make sure to email your resume to your contact person at the company or organization so that those completing the interview will have an updated electronic copy. It is important to know that the Americans with Disabilities Act allows you to request accommodations during the application process and for the interview if necessary (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2005). It is best to only request the accommodations that you need for the interview, not all of the accommodations that you may need for the internship. The important thing to highlight when interviewing is your ability to do the job well. You can take care of the additional details after being hired.



The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission provides the following information on requesting accommodations for an interview:

Reasonable accommodation can take many forms. Ones that may be needed during the hiring process include (but are not limited to):

- providing written materials in accessible formats, such as large print, braille, or audiotape;
- providing readers or sign language interpreters;
- ensuring that recruitment, interviews, tests and other components of the application process are held in accessible locations;
- providing or modifying equipment or devices;
- adjusting or modifying application policies and procedures.

**Example:** John is blind and applies for a job as a customer service representative. John could perform this job with assistive technology, such as a program that reads information on the screen. If the company wishes to have John demonstrate his ability to use the computer, it must provide appropriate assistive technology as a reasonable accommodation.

**Example:** An employer requires job applicants to line up outside its facility to apply for a job, a process that could take several hours. Tara has multiple sclerosis and that makes her unable to tolerate prolonged exposure to temperatures in the 90s. Tara therefore requests that she be allowed to wait indoors where it is air conditioned until the human resources department is ready to take her application. The employer would need to modify its hiring procedure to accommodate Tara. (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2005)

Finally, it is important to both take notes during your interview and ask questions. Taking notes is good because it displays your attention to detail and your understanding of what's being shared.

**Asking too many questions can be a bit overwhelming for the interviewer, and may sometimes appear as if you don't have a strong grasp on the overall mission of the organization or the role that you will be playing.**

It is also fine to bring along a list of questions to ask the people you are interviewing with. In fact, asking appropriate questions during an interview is often appreciated, as those interviewing you will recognize your interest and will see that you have done your homework before coming in. However, you must be careful. Asking too many questions can be a bit overwhelming for the interviewer, and may sometimes appear as if you don't have a strong grasp on the overall mission of the organization or the role that you will be playing. It is always best to do practice interviews with a career counselor or

teacher so that you can feel out the appropriate times to ask a question during an interview. Sometimes you will find that interviewers would prefer not to be interrupted, as they want to get through their list of questions before you ask yours.

Either way, you should always be ready with questions at the end of the interview that follow up on what was stated during your conversation. This will really show the interviewers that you were paying attention during the interview and that you have strong analytical skills. Immediately, it shows that you have the ability to listen and answer questions while also formulating your own questions. What a great skill to have!

In the resources section of this guide, you will find information on sample interview questions from the Regional Internship Center of Southwestern Pennsylvania. These questions are a great way to prepare for the internship and to see what types of questions an employer might ask you during the interview. This information is listed under “*Interviewing 101: General Questions to Expect from the Employer.*”

### **Following Up**

After completing an interview, following up about a potential internship opportunity is possibly just as important as the interview itself. Within no more than two business days, you should send a thank you note or card to those you interviewed with, or at least to your main point of contact. This is critical for a variety of reasons, including the following:

- Allows you to show appreciation for the company’s interest in you.
- Reiterates your interest in the company and the position for which you interviewed.
- Provides an opportunity for you to go over or remind the interviewer(s) of your qualifications.
- Allows you to provide any necessary follow-up information the interviewer(s) may have requested of you.



In today’s technology-driven society, you will most likely be tempted to send your thank you note via email. While this is certainly appropriate in certain circumstances, especially when email has been your primary means of contact with the employer, or your point of contact has requested that you specifically maintain contact in that manner, sending a handwritten copy of your note is generally considered more personal. Some people may choose to send a type-written hard copy of their thank you note (especially if their handwriting isn’t so great), so this is an option as well. Visit the resources section of this chapter for sample thank you letters.

When you initially completed the interview, the employer should have let you know when, by whom, and in what manner you would be hearing from them regarding the position. If you have not heard back about your potential internship after a week, it is appropriate to politely inquire via phone or email about the status of the organization’s decision-making process. When you contact them to find out about the status of your application, be sure to mention the name of the person you interviewed with, the time and place of the interview, and the position you applied for.

# Chapter 3

## Resources



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### **Activity 3A - My Internship Goals**

I feel that now is the time for me to do an internship because:

My specific career interests are:

My specific career goals are:

My ideal work environment would include:  
(Example: Small office, flexible work schedule, team-oriented)

The ideal location for an internship would be:

I am looking for an internship that is:  
(Circle) Paid/Unpaid/For School Credit

In completing an internship, I would like to gain the following skills:  
(Example: Organizational skills, problem-solving skills, technical skills)

In completing an internship, I would like to have the following experiences:  
(Example: Get to attend networking events; Get to participate in staff meetings)

In completing an internship, I would like to complete assignments such as:  
(Example: Attend client meetings and participate in negotiations; Review and analyze contracts)

**Sample 3B – Interview Thank You Letter**

1225 Warren Street  
Concord, NH 03301  
(603) 228–1919

August 2, 20—

Henry P. Clandin, Esq.  
Grolsh & Donner, P.A.  
671 First Street  
Boston, MA 02145

Dear Mr. Clandin:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me in Atlanta. My interest in working for you has only grown after learning more about your firm's work in admiralty law and your summer associate program.

If you would like any additional material to help you evaluate my application, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

**Patrice Franklin**

**Sample 3C - Interview Thank You Letter**

12489 Lantin Street  
Manchester, NH 03101  
603.664.5980

Sheila Bennett, Account Executive  
Five and Nine Marketing  
28 Thornton Street  
Concord, NH 03301

June 11, 20—

Dear Ms. Bennett:

It was a pleasure meeting with you and experiencing the opportunity you have to offer. I appreciate and thank you for providing me with the time to interview for this chance to become your marketing intern this summer.

Since our meeting, my interest and excitement about the position has only intensified. I feel as though I have a thorough understanding of the requirements and responsibilities, as well as a new appreciation for the challenges and opportunities that this position affords. I am particularly impressed with the range of work you perform, and the variety of clients you serve. I am confident that my wide-ranging skill set and experience will enable me to make a valuable contribution to your team.

I hope I was able to provide you with sufficient information about my qualifications and experience to give you a clear picture of what I have to offer you. If you have any other questions, please feel free to call me.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jacob Ardys

**Sample 3D - Interview Thank You Letter with Multiple Interviewers**

23 Hunter Drive  
San Diego, CA 91901

February 16, 20—

Bailey Henderson  
Web Supervisor  
Smith & Smith  
1001 E. Cleveland Avenue  
W. Farmington, NY 10005

Dear Ms. Henderson:

I would like to thank you and the other members of Smith & Smith for the warm reception I received during my recent visit. Your interest in my web design work was encouraging and I am following up on your suggestions.

Meeting with Alex Scott, Marjorie Barry, Sam Rhodes, Bob Umberger and Allison Reeves provided important insights into the company's practice. Please extend my thanks to them for their time and the information they shared with me.

My recent visit confirms my enthusiasm about starting my website development career with Smith & Smith. Your practice areas, the outstanding reputation of the account executives, and the company's commitment to delivering quality websites to a variety of clients creates an ideal environment for professional growth.

Thank you again for your hospitality. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Dana Holt

# Chapter 4

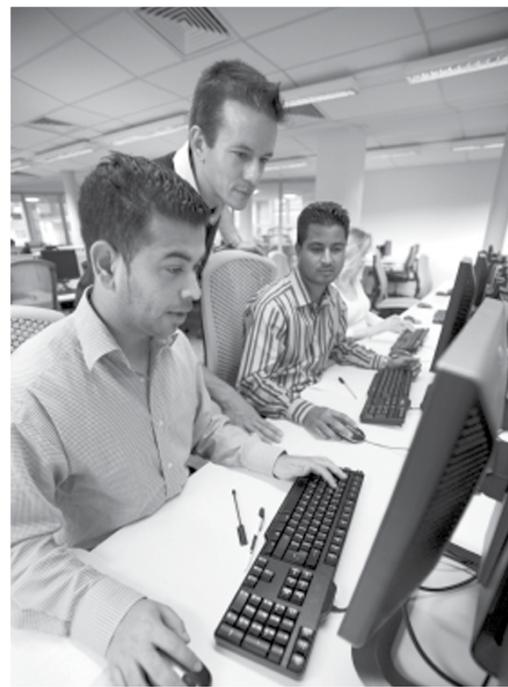
## Doing your Homework— Before you accept an offer

### *Ensuring your school requirements are being met*

In chapter 1, the various types of internships were explained. If you are in a degree program that requires you to obtain an internship, it is important that you review the internship requirements before you accept an offer to ensure that the internship lines up with the degree you are working towards.

There are three great ways to make sure that your internship meets the program requirements for the degree program you are working towards:

- Select your internship from a pre-approved list of internships that your school provides.
- Check with a counselor at your university to make sure that the internship will fit the program requirements.
- Do an analysis yourself based on your program requirements and determine whether the internship you are pursuing will fulfill them.



After you have made sure that the internship will fit within your academic requirements, it is time to think about whether the internship is the right fit for you and for what you desire to get out of the internship experience.

### *Making sure the internship is the right fit for you*

After you have completed the interview and double-checked to make sure the internship fits within any requirements your degree might have, it is time to reflect once more and consider both what you have learned about the internship and if it will work for the need you are trying to fulfill. This is one of the reasons why it is important to bring questions to your interview and to take notes as well. This provides the opportunity to compare various internship options, if you have more than one, and refreshes your memory on what was said during each interview. If you only completed one interview for an internship, either because you really liked a specific internship program or because it was the only one available at that time, you can compare your notes to what your original expectations of the internship were.

One of the major components to consider when reflecting is to compare what you would like to get out of your internship and what you hope to offer the company during your internship. What is written up in an internship summary or brochure is not always what you will get, so it is important to think about that after you have completed your interview and before you accept an offer.

## ***Getting to your internship location***

Sometimes the best internship opportunities are in a different city, and possibly even a different country, than the one in which you are located. Even though the offer may be a really good one and the internship may seem that it would provide you with the best experience, you also need to consider whether you are mentally and financially prepared to relocate for any length of time. Moving can be expensive and temporary housing can be even more expensive, especially in cities where temporary housing is common because of the influx of interns that come each year.



Before you decide to accept an internship offer you should consider how you will get to the city in which it is located and how you will cover your expenses while you are there. It is

definitely easier if your internship provides housing as part of their compensation package, but many do not. Many universities rent their dorm rooms during the summer to interns for summer housing and many interns find roommates using the internet, which helps keep costs lower. When looking for housing or roommates, check out local and college newspapers, community bulletin boards, and the Internet. Popular housing/roommate websites include [www.rent.com](http://www.rent.com), [www.apartmentfinder.com](http://www.apartmentfinder.com), [www.roommates.com](http://www.roommates.com), [www.ratetheroomie.com](http://www.ratetheroomie.com), and [www.roomster.com](http://www.roomster.com).

**Popular housing/roommate websites include**  
[www.rent.com](http://www.rent.com),  
[www.apartmentfinder.com](http://www.apartmentfinder.com),  
[www.roommates.com](http://www.roommates.com),  
[www.ratetheroomie.com](http://www.ratetheroomie.com), and  
[www.roomster.com](http://www.roomster.com).

Transportation is another major item that you have to think about before you accept an offer for an internship. If you are moving to a new city, how will you get around? Make sure to plan how you will get around in advance so that you are not disappointed or in a bind when you arrive. Even if the internship is in your city or town, you must still consider whether the commute will require a car or public transportation, for example. If you have a disability that requires accessible transportation, is there some available to you where you will be living and working? Will a friend or family need to transport you? If so, how many times per week?

## ***Funding an internship***

Typically, no matter how beneficial you believe an internship will be, a critical deciding factor regarding whether you can accept an offer is whether you can afford to do so. This is especially the case when determining whether to participate in an unpaid internship. Not only might you have to continue to pay any bills you had prior to beginning the internship, but if you plan on relocating to complete it, you will also have to consider any new expenses you will have. This includes housing, transportation, food, personal attendant care, and a host of other items and activities.

Before making a final decision, consider some of the following strategies for overcoming the no-money dilemma:

- **School/University Funding** – Many colleges and universities around the US have established programs that provide funding to students who want to pursue unpaid work experiences. Quite often there are alumni-sponsored internship grants available for students pursuing unpaid internships. Check with both your career services office and the financial aid office regarding these opportunities.
- **Individual Grants, Scholarships and Fellowships** – Many nonprofit, religious, business, or community/civic based organizations around the US and world provide funding to help pay for educational experiences relating closely to your career field of interest. Check out scholarship and foundation grant websites such as [www.foundationcenter.org](http://www.foundationcenter.org).
- **Extra Financial Aid/Loan** – Although continuing to add to your future debt may not sound appealing, you may find it worth the sacrifice to get additional financial aid or take out a loan so that you can take an unpaid/low-paying internship. This is certainly an idea you should talk over with your support network, including a financial aid counselor.
- **Part-Time, Paying Job** – Another option for ensuring your financial stability during your internship is seeking out part-time job opportunities that would allow you the opportunity to complete your internship and work during your off hours. In thinking through this decision, make sure you consider how much you believe you can handle physically, mentally, and emotionally. You don't want to end up doing poor work either within your internship or your paid job simply because you are stressed or overloaded. You may even consider asking your potential internship supervisor whether your hours can be shortened or modified in some manner so that you can successfully complete your tasks and work in a paid position as well.
- **Bank of "Mom & Dad"** – When all else fails, consider asking your parents (or other relatives) to provide financial assistance while you complete your internship. This could mean either asking them to give you the money or loan it to you. Be sure to emphasize the fact that making such an investment in your future will serve as a benefit to you and to them (especially if it means helping you gain your own independence). (Vogt, 2005)

### ***Recognizing the need to adapt***

Before you accept an offer, if you rely on social security benefits as a source of income and your internship is paid, it is important to think about how it may affect these benefits. If you have any questions on how any money gained from an internship can affect your social security benefits, contact your local benefits counselor. If you are interested in working while receiving benefits, information on supports available from the Social Security Administration is located in the resources chapter at the end of this guide.

Another thing that you have to consider is the geographical location that your internship is going to be in. If you are from a rural town and the internship is in an urban city like Chicago, have you prepared yourself to live and work in a big city? The same question applies if you are more familiar with big-city life such as that of New York, yet you plan on interning in a small town.

It is equally as important to consider the location's climate. Depending on the time of year during which you will complete your internship, your willingness or ability to handle different types of weather may play a key role in your decision. Moreover, consider what kinds of inclement weather you would be willing to endure. If you decide to participate in a fall semester internship in a northern city, will you be willing to cope with snow and ice? If you take a summer internship in a city that receives quite a bit of rain, will you be willing to endure this for a season?

It is good to experience new things during your internship, and participating in an internship in a different city is a great way to do that. Simply make sure that you understand the changes you may potentially experience before you accept an offer so that you will be prepared.

Typically, no matter how beneficial you believe an internship will be, a critical deciding factor regarding whether you can accept an offer is whether you can afford to do so.

# Chapter 5

## Preparing for the Big Day *After you accept an offer*

### *Using technology to your advantage*

**A**fter you accept an offer for an internship, it is important to begin learning the types of resources you can pull together in order to build your own networks and quickly get acclimated to the city. Many organizations and their staff utilize various social networking outlets and generic listservs to get information out, both within their organizations and to the general public. It is important to learn about which listservs or other types of groups are available to you and to join the ones that you think are most appropriate.



In addition to listservs that are work specific, it is also important to participate in listservs that provide you an opportunity for networking and social interaction with peers who are also interning in the city that you are in or are moving to. These are also helpful to find those who have recently graduated and can give you advice on how to navigate the workforce system. A great example of this type of group is Hidden Army in Washington, D.C. This group of young professionals with disabilities or those interested in learning more about disabilities provides one another with tools and resources to obtain employment and advance in whatever company or field they are in. It also provides an outlet for members to meet in-person in both casual and professional settings, including coordinating dinners and participating in informational sessions to improve one another's marketable skills.

Examples of how you can benefit from participating in listservs:

- Meet some of the staff ahead of your arrival.
- Gain a sense of the attitude and disposition of the company.
- Start building a general sense of camaraderie between you and the staff.
- Understand ongoing issues within the field that you are going to be a part of.
- Access to volunteer opportunities in the area.
- Find affordable and accessible housing options.

Generally there are also listservs based on your specific areas of interest or organizations that may address that issue. For example, if you have a specific interest in volunteerism, there are a variety of listservs that can connect you with organizations or projects that will provide volunteer opportunities. These types of organizations are great to connect with during an internship because they not only provide you with an outlet to give back to the community, but also allow you to meet other interns or college students your age.

## ***Determining who to meet and what to bring***

Before you start your first day at your new internship, it is important to know who your contact person will be. You may have to be signed into a building by a staff member and knowing who to call when you arrive will make things a lot easier. This point person will also be great to ask any immediate questions that you may have before you start your internship. For example, you will need to know things like: What is the dress code? What time should I arrive at work? Is there anything specific that I should bring on my first day (i.e. drivers license and social security card for taxes)? Is there a refrigerator available for my lunch if I bring items that should be kept cold? Where is the closest bus or train stop if I am using public transportation to get to work?

Make sure that you understand how to get from wherever you are living to the office that you will be working in so that you are not late. If you are not certain, ask your point of contact. This may involve trying out your route on a day prior to starting your internship. If you try your route on a weekend or during non-rush hour times, just remember that during the week within specific timeframes the commute may take longer because there will be more people.

It will also benefit you to ask questions before you start like the ones previously mentioned because it will show the team that you will be working with that you are organized, excited and ready to start working as soon as you arrive. Showing your enthusiasm will only make them all the more excited about your arrival.

## ***Deciding what to wear***

When you talk with your point person, it is important to ask what the dress code is for the internship. Some internships will require you to work outside, and therefore you should wear a t-shirt and jeans, while others in corporate or government offices may require you to dress more formally. When you talk to your point person about the dress code, you should also ask if there are times when employees are expected to dress differently than the general dress code requires. For example, your point person may tell you that you need to wear a shirt and tie or dress every day. If you ask further you may also find out that once a month there is an all-staff meeting with the CEO and most of the staff dress in suits. On the other hand, many companies have implemented a “dress down” day, typically on Fridays, when staff can wear jeans and other casual garments. If possible, it is beneficial to dress like the other staff, especially during more formal times, because it shows your employer that you are professional and can fit in, which will help them determine whether they will keep you as a permanent employee, if the time comes.

***“It is a good rule of thumb not to dress for the job that you have – but to dress for the job that you want.”***

If your point person tells you that interns are not expected to dress up in a suit at all and that a shirt and tie is fine no matter what type of meeting you are participating in, it may still be wise to wear a suit to the important meetings to show that you have a vested interest in the good of the company and that you want to dress to impress. You will be taken more seriously when you dress similarly to those on your team.

It is also good to keep in mind the importance of dressing in what makes you feel good. As long as your choice of clothing does not stray from the guidelines provided by your employer, dress according to what makes you perform best. For some people, this means wearing suits and ties or dresses and heels. For others this means wearing dress slacks and button-down shirts. Either look is appropriate for the typical office setting, so decide based on what fits you best.

## Chapter 6 **Now that I am Here, what do I do?**

### *Surviving the first week as an intern*

**M**ost likely you've heard the phrase, "First impressions are everything." While this is not necessarily true in all circumstances, first impressions are certainly important when you begin an internship. The way that you handle your first week will guide people's perceptions of you throughout the remainder of your internship experience. Ultimately, these first days have the potential to help or harm your future within the organization and even the field as a whole.

Consider the following 15 tips to help you make a good first impression:

**Have a Positive Attitude** – Let everyone see that you're excited about being a part of the organization and look forward to interacting with your new co-workers.

#### **Dress Professionally/Blend in With Co-Workers**

– In the workplace, your dress and overall upkeep are representations of you. As mentioned, as you begin your internship, it is important to dress professionally every day, even on those deemed "casual" days. At this point you still don't know who is likely to show up or who you might be asked to meet with (i.e. a senior executive) and you want to make sure you're dressed to impress.

**Learn Co-Workers' Names Quickly** – Of course learning names can be a bit tricky, especially if there are quite a few people in your office. The most important thing is to make sure that you learn the names of those who you will be working more closely with as soon as you can. If you do forget a name, simply apologize and ask the person to tell you his or her name again.

**Ask Questions/Ask for Help** – Relax! No one expects you to know everything on your first days as an intern. It's definitely better to inquire about something before you do it then to make a mistake and have to go back and correct it. Be sure to LISTEN and communicate openly so that you continue to build upon your learning.

**Take Notes/Go to Orientation** – Some formal internship programs within organizations include an internship orientation to help you learn more procedural activities and systems. This includes gaining information about everything from filling out timesheets (especially if you're being paid) to using the copy machine. Even still, some organizations require their interns to go through the same orientation that all new full-time employees participate in to gain more background about organizational rules and procedures. Whether you do attend a formal orientation session or simply speak with office staff about how things run within the office, it's important to take notes so that you don't have to repeat the same question over and over.



**Don't Rely on Others to Integrate You** – Although it is certainly important to ask questions, especially related to policies and procedures within the office, it is important that you take a proactive approach in blending in with your team. This means taking the initiative to introduce yourself around the office. Your goal should be to be seen as approachable and sociable, so try to demonstrate this immediately (Employment Digest, 2007).

**Observe** – Your first week as an intern is typically your only opportunity to observe the setting in which you will work clearly and without judgment. Use this time to observe your surroundings and the office culture. This will help you figure out how your role fits within the team and how to interact best within it. You probably won't have an opportunity to do this after you become engrossed in your assignments. You should certainly try not to make generalizations at the beginning because your impressions may not always be accurate, but they do have the potential to help you during your time as an intern (Employment Digest, 2007).

Your goal should be to be seen as approachable and sociable.

**Be a Self-Starter: Take Initiative** – Most likely you will not be given a lot of work at once when you begin your internship. As you complete the tasks you've been given, take the initiative and ask your supervisor for more assignments. Don't wait for someone to come to you, but instead show your commitment and desire to help and grow.

**Work Full Days** – It's important to show your dedication to your work by making sure that you are working the appropriate amount of time expected of you. No matter whether your internship is full or part-time, during your first few days/weeks you should do your best not only to be on time, but even to come in a bit early and/or stay a bit late. You definitely should try not to leave before the majority of your co-workers leave (unless you have specified hours that are shorter than those of your co-workers).

**Establish a Good Attendance Record** – It is equally as important to come to work every day and establish a good attendance record. Of course emergencies and illnesses do happen, but do your best to make sure you are at work every day during the first few days/weeks of your internship.

It is equally as important to come to work every day and establish a good attendance record.

**Avoid Office Politics and Gossip** – Rumors and gossip are a part of any social setting, including the workplace. Your goal should be to stay clear of all gossip and try your best not to associate with those who do so. As an intern you won't be at the organization long and do not want to become involved in issues that may potentially harm your professional career.

**Keep Personal Business on Company Time to a Minimum** – Studies prove that most people conduct some manner of personal business during work hours, such as checking emails, paying bills, and online shopping. You should avoid this as much as possible and try to stay focused on your assigned tasks.

**Track Accomplishments** – One of the great benefits of an internship is gaining a variety of experiences that will be helpful in your career and will be great for your resume. When completing your internship, you should to keep track of the things that you accomplish, especially so that you will be able to sell yourself to your future employer. Use the "Internship Accomplishments" worksheet included in the Resources section of this chapter to keep track of them.

**Show Appreciation** – You can certainly go far simply showing a bit of kindness. Show your appreciation throughout your internship experience, but especially during your first week. This includes everyone from your supervisor to the receptionist.

**Keep Your Boss Informed – of Everything** – As you enter the workforce, it is important to keep in mind that your boss doesn't have the ability to read your mind. This means that he or she will not always know how you're doing and what is or is not going well. During your first week, you should meet with your boss more to begin to build a strong relationship. Always be open to constructive criticism, and ask what you can do to move ahead or reach your intended goals. (Hansel & Hansel, n.d.)

### *Creating a work plan*

It is important during the first couple of days to create a work plan with your supervisor. This will be a great tool to use to gauge your progress and ensure that you are meeting the company's goals for you. The work plan will also help you make sure that you accomplish the personal goals you created prior to interviewing for the internship.

As you talk through your plan with your supervisor, make sure that you have both short-term and long-term projects on your plate. This means having some activities that may take



a few days or even just a few hours, and having some projects that you may ultimately spend much of your internship term working on. Having a variety of projects is a great way to ensure that you're never bored! If there comes a point in your work when it seems you've reached a slow point, you can focus on the long-term projects instead of trying to figure out what to work on next. See the "Work Plan Template" in the Resources section of this chapter.

After you have figured out what you will be working on during your internship term, you should make sure you have clear information regarding who you will be reporting to for each project. Your team manager might not be the person you will be dealing with on a daily basis, so it is important to also sit down and talk with the people who you will be reporting to on each project. Talking with these people allows you to make sure that you are on the same page with regards to expectation, just as it will ensure that what you plan on providing is what they expect.

Your work plan is also a document that is quite likely to change during your time as an intern. You may find that you do not like a project at all; in that case, you may want to request the opportunity to work on another project. Your manager may also ask you to work on new projects as time passes during your internship. A good team manager will recognize your strengths and weaknesses and will give you projects that will maximize your strengths and help you improve the areas that you are weak in.

[See the "Work Plan Template" in the Resources section of this chapter.](#)

Make sure that as you are talking with your boss and creating your work plan that you continue to refer to your original goals for the internship and make sure that what you wanted to accomplish is reflected in your goals. You may not be able to reach all of them in a single internship, but you should request and work toward the opportunity to accomplish as many of them as you can. The more that you can do for the company you are interning for, the more the company gains from having you around and teaching you, and the more skills you gain to move you toward permanent, long-term employment.

### ***Exploring the organization***

Once you have settled into the organization that you will be interning with, it is important to get out and explore everything that it has to offer you. To some, this means finding the cafeteria or the snack shop or even the workout facilities, if the building is large enough. While it is important to know about these basics, exploring the organization goes much further.

**It is important when you are trying to talk to people at higher levels of leadership within an organization to make sure that you utilize the proper channels to do so.**

To begin, check the biographies of the people that you will have daily interaction with, and even those that are in higher leadership positions that you may not see very often. You should also keep in mind that depending on the type of organization you're in, the overall organizational structure will differ. The way that a non-profit organization runs is different from that of a large corporation, and the way that a corporation runs is different from a government setting. Don't be afraid to ask for a one-on-one appointment with these people. You will find that as an intern you have an advantage because many people will be more than willing to sit down and chat with you either in their office or during lunch about their career. Many times they may share how they used an internship to get a foot in

the door at the first job that started their career. Check out the sample organizational charts in the Resources section of the chapter to familiarize yourself with the titles of those you will want to meet with during your internship.

The historical and institutional knowledge that you can glean from some of your colleagues will go far beyond what you can learn in a classroom. Internships provide the opportunity to hear, see and feel how the work of others has actually been utilized in the world around you. This is true whether you are at an internship in a corporate building, federal office, non-profit community center or a park, just to name a few. Everyone has a story to tell and they all have been where you are today. They all started somewhere and worked their way up the ladder, and by talking to them, you can take the skills that they learned along the way and turn it into SUCCESS!

It is important when you are trying to talk to people at higher levels of leadership within an organization to make sure that you utilize the proper channels to do so. This means that you might have your boss or another colleague set up the meeting. This is not because the higher level manager may not want to talk to you, but it is because they may receive many requests for meetings and have very busy schedules, so it is helpful for them to have others help them understand what meetings they should or should not accept. Having a higher level official set up the meeting for you will provide the proper introduction so that the person you meet with will be prepared when you come.

Prior to meeting with the leaders of your organization and with any others, you should make sure that you are prepared in every way possible. Consider what knowledge you hope to gain from the meeting or what knowledge you hope to provide the person that you are meeting with. The questions that you ask don't necessarily have to coordinate with what you are working on at your internship, but they should reflect your desire to learn and gain some insight from the person that you are talking to. You may consider utilizing the same list of questions you used when conducting your informational interviews when having these conversations.

### ***Exploring the city around you***

Of course, your main priority while interning is to make sure that you work hard and make an impact within the company for which you're interning. However, it is still important to make sure that you embrace every part of the internship experience, including exploring your surroundings. Many internships take you to a new city, which opens up possibilities for a host of new experiences. Talk to your colleagues at work and ask them what they do on the weekends. Go out with other interns in the office and relax after work. It is important that you have an avenue where you can safely blow off steam after work or can share about your experiences. Relaxation and a balanced lifestyle is a key aspect of any successful career.

**Using the listservs or other social networking groups that you joined is an excellent way to figure out things to do around the city.**

Using the listservs or other social networking groups that you joined is an excellent way to figure out things to do around the city. Happy hours can be a great way to meet other young people after work and they don't have to involve alcohol if you are not old enough or simply choose not to drink. If you do choose to drink during these events, make sure to remember that even though you are outside of the work environment, you still are a representative of your organization. Your intern affiliation goes with you wherever you go. This means that you must be responsible. If you say or do something that is inappropriate it will most likely get back to your superiors, which could result in both short-term and long-term negative consequences.



Make sure to also explore various cultural activities and landmarks in the area. If your internship is in a large city, typically you will have access to museums, theaters and a variety of other events. If your internship is in a smaller city, check with local colleges, newspapers and websites to learn about events or special expositions. In general, every city has a history and local landmarks, and many of these sites cost little-to-nothing at all. Most counties

and/or cities have what's known as convention and visitors bureaus (CVB), which are designed to improve the overall economic development of an area by encouraging others to visit. CVBs are great places to find information about a destination's lodging, dining, attractions, events, museums, arts and culture, history and recreation. Some provide more in-depth information, including activity lists and top attractions, blogs, free things to do and activity suggestions for the season. To find a local CVB, simply type the city along with the phrase "convention and visitors bureau" into any search engine.

The important thing to remember during your internship experience is that it's not just about what you can learn and soak up during the work day. It is also about the opportunities that it provides to you when you are not at work.

### ***Resource mapping***

As you are exploring the city, it is important to know where your local resources are. Depending on your disability, you may need to know where the local wheelchair repair shop is or where you can get other medical equipment if yours malfunctions. In case of an emergency, you should know where the nearest hospital is. Access your insurance company's website to determine what type of coverage you have when you're outside of your normal area or network. This will be important to know should you have to visit a doctor while you're away. If your insurance is unable to cover you while you're away, you should be prepared to cover any medical expense that could arise.

You will also need to know where the local grocery store is and how the local transportation works if it is available to you. Also consider things like where the nearest branch of your bank is. If your bank does not have locations in the city you're in, think about how you will manage your money. Will you simply withdraw money from another banking company and continue to handle any other banking needs online or long-distance, or is there another option? These are all great ways to use the listservs and other social networking groups that you joined to gain information. You are not alone in your new environment. There are always others who are experiencing or have experienced the same situations that you are, so it never hurts to ask for help or to see what resources that they used to meet their needs. Use the "Finding your Resources" sheet in the Resources section of this chapter to help you start thinking about the places you need to find most.

## ***Evaluation***

After you have a clear understanding of your position and what a normal day is like in the office, you should make sure to meet with your manager and talk about how you will be evaluated. Sometimes, if your internship is required as a part of your degree's program, your university may have an evaluation form that your supervisor is required to complete. There is also a possibility that the office you are interning in has its own evaluation tool. Either way, you should ask to ensure that you are prepared. In most cases, not only will the program you're interning with complete an evaluation of your performance, but you will complete an evaluation based on your experience.

If those participating in internships in your office are typically only evaluated at the end of the internship term, you may also want to ask your manager if you can be evaluated more frequently. This can be a useful tool to gauge your progress throughout the internship. This can also make the evaluation process at the end of the internship much easier because you will have a better idea of what to expect. Of course, above all, frequent evaluations enable you to improve in any areas where you may originally have had difficulties.

Evaluations are not a bad thing and shouldn't be feared. They are developed to assist you in becoming a better employee and to make sure that you are learning what you set out to learn when you created your goals. Check out the Resources section to view sample evaluations.

***In most cases, not only will the program you're interning with complete an evaluation of your performance, but you will complete an evaluation based on your experience.***

# Chapter 6

## Resources



## ***Activity 6A – Internship Accomplishments***

This worksheet is intended to help you brainstorm the accomplishments you've made in your internship so that you are able to create an accomplishments-driven resume and cover letter. More importantly, seeing your accomplishments on paper will truly make you feel proud of yourself for all that you've completed!

Tips for completing this worksheet:

- Try to list accomplishments that are specific and measurable. This includes using numbers (quantities) as much as possible (Examples: Served a customer base of 250; Increased conference attendance by 15 percent.)
  - Use superlatives and “firsts.” Use words such as “first,” “only,” “best,” “most,” and “highest.”
  - Ask yourself, “so what?” For every accomplishment you list, consider how this displays your abilities and potential in your future career.
1. In your internship, what special things did you do to set yourself apart? How did you do the job better than anyone else did or than anyone else could have done?
  
  2. What did you do to make this internship your own? How did you take the initiative? How did you go above and beyond what was asked of you in your job description?
  
  3. What special things did you do to impress your boss so that you would receive a good reference or even be hired permanently?
  
  4. How has the organization benefited from your performance? How did you/will you leave this organization better off than before you interned there?



**Activity 6B - Internship Work Plan**

**Objective #1** (I plan to accomplish...)

I will enhance/gain the following skills as a result of achieving this objective:

I will complete the following tasks (include start/end date) in order to reach this goal:

Tasks and Major Steps	Start/End Date
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

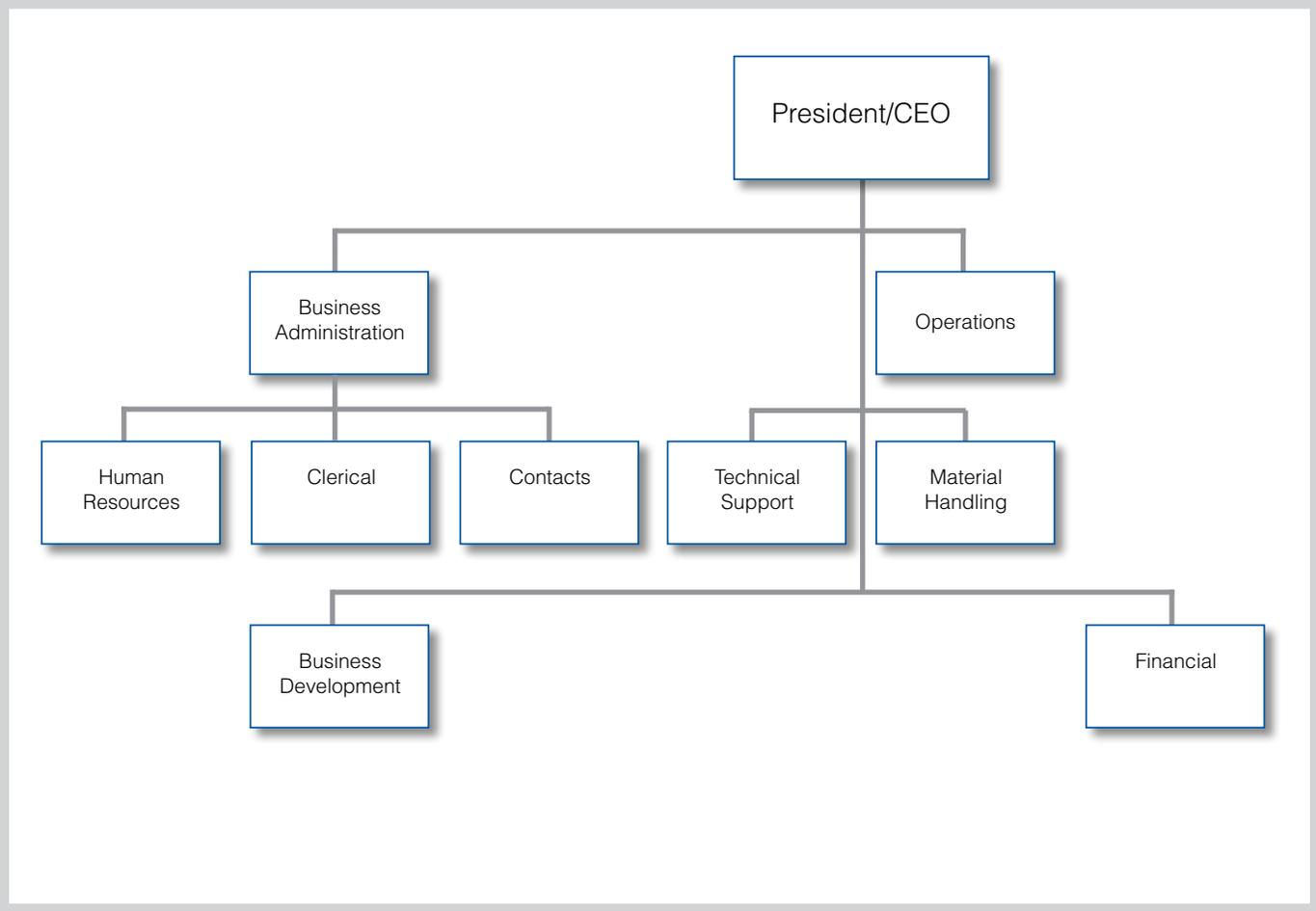
**Objective #2** (I plan to accomplish...)

I will enhance/gain the following skills as a result of achieving this objective:

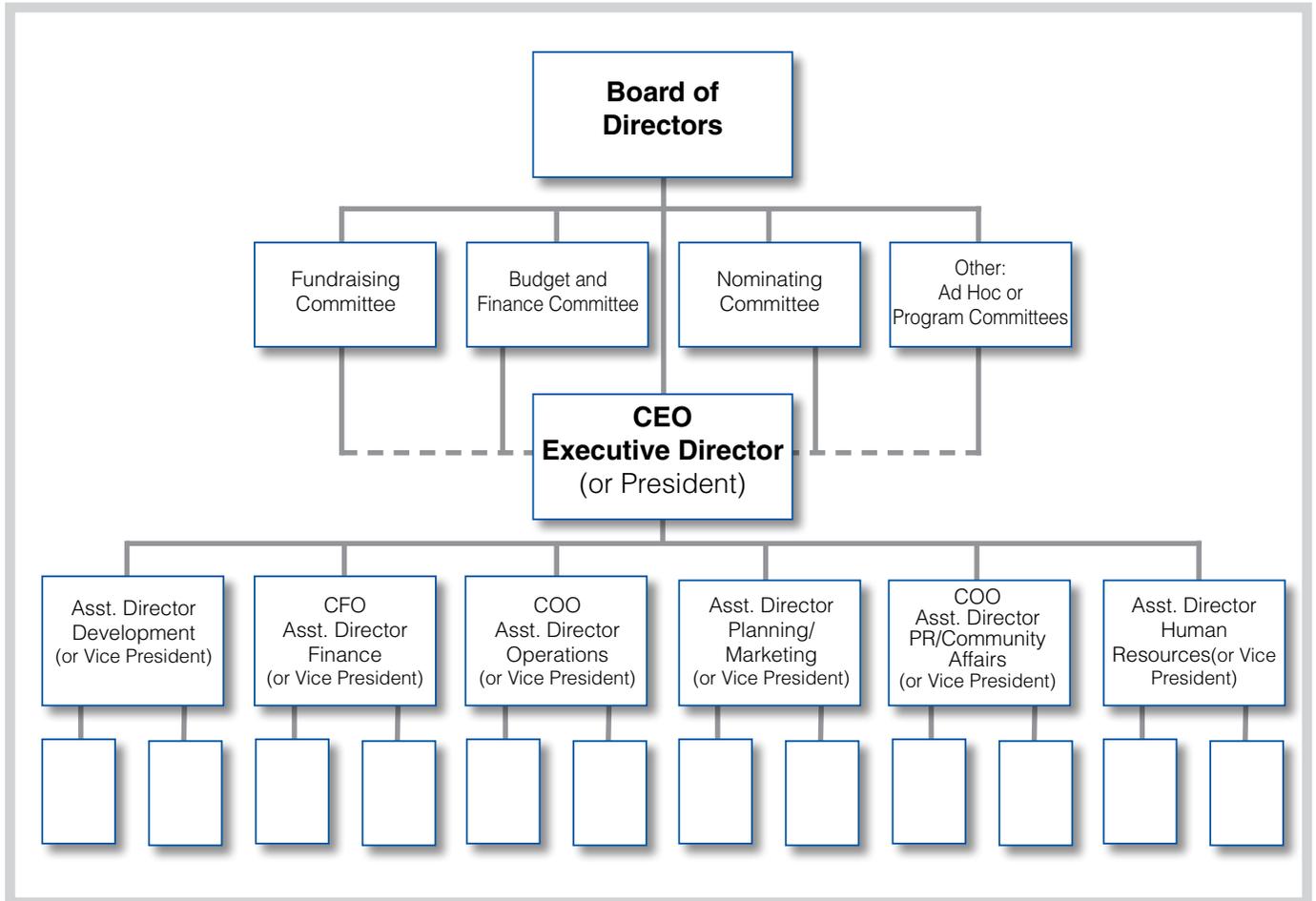
I will complete the following tasks (include start/end date) in order to reach this goal:

Tasks and Major Steps	Start/End Date
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

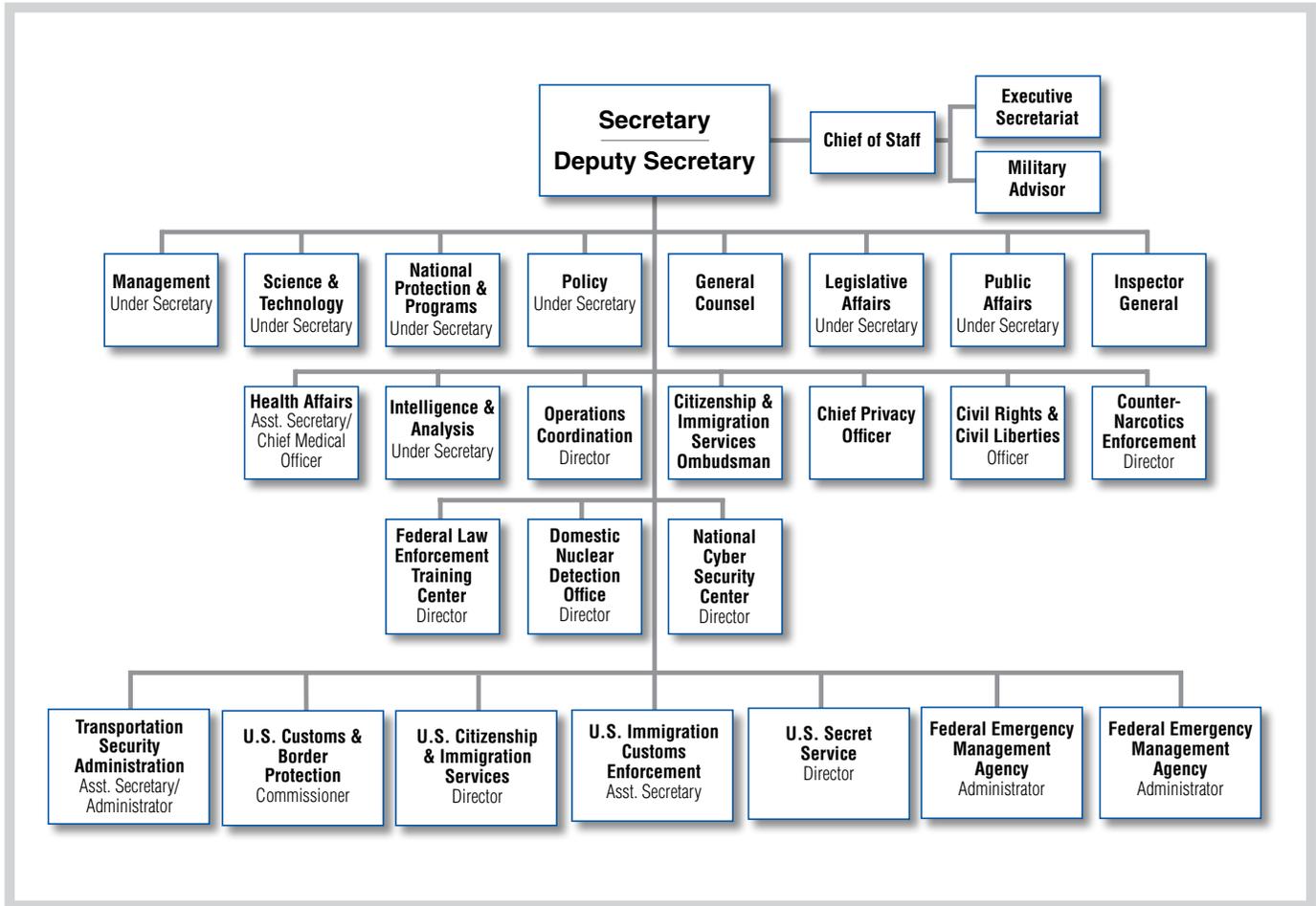
**Sample 6C – Corporate Organizational Structure**



**Sample 6D – Nonprofit Organizational Structure**



**Sample 6E – Government Organizational Structure**



**Activity 6F – Finding my Resources**

If you decide to complete an internship in another city, many of your experiences will be those you have outside your place of work. You should make sure you are aware of the places that will make your time more enjoyable and run smoothly.

Complete as much of the following information either before you head off to do your internship or soon after you arrive. Remember to check out the local Convention and Visitors Bureau website, and use the suggested search terms in your search engine of choice (i.e. Google, Yahoo!).

<b>NEAREST...</b>	<b>INTERNET SEARCH TERM</b>	<b>NAME &amp; LOCATION/ADDRESS</b>
<b>BANK BRANCH</b>	“(Bank name) + locations”	
<b>HOSPITAL</b>	“hospital + city/county name”	
<b>LIBRARY</b>	“library + city/county +state”	
<b>CHURCH/SYNAGOGUE/ MOSQUE, ETC.</b>	“(church	
<b>GROCERY STORE</b>	“groceries + city/county + state”	
<b>PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION STOP (I.E. BUS/TRAIN STOP)</b>		
<b>MEDICAL SUPPLY/REPAIR</b>		
<b>GAS STATION</b>		
<b>RESTAURANT(S)</b>		
<b>VEHICLE MECHANIC</b>		
<b>REC CENTER/GYM/YMCA</b>		
<b>MOVIE THEATER</b>		
<b>MALL/SHOPPING CENTER</b>		
<b>OTHER ENTERTAINMENT VENUES (I.E. MUSEUM, ART GALLERY, BOOK STORE)</b>		

**Sample 6G - Internship Evaluation by Program Manager**

**Intern Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Semester:**                **Fall**                **Spring**                **Summer**                **20\_\_**

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

**Supervisor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please rate the student intern on each of the following categories.**

**Professional Qualities**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
<b>RATINGS</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
Establishes rapport with supervisor					
Establishes rapport with staff					
Establishes rapport with clients					
Communicates well					
Seeks new knowledge					
Shows initiative					
Manages time well					
Produces accurate reports/records					
Demonstrates adequate knowledge					

**Personal Qualities**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
<b>RATINGS</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
Is punctual					
Is dependable					
Accepts Constructive Criticism					
Demonstrates Enthusiasm					
Dresses Professionally					

**I certify that** \_\_\_\_\_ **has completed** \_\_\_\_\_ **internship hours.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Supervisor Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Supervisor phone number**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Sample 6H - Internship Evaluation by Student**

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Site \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

**Please use a check mark (✓) to indicate your responses.**

<b>SITE</b>	Not Ap- plicable 0	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
1. The facility was adequate.						
2. This agency was clearly setup to have interns.						
3. The atmosphere at the agency was professional.						
4. Would you consider accepting employment at this agency?						
5. Would you recommend this site to other interns?						

<b>SITE SUPERVISOR</b>	Not Ap- plicable 0	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
Name:						
1. Interns were encouraged to ask questions and/or give opinions.						
2. The supervisor's development and presentation of material were consistent with the goals of the internship.						
3. The supervisor's presentation of materials was of the highest quality level.						
4. The supervisor was accessible to you and concerned about your progress.						
5. The supervisor's overall capability was of the highest quality level.						
6. I would consider working for this supervisor.						

\* Modified from [www.slis.indiana.edu/courses/internship/evaluation.html](http://www.slis.indiana.edu/courses/internship/evaluation.html)



Your title as an intern does not make you any less valuable than any other employee.

## Chapter 7 Skills for Success

### *Speaking up: Finding your inner voice*

One of the hardest things for an intern to do is ask questions. You may feel that you are speaking out of turn or that you are taking up too much of your boss's time. Remember, you are there to learn. You can't always learn by observing; you need to ask questions, too. If your boss invites you to a meeting and directs you to sit in the back of the room to observe, then it probably isn't best to ask questions during the meeting. Don't be afraid, however, to pull your boss aside afterwards to ask any questions that you may have.

It's important to show your team that you are paying attention to what is going on and that you are there to learn and be a team player. By asking questions, it shows that you are alert and aware of the inner workings of the organization and that you want to be an integral part of it. There will certainly be opportunities for you to offer your insight in meetings, and these are critical opportunities to provide your thoughts and prove your ability to add value to a team.

For example, if you are interning with a company that develops college textbooks, this is an ideal opportunity to offer your unique perspective as a young person. Although you may not be familiar with the actual content of the textbook, you would be able to offer insight about particular preferences students have about textbooks. In addition, you can share ways that you study and how a textbook design can assist in your study process.

Your title as an intern does not make you any less valuable than any other employee, even if you are not paid. The way you present yourself and engage in conversation at any office-related function is critical to your success within your position. Your attention in these areas will cause you to stand out among other interns in the office.



## Representing the organization

An important component of working or interning for any organization or company is knowing how to talk about the organization and the role you play within it. As your experience grows, you will begin to recognize that different types of organizations present themselves in a variety of manners. Non-profits are known for their tendency to mention the names of people or foundations that fund their major projects. Private companies sometimes like to mention a new project or major breakthrough that makes them the leader in their field. Government agencies may have legal restrictions regarding what they can and can't talk about when talking to people in the public. It is always a good idea to ask your supervisor and your colleagues how they talk about the organization to people when they are in outside meetings so that you can represent the organization well, too.

After you have a clear understanding of the role of the organization you're interning with, practice giving what is called an "elevator speech."

**An elevator speech is a concise, carefully planned, and well-practiced description about your company that anyone should be able to understand in the time it takes to ride an elevator.**

This is a concise, carefully planned, and well-practiced description about your company that anyone should be able to understand in the time it takes to ride an elevator. Typically, this means when you introduce yourself at a meeting or event, you should be able to relay what you do and where you work in close to 30 seconds. Keep in mind that your speech should be able to quickly catch the attention of others and make them want to more about your organization and what you do. It should also be relevant to the audience you are speaking to. You

wouldn't tell your sister's third grade class, "I design J2EE software applications to deliver SOA for F1000 companies."

### Here are two strong elevator speech examples:

"My name is Daniel Armstrong. I'm interning at Pintuk, Inc. In the aftermath of some of the recent accounting scandals, Pintuk helps companies make sure that they are following the law. No one else can help them comply as fast as Pintuk can."

"If you're a restaurateur and can't keep your regulars coming back, you're lost. Using proprietary online and offline survey techniques, Gant Research will find out how you can stop the losses and start generating profit. I'm serving as an assistant researcher at Gant for the summer."

## Networking

Once you have developed a 30-second speech based on what you would say to others about the company you're interning with, make sure to create one about yourself. It is a great tool to use as you explore employment options for after you complete your internship. It will help explain your accomplishments to potential employers.

When creating an elevator speech for yourself, consider using the following formula:

1. Who am I? (introduce yourself)
2. What field or industry am I in?
3. What position am I in? In what capacity do I serve?
4. How am I unique? What makes me different from the competition?
5. What benefits can employers gain from my skills, based on the accomplishments I've already made?  
(Hansel & Hansel, n.d.)

Although using a guideline is important, you should keep in mind that the elevator speech is really an opportunity to sell yourself, so pretend that you're creating a 30-second commercial for yourself. You have to catch the person's attention right away to ensure their continued interest in you and what you have to offer.

Here are some examples to get you started. Use the "My Elevator Speech" worksheet in the Resources section of the chapter to create your own:



### **High School Student Elevator Speech**

*Hi, I'm Rick, and even though I'm just a senior in high school, my voice is already recognized across the city. This year I've been interning at KYZ radio in the programming department. A lot of my responsibilities include scheduling and researching artists, but I've had a few opportunities to go on the air. People say they enjoy my calming voice, especially for the evening radio shows. I definitely look forward to majoring in broadcast journalism in college next year.*

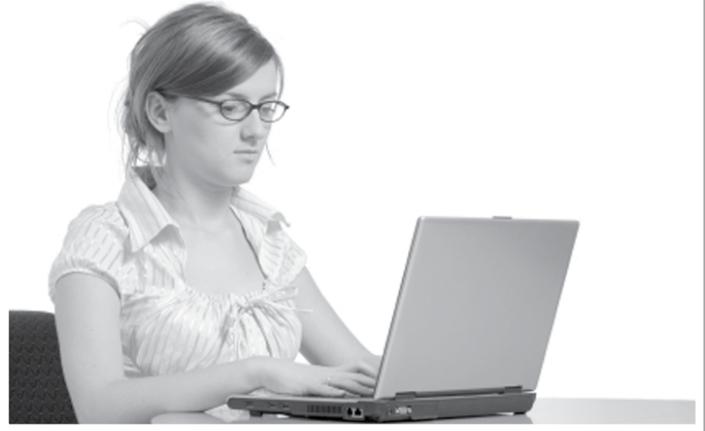
### **College Student Elevator Speech**

*Hi, my name is Lisa. Right now I'm working hard to make sure organizations across the country become richer and richer. I am currently a junior at George Mason University just outside of Washington, D.C. I'm currently majoring in business and am completing an internship at Lucida Finance Group. I'm co-managing files for a series of clients to create financial plans and investment portfolios, and am doing everything from researching and analyzing data, to creating and implementing the plans. I've always had a love for numbers, so I know this is the career path that I'd like to pursue. I've already worked hard with my supervisor to create plans that are being used at three organizations.*

These are great sales pitches because they describe what the individuals are currently working on, accomplishments that they have already achieved, and express the fact that they are goal-oriented. These speeches are also positive because they share what their specific skill sets are and that they want to put them to use in the future. It is also wise to make sure that the skills being presented are the most marketable skills of interest to the person being spoken to.

## Doing Your Homework

Just as it is important to be prepared and do research prior to any interview you have, it is equally as important to do the same background work before going to meetings and events. Figure out who will be attending these events and what organizations will be represented. Depending on the size of the meeting, it may be nearly impossible to remember all of the people that will be there, but make a list of the top five people who you want to meet. Then ask questions about them to those you have developed



relationships with within your office. Of course, it is also good to utilize any resources, such as the Internet, that might provide you with a history of each person's background.. Learn about any publications they may have written or other works they're known for, and do your best to get your hands on a copy of them. Oftentimes, these background items can be great conversation starters, and will generally make you stand out. Remember, you may only have one opportunity to sell yourself or even just meet this person, so make the most of it.

If the conversation goes well, you can always ask the person you've been speaking with to introduce you to other people at the meeting they think you should talk to. This opens the door for you not only to create a relationship with your initial contact, but allows you to continue to build your own network as you are introduced to more people. This may also make the next person you meet more receptive to you because you have a mutual contact.

## Business Cards

It is also always wise to ask folks you meet for one of his or her business cards, and to also make sure that you provide them with one of yours. If the company that you are interning with does not provide business cards, don't fret! Simply go to your local office supply store and purchase blank ones that come with an online template. Print these out and use them. In addition, some printing websites offer business card deals for little-to-no cost. Check out the following websites for business cards: [www.vistaprint.com](http://www.vistaprint.com), [www.overnightprints.com](http://www.overnightprints.com), [www.freeprintablebusinesscards.net](http://www.freeprintablebusinesscards.net), [www.123print.com](http://www.123print.com), [www.printsmadeeasy.com](http://www.printsmadeeasy.com).

Remember that you are in your internship to gain experience so that you have a greater advantage when looking for a job. This experience also comes with the contacts that you are able to make during your internship. In some cases, you may encounter many people in a given day and gather many business cards, which may make it difficult to remember who you met when you refer back to them. One way to trigger your memory is to write three key things on the back of the person's card that were memorable about him or her. For example, if you met Dan Sneed, the president of a large technology firm, you may write the following on the back of his card:

1. Wore tie with golf clubs
2. Talked about love of Star Wars
3. Mentioned having two sons in college

At the end of each day, or as often as possible, go through the business cards that you were able to obtain and send thank you notes to those who took special time out to talk to you. You can also use this opportunity to ask any follow-up questions you may have. Don't forget to send along a resume and even ask for an informational interview if you'd like to learn more about how you can fit into his or her organization.

### ***Finding and using a mentor***

It is always important to have mentors as you progress both in school and into the world of work. A mentor at work doesn't have to be your boss and, in fact, it may be better to ensure that your mentor is someone that is *not* your direct supervisor, or even on your team. Sometimes, you may need advice on how to work with a member of your team or you may be looking for further development in an area of the company that your team doesn't cover. The key component of mentoring is "relationship," meaning that while in some situations you may have someone you admire as a role model, a mentor is one with whom you continually interact. Having someone that can help you navigate the paths within your work setting and devise effective solutions to some of your questions will be helpful in making your internship a success.

If you decide that a mentor is what you need, consider what type of mentoring relationship would make the most sense within your work setting. There are five main categories.

- 1. Traditional One-to-One Mentoring** – A model of mentoring in which one adult is paired with one young person. Typically, there will be an extensive matching process to ensure a strong relationship, and it is expected that the commitment will be for one year or longer. This is most likely the form of mentoring you will use within the internship setting.
- 2. Peer Mentoring** – A mentoring model in which peers from a shared or similar developmental stage provide support and advice to mentees. Peers can be close in age or farther apart, depending on the circumstances.
- 3. Group Mentoring** – This form of mentoring matches one or more adults with a group of youth in a structured setting. This could include an individual or group of adult volunteers working with several youth in a school or a faith-based program, or a group of employees from one company working with students from a local school in a work-based mentoring program.
- 4. E-Mentoring** – E-mentoring describes a contemporary model commonly used in schools in which one (or more) youth is matched with a mentor. The youth and mentor regularly exchange e-mail messages for a designated, prolonged period of time. In ideal circumstances, e-mentoring includes occasional face-to-face meetings to provide a more personal connection. In many instances, a program coordinator (often a teacher) will monitor all correspondence and meetings. (*Paving the Road to Work*, NCWD, 2005.)
- 5. Reverse Mentoring** – This form of mentoring is where someone older or more experienced is mentored by someone younger or less experienced. Typically this is more likely to take place in the workplace, but there may be occasions for this to occur in social and educational settings. (Hare, 2008)

After you find someone that you are comfortable with and that you think would be a great asset to your internship experience, ask them if they would be willing to serve as your mentor. There are some helpful resources listed in the resources section of this guide that will share how to get this conversation going with a potential mentor and how to create a mentoring plan that will guide both the mentor and you as the mentee. In many cases you will find that a strong mentoring relationship lasts long after the internship is over. Your mentor can also be an extremely useful resource in helping you find a full-time position after you have completed your internship.

**In many cases you will find that a strong mentoring relationship lasts long after the internship is over.**

### ***Navigating the transportation system***

If you are using public transportation, make sure that you become extremely familiar with the system. Elevators and escalators break down at bus and train stations and you will need to know what other options you have. If your bus appears to be late or doesn't come at all, you should have the number of an accessible taxi service or some other form of transportation on hand. In general, most cities have accessible paratransit services, which do not follow fixed routes or schedules and are operated by public transit agencies, community groups, and not-for-profit organizations. While there is typically an application process to receive these services, often there are simpler or quicker options for people who will temporarily require this type of transportation. Just as with any employee, having a backup plan in place is essential because you never know what may happen during your commute to and from work. Also be sure to always have your office's phone number handy; if you're going to be late for any reason, it is always a good idea to call in and let your team know.

### ***Taking time off of work***

Every company has a policy on how to request time off of work and how much time you are allowed for both sick and vacation leave. Make sure that you familiarize yourself with this policy and know that the policy for full-time employees and interns is typically different. Some companies do not allow their interns to have paid time off, but will allow them leave without pay. Other companies expect their interns to be present every day, depending on the length of the internship.

**Universal leave** – In recent years, some companies have begun switching over to what may be considered a more convenient way of allowing time off. In these cases, they are combining vacation time and sick time into an overall number of paid days that an employee can take off each year. For example, as opposed to receiving 12 vacation days and eight sick leave days, a company may choose to simply provide employees 20 paid days off, which can be used in whatever manner the employee chooses. This is especially beneficial for those who don't tend to use many sick leave days and generally have them left over at the end of each year. This makes for more vacation time!

If the company that you are interning with operates under a universal leave structure, before you request your vacation time consider whether you have enough leave, just in case you need sick leave later in your internship. (You should always try to leave an extra day or two of sick leave, in case you get sick unexpectedly.) Also, keep in mind that doctor's appointments and other health-related visits that will require you to be out of the office will most likely be counted as sick leave. While these can't generally be anticipated, it is always best to plan ahead.

**Vacation time** – If your internship is long enough to allow you vacation leave, be sure to provide your employer with as much advanced notice as possible. It is also smart to make sure that you have completed as many projects as possible before you leave and that the team that you are working with knows of any due dates that lie within the time you will be away. Even though you are on vacation, it never hurts to leave your boss with a phone number by which you can be reached in case something important comes up that they need to contact you about. As a rule, employers are considerate of employees' (including interns') vacation time, so they would not typically contact you unless there was a dire need.

**Sick time** – If you have to call in sick or take sick time to see a doctor, make sure that you provide your boss with as much notice as possible. Also, make sure that you talk with your boss about how to provide notice that you will be out. Some supervisors prefer a phone call as opposed to an email. Others request that you call the administrative person for the team, such as a secretary, because he or she can be easier to reach within the office. Obviously, predicting when you will come down with an illness of some sort is nearly impossible, but if there is an instance where you wake up in the morning and realize that you aren't going to make it into work, call or notify the appropriate people immediately instead of waiting until shortly before you're due to arrive at your work site.

### ***Disclosing your disability***

If you are an intern with a disability, you may need to disclose before your interview or even upon starting your internship, especially if you need an accommodation to complete an interview. The key thing to keep in mind is that it is your choice to share information about your disability **WHENEVER** you choose to. Of course, while it is strictly your decision, employers are only required to make accommodations for you if you let them know your needs. Disclosure can be tricky and there are tools available to help you understand the best way to inform others of your disability, especially depending on the situation you are in. The way you've chosen to disclose in school will most likely be different than the way you disclose to your employer, and the way that you disclose to your boss might be different from the way that you disclose to the rest of the team that you work with.



One way to think about disclosure is to consider the fact that your disability can provide an advantage that interns without disabilities would not have. Again, your unique perspective may be able to further the company as they seek to address disability both within and outside of the organization. They may also be seeking to expand their marketing to include people with disabilities, on which you could certainly provide insight. Just as you consider how to market your accomplishments and strengths when going through the interview process, do the same when thinking about how to present your disability here: as a beneficial, distinguishing asset that you bring to the table. For more information and to get help thinking through the disclosure process, download the 411 on Disability Disclosure.

# Chapter 7

## Resources



## *My Elevator Speech*

Answer the following questions to help you formulate your elevator speech. Then use the space at the bottom to write out your full speech. Remember to make it catchy and keep it concise. This is your opportunity to sell yourself!

1. Who am I? (Your name, School, Organization your Interning with)

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2. What field or industry am I in?

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3. What position am I in? In what capacity do I serve? What do my duties include?

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4. How am I unique? What makes me different?

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5. What accomplishments have I made toward my career? What have I achieved within my current internship? What do I plan to achieve during my internship?

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My Elevator Speech

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Saying or sending a thank you note or card is one of the easiest things you can do for your supervisor and all the people who helped you throughout your internship experience.

## Chapter 8 **That was fun... Now what?**

### *Getting letters of recommendation*

**B**efore you leave your internship, make sure to ask your supervisor for a letter of recommendation to keep in your files. The letter does not have to be addressed to a specific person, but could simply be addressed “To whom it may concern” so that you can use it for your future job search. Having a letter like this on-hand will alleviate any potential stress that could come from scrambling to get in touch with people to provide references when you really need them. Obtaining a letter right away also allows your supervisor to write about your achievements and responsibilities while they are still fresh on the mind.

### *Saying thank you*

Saying or sending a thank you note or card is one of the easiest things you can do for your supervisor and all the people who helped you throughout your internship experience. It is oftentimes an aspect of completing an internship that gets overlooked, but saying thank you doesn't have to be time-consuming or costly. It can be as simple as leaving a card on your supervisor's chair when you leave, or sending an email to all of your co-workers expressing your gratitude and providing them with your contact information so that you can keep in touch. No matter how you choose to say thank you, it is important to do so. It could potentially make the difference in being offered permanent employment with the organization or receiving a “glowing” reference. The Resources section at the end of this chapter includes a sample thank you letter that can be used as a guide.

### *Keeping your network strong*

Throughout your internship you will meet many people and gather quite a few business cards or contacts for people who can help you succeed now and in the future. Make sure that you keep a record of all these contacts. While the work you complete as an intern is of great significance, another essential portion of the internship experience is building a network that you can connect with and seek assistance from as you proceed in your career.

Be sure to follow up with anyone who asked you to contact them after you complete your internship. If you would like to participate in another internship, start working early with any people you meet who could either help you prepare for this experience or could offer you an internship themselves. If there will be a break in time between when you complete your first internship and when you will be able to complete another one, continue to stay in touch with the same people that could offer you the next internship. The more experience you gain before you finish school, the greater the possibility that your resume will stand out from others when you begin applying for jobs.

## Reflecting on your accomplishments

So, how did your internship go? What did you learn? What did you really like about your internship? What would you like to try more of and what have you learned that you definitely don't want to do in the future? These are all very good questions that you should think about as your internship comes to a close and you have had some time to decompress after your internship is over. Taking time to reflect on your past internship experience gives you an opportunity to use your encounters as a guide and resource in your career exploration.

These questions can help guide you to think about your career prospects and what other types of internships to look for. The reflection sheet in the Resources section of the chapter will help you begin to think about what you gained from your internship.

You should also ask yourself some environmental questions. If you worked inside an office building during your internship, did you like that or would you prefer to be able to work outside during the day as well? Did you like working on a team or would you prefer to be able to work on projects independently? If you were able to travel to conferences and meetings outside of the city that your internship was in, did you like that experience or would you prefer a job that didn't involve travel? These are questions that can help guide you to the type of office environment that is the best for you to grow in. As always, sometimes it would be best to go outside of your comfort zone and try new things, but after every internship, take time to evaluate the environment that you worked in and notice trends that can help guide you. What seemed to work best for you and allowed you to thrive most? You should also consider these questions as you enter the workforce and look for your second or even third job.

Using a chart like the following can help you organize your thoughts:

Internship A Environmental Positives	Internship B Environmental Positives
1. Open office feel	1. Office mates had a sense of humor
2. Had my own office	2. Lots of natural light
3. Lots of natural light	3. Public transportation
4. Easy access to a kitchen for bringing my own lunch	4. Open office feel
5. Public transportation	5. Had an outside work area
6. Had an outside work area	6. Had a printer at my desk

Now that you know what you liked from your first and second internship, put the similar positives in the same box. This will help you know what to look for in an office environment when you are looking for a full-time job. Just because something didn't make the final list doesn't mean that you shouldn't look for that in your next job. This is just a guide to help you find the commonalities.

### Internship Environmental Similarities

1. Open office feel
2. Lots of natural light
3. Public transportation
4. Had an outside work area

### *Updating your resume*

Now that you have completed your internship and reflected on what you accomplished, make sure to take some time to update your resume with the new information from your experience. Keep in mind that resumes that stand out to employers are those that have specific, measurable, and realistic information. Don't just summarize the job description in your resume. Describe your duties and accomplishments in a manner that allows your next employer to see exactly what your skills are and how you can benefit the company.

# Chapter 8

## Resources



**Sample 8A – Internship Follow-Up Thank You Letter**

September 1, 2010

Ms. Jane Doe  
ABC Company  
Chicago, Illinois 11122

Dear Ms. Doe:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your guidance and supervision this summer during my internship experience with ABC Company. Your leadership throughout the summer assisted me in further development of my writing and communications skills as well as my ability to implement individual projects and function as a leading contributor on various team projects within the company.

The experience was more than I could have expected and allowed me the freedom to develop and maintain individual accounts as a professional member of the team. I actually felt like a major contributor in the weekly planning sessions and I was able to independently assist clients in making changes to their existing contracts with ABC Company. Working for ABC Company helped me use the knowledge I've acquired over the past three years as a college student as well as the skills I've developed during my previous internships with Z Corporation and the LTC Agency.

I also want to thank the entire staff in the Communications Department for taking the time to share their expertise and knowledge of the field. It was through these times that I felt I was able to learn and grow the most in developing my skills over the course of the summer. The staff was most responsive to my requests and always made me feel like a full-time member of the group.

I appreciate your willingness to write me a recommendation letter and you can mail it directly to my home address included above. I will keep you informed of my progress in searching for jobs as I get closer to actually applying and posting my resume.

Sincerely,

Becky Smith

**Sample 8B – Internship Follow-Up Thank You Letter**

August 13, 2010

Ms. Susan Smith  
Director, Public Relations  
XYZ Corporation  
225 Washington Street  
Boston, MA 02145

Dear Susan,

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for sponsoring my internship this summer with XYZ Corporation. My experience was extremely rewarding. In addition to sharpening my writing and editing skills, working in direct contact with the media, and maturing professionally, I thoroughly enjoyed working with such a great team of people. It was a pleasure to watch and learn from my fellow colleagues.

In particular, I want to thank you for the time you spent with me discussing my professional development. Our weekly meetings were very helpful and provided me with insightful constructive criticism of my work. The research I conducted for my report on the strengthening of media relationships and public visibility was quite interesting. I hope the report has provided the public relations department with some solid data and fresh ideas. If anyone has questions about my report or the methodology of my research, I can be reached via email at [jane.sample@yale.edu](mailto:jane.sample@yale.edu).

In addition, thank you for agreeing to write a letter of recommendation on my behalf. It will be particularly valuable to me as I search for full time positions next spring. I will contact you periodically to let you know how my career quest is progressing.

Please extend my thanks and appreciation to the entire public relations team for such a substantive internship experience.

Sincerely,

Jane Q. Sample

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### **Activity 8C - Internship Reflection Sheet**

Reflecting on your internship experience is an important part of your career development. During an internship, you discover skills, values, strengths, and interests. Ultimately, you may decide to go through new open doors and may decide to close others.

**Think about the following question when reflecting:**

What impact did this experience have on my personal growth?

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What was my greatest accomplishment?

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What did I find most challenging about this internship?

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What skills did I learn?

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How was I able to apply my current skills?

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What did I discover about myself? (Strengths, weaknesses, dislikes)

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What influence will my internship experience have on my future academic and career choices?

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What did I learn about office politics that will serve me in the future?

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What successes have I experienced? What did they mean to me?

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What setbacks have I experienced? What did I learn from these setbacks?

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Were there people whose work ethics I would imitate?

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What did I learn from people I admire in the organization?

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## Chapter 9 Personal Assistance Services

### *Finding a personal assistant*

If you have a disability that requires personal assistant services (PAS), you will have to consider your approach if you participate in an internship away from home. Some people have their parents or family members serve as their primary PAs during their internship or even request that their current PA's come with them for the duration of the internship. Others use a formal service or company to find PAs, or they post announcements on the Internet, college campuses and other areas for assistance.

If you have a PA at home that you would like to come with you, you will have to determine whether he or she desires or has the means to be away for an extended period of time: Is being your PA his or her full- or part-time job? Would his or her income increase or decrease by going with you for this time? Do other people, such as family members, depend on him or her as well, and is leaving for an extended period of time a current option?



When determining your needs for PA care, make sure to research the availability of PAS in the city that you will be working in. Sometimes working in a rural area may make it more difficult to acquire the services of a PA as opposed to working in a city or urban area. If you will be working in a more metropolitan area or even a college town and find that you need to have a PA, consider looking for them on college campuses. This is an ideal part-time job for a college student, as it will provide flexibility and a good source of income.

There are two great ways to find college students to work with you as a PA: through fliers and announcements posted on websites and bulletin boards, and through referrals from disability support offices on campus.

If the city you will be working in does not have a university or you are having difficulty finding a PA on the college campus, you can also contact the local Center for Independent Living to request assistance. Also consider contacting home health agencies in the area and placing ads in local newspapers, on career websites, and even on websites like [www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com). Of course, when choosing to post on websites with little security, you will have to take more caution in conducting screenings and background checks. If you are participating in an internship program that may have some experience recruiting students with disabilities, you may want to inquire about what others have done in the past regarding PAS.

## ***Being the employer***

It may seem odd to think of being an employer while also participating in an internship program, but if you are using PAs, you are the employer and you are the primary person in charge of hiring and, potentially, firing them. It is important to understand that PA's work for you and you should feel comfortable working with and managing them. This also means that you need to fully understand your daily needs so that you can make an educated decision on how many PAs you will need during your internship.

When interviewing for PAs, it is important to have appropriate screening mechanisms in place. Be prepared to complete multiple interviews and ask any questions necessary to ensure your needs are met. Having reliable PAs is critical because they will help you make an impression on your employer, as they may be responsible for making sure you arrive on time, look work appropriate and have your needs met at work quickly and efficiently so that you can focus on your job. During the interview process, it is also important to perform background checks before you offer employment to a potential PA in order to protect yourself and your personal information.

There are various publications listed in the resources section of this guide that can assist you in determining how to proceed in hiring and maintaining an appropriate relationship with a PA.

## ***Considering the cost***

Determining how you will pay for a PA is a key factor to consider when both applying to and preparing to leave home for an internship. Your health insurance or your Vocational Rehabilitation office *may* be able to assist with expenses related to covering a PA, especially because an internship experience is part of the process that could lead to full-time employment; but you should definitely make sure you are fully aware of your financial ability to fund a PA if necessary. If your PA is paid for through state medical benefits, such as Medicaid, you will need to speak with your benefits counselor to determine if there is a way to have the costs covered even when you're in another location. If you plan on personally paying for a PA, you will need to research the average rate for these services in the location you will reside in. Because the cost-of-living varies in different areas, you will find that job salaries and hourly wages are consistent with the cost to live there. Ensuring that you have quality care means making sure that you will compensate people appropriately for the services they provide.

## ***Determining your needs***

It is important to take time to determine what your daily schedule will be when you are in your internship program so that you can properly determine what assistance you will need your PA to provide. When putting together your schedule, make sure that you include both your tasks before, during, and after work. Depending on your needs, your PA may need to be at your apartment or house in the morning to assist you with getting ready for work and with going to bed in the evenings. You may also need him or her to come into the office to provide assistance, and if you want to participate in any after work activities you may need to your PA to assist then as well.

You should also think about the type of living arrangement you will have during your internship. Will you have a roommate who will be willing to help out if asked? Will there be someone at the front desk of an apartment or dorm complex to call if there is an emergency?

It is also important to understand your transportation needs while you are completing your internship. Will your PA drive you to each destination you need to go to? If your PA will be your primary driver, make sure you have alternate plans for how things will work should you decide to go out after work.

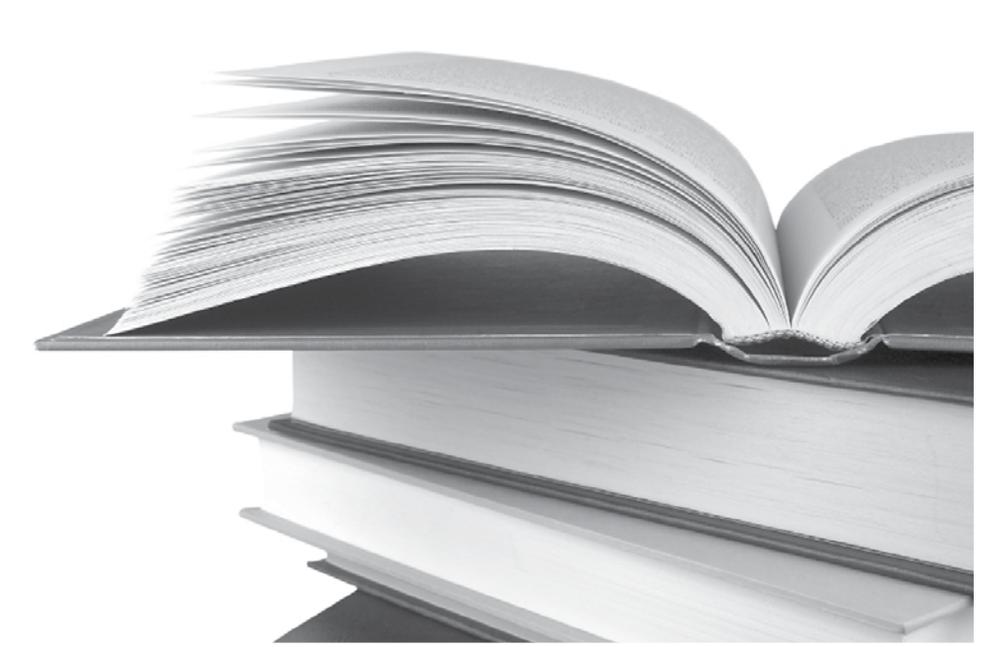
Finally, when determining your needs and what services your PA will provide, think about how structured your schedule will need to remain. This will help determine how many PAs you will need during your internship. Some people will only require one or two PAs, but others may stay very busy and need multiple. Although being active in the community during your internship will allow you to network and build relationships, you should be sure to consider how this will impact your PA schedule and needs.

### ***Talking to your employer***

It is a general rule of thumb to wait to disclose your PA needs to your employer after you have received an offer. This is simply to ensure that the primary thing your employer considers when determining whether to hire you as an intern is your skill set and what you bring to the table. Just like when disclosing your disability, you are not required to disclose anything about your PA services if you do not feel comfortable doing so. In order for your employer to make PA-related accommodations, you will need to disclose what supports you will need during the work day. Keep in mind the importance of maintaining personal and professional boundaries at work, so be sure to disclose only the information necessary to receive accommodations. In addition, make sure that any information you disclose is information you are comfortable talking about. It is not a sign of weakness to ask for accommodations and let your employer know about your PA needs. Using accommodations and a PA at work, to the extent needed, will only make you a more productive employee and can ultimately set you above the rest.

### ***Helpful hints***

- If you acquire your PA before you arrive in your new city, you may want to ask your PA to check out your housing arrangement before you get there to ensure its accessibility. Some interns have even mentioned asking their PAs to visit the university dorms in which they'll be staying during their internships to provide measurements to verify the dorm's rooms are accessible.
- Make sure to always have a backup plan in place for your PAs. Just as with any employee, your PA may call in sick, have an emergency of some sort, or simply not show up. As an employee yourself, you still have a responsibility to show up at your internship. It is always wise to have a substitute PA you can call in times like these. You should also think about what you will do if you decide to go somewhere or participate in an event that is not part of your typical schedule. If you need PA services, is your PA's schedule flexible enough to allow for these types of occurrences, do you have a friend that would be willing to assist, or will you have to sit this one out?
- Sometimes your Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services will cover the cost of your PA during an internship if you can show that it is directly related to your potential to have a positive employment outcome for VR upon completion of school. It will depend on the rules of the state that you are living in, your VR agency's budget, and how well you can convince your counselor that this is a beneficial investment to make. PA services can be expensive, so be sure to try to use all of your available options.



# Chapter 10 Resources & Publications

## ***American Association of People with Disabilities – Internship Programs***

[http://www.aapd.com/site/c.pvl11kNWJqE/b.6388937/k.63DF/AAPD\\_Internship\\_Programs.htm](http://www.aapd.com/site/c.pvl11kNWJqE/b.6388937/k.63DF/AAPD_Internship_Programs.htm)

[http://www.aapd.com/site/c.pvl11kNWJqE/b.5688003/k.BBDF/Other\\_Internships.htm](http://www.aapd.com/site/c.pvl11kNWJqE/b.5688003/k.BBDF/Other_Internships.htm)

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), the country's largest cross-disability membership organization, organizes the disability community to be a powerful voice for change – politically, economically, and socially. AAPD was founded in 1995 to help unite the diverse community of people with disabilities, including their family, friends and supporters, and to be a national voice for change in implementing the goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). AAPD runs two types of internships: summer congressional and IT internships, and year-round, internal internships. Additionally, AAPD's website hosts an updated list of internship programs designed specifically for people with disabilities.

## ***411 Guide on Disability Disclosure***

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure>

The *411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities* is designed to help you learn about disability disclosure. This workbook helps you make informed decisions about whether or not to disclose your disability and understand how that decision may impact your education, employment and social life. Based on the premise that disclosure is a very personal decision, the Workbook helps you think about and practice disclosing your disability.

## ***Making the Move to Managing Your Own Personal Assistance Services (PAS): A Toolkit for Youth with Disabilities Transitioning to Adulthood***

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/PAS-Toolkit>

This guide assists youth in strengthening some of the most fundamental skills essential for successfully managing their own Personal Assistance Services (PAS): effective communication, time-management, working with others, and establishing professional relationships. Whether moving from school or a home setting to work, college, or living on their own, transition-age youth and their families or friends would benefit from the information and guidance offered by the toolkit. Sample worksheets, questions, and charts provide readers clear, helpful examples of things to consider along the path to greater independence. And stories from real youth and their families give practical insight and guidance for youth with disabilities who want to manage their own PAS.

## ***A Step-by-Step Guide to Training and Managing Personal Assistants: Consumer Guide***

<http://www.rtcil.org/products/RTCIL%20publications/Personal%20Assistance/PA%20Manual%20print%20version%20Consumer%20guide.pdf>

The first step in using personal assistance services is to decide what activities you need help with. This guide breaks down the needs assessment process and makes training your assistant and providing feedback as simple as possible.

## ***Centers for Independent Living (CIL)***

<http://www.ilru.org/html/publications/directory/index.html>

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential private nonprofit organizations that are designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities. They provide an array of independent living services. At least 51% of the staff and board members of CILs are people with disabilities and they specialize in independent living skills, individual and system advocacy, peer counseling, and information and referral services.

## ***Interviewing 101: General Questions to Expect from the Employer***

[http://ric-swpa.org/ricworks/pdf/Interviewing\\_101.pdf](http://ric-swpa.org/ricworks/pdf/Interviewing_101.pdf)

The sample questions created by the Regional Internship Center of Southwestern Pennsylvania are great for preparing yourself for the types of questions that you may have asked at your interview.

## ***Plotting the Course for Success: An Individualized Mentoring Plan for Youth with Disabilities***

[http://www.nclid-youth.info/Resources\\_final.htm](http://www.nclid-youth.info/Resources_final.htm)

This plan guides mentors and mentees through a number of activities to help them think about a young person's developmental needs and goals, and the activities, experiences and connections that can help them reach these goals. Not only does this plan outline specific activities and action items for the mentee, but it also enables the mentor to have an opportunity to express how he or she would like to grow within the relationship. Driven by youth with disabilities and grounded in the research-based fields of youth development and leadership (learning, connecting, thriving, working, and leading), this plan will guide mentors and mentees as they "plot the course" to help youth and emerging leaders make a successful transition from youth to adulthood.

## ***The Work Site***

<http://www.ssa.gov/work/receivingbenefits.html>

This site is a resource provided by the US Social Security Administration and assists in helping you understand the supports available if you desire to work while still receiving government benefits. There are many programs that are available and information on all of them can be found here.

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