

## THE PURPOSE OF AN INTERNSHIP

Internships provide real world experience to those looking to gain the relevant knowledge and skills needed to enter a particular career field. Most internships are short term with a focus on obtaining on the job training and applying classroom learning in the real world. Although employment is not always guaranteed at the end of an internship, internships can be a means for employers to train and evaluate future employees.

An internship may provide you with the opportunity to:

- Develop new skills and abilities
- Transition into a new career
- Establish relevant professional contacts
- Explore career choices **early** and realistically
- Gain a competitive edge for the job market
- Obtain specialized training or certification
- Build self-confidence and knowledge

## HOW DO I FIND AN INTERNSHIP?

Finding internship opportunities takes research, planning, and time.

**Use the following resources to locate internship opportunities in your area:**

- Ask people in your personal network (talk with people you know)
- Create a target list of employers
- Visit targeted company websites
- Contact Human Resources (and/or Internship Coordinator)
- Informational Interviews
- Career Fairs
- Utilize LinkedIn to communicate with relevant professionals
- Join a career-related professional association
- Volunteer in the community
- Network at community events
- Utilize Job Search Tools (under Helpful Resources in the right column)

**Create job search materials/prepare for internship interviews:**

- a. Resumes
- b. Cover letters
- c. Practice answering common questions
- d. Have your resume critiqued
- e. Practice discussing your qualifications with employers

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

When exploring internship opportunities, it is important to consider where you would like to work and what skills and experiences you hope to acquire. Most internships are part of established programs, but you may also be able to create a new internship with the right organization or company.

/ **O\*Net** is a tool for career exploration and job analysis and has detailed job descriptions and skills necessary for each occupation.

/ **Reference USA** is used to locate and obtain information on businesses and organizations in the United States. See directions below on how to locate and use **Reference USA**.

/ **Log into your Student Portal:**

- / Click on Library
- / Select Find Article & More
- / Click Databases A-Z
- / Select R for Reference USA
- / Click [Reference USA](#)

### JOB SEARCH TOOLS

- / [Internships.com](#)
- / [Indeed.com](#)
- / [NACElink](#) (Ashford University listings)
- / [Volunteer Match](#)
- / [Idealist.org](#)

## TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP

- Work with your supervisor to map out goals and expectations for the length of your internship
- Communicate with other interns and professionals to develop your network of contacts
- Record and collect examples of your work accomplishments
- Track your job duties and accomplishments on your resume
- Be flexible! You may have to do some grunt work in addition to your professional responsibilities
- Develop an internship schedule that is balanced and meaningful
- Request letters of recommendation upon internship completion