

Internship



Northeastern University *University Career Services*

What Is An Internship?

An internship is a supervised opportunity to get “real world” work experience in your field of interest. It gives you a chance to apply the knowledge and skills you’ve developed in your classes.

Why Do An Internship?

You should do an internship to:

- Explore a major or career path
- Build your resume with valuable work experience
- Gain confidence in your own abilities
- Become comfortable with a professional work environment, expectations and social norms
- Meet people in the industry and develop a professional network
- Get your foot in the door at a particular company

Facts About Internships

- An internship is not the same thing as co-op
- While some internships are paid, most are not
- Internships tend to be flexible with a student’s schedule
- Internships can be part-time or full-time (8-40 hours per week)
- Internships generally last from 6 weeks to 4 months, and may take place during the summer or academic semester
- You can do an internship at any time, from freshman through senior year

What Kind of Internship Should I Look For?

Explore internships that match your skills and career interests. Search for opportunities that fit your academic program, help you explore a new direction, or develop new skills. Decide what is most important to you: Do you want to learn more about specific industries and careers, or do you want money for expenses? Sometimes you will have to choose between these things.

When Should I Start Looking?

The timing depends on what kind of internship you are seeking. Employers with structured, competitive programs begin the selection process months in advance. Most employers, however, start looking for summer interns anywhere between late January and April. Internships for fall and spring are usually advertised either very early in the semester, or late in the prior semester. Ideally, you should start networking and researching companies and opportunities as far in advance as possible.

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How Do I Find An Internship?

Searching for an internship is like searching for any other job; you need to use as many resources and strategies as possible. Here are some possible ways to find an internship:

- Use online resources such as HuskyCareerLink, the online database of Career Services.
- Research companies in your field of interest, and go directly to their websites to explore internship opportunities. You can use “Career Search” within HuskyCareerLink to research companies.
- Ask around. Many students find internships through “networking” – that is, talking to other people. Family, friends, and faculty may have leads or contacts in fields that you don’t even know about. Additionally, you should create a profile on LinkedIn.com, and join groups related to your fields of interest. LinkedIn is a fabulous way to research companies of interest and people who work there. (see Networking handout).
- Attend multiple Career Services events, including the Career Fair and Career Conversations series. You should take advantage of any chance to meet an employer or professional in your desired field. The more relationships you build in your field, the more likely you are to discover leads. Keep in mind that relationships take time to build, and may not have immediate payoff in terms of an internship, but can be excellent professional contacts.
- Keep your eyes and ears open for spontaneous opportunities. One Career Services client got an internship from striking up a conversation with someone at a Northeastern baseball game!

What Do I Need To Apply To An Internship?

- A resume with relevant work, educational and extracurricular experience (see Resume handout).
- A targeted cover letter/letter of introduction (see Cover Letter handout).
- Depending on the position, you may need a portfolio, writing samples, or other examples of your work

What If The Employer Requires That I Get Academic Credit?

Interview preparation - practice your interview skills by using Interview Stream (Careerservices.neu.edu, in the tools section, and see Interviewing handout). Some employers, particularly in the entertainment and communications fields, but also others require students to earn academic credit in order to participate in their company’s internship program. Some departments, such as Communications and Human Services, already have courses set up for their respective students. Other students should speak with their academic advisor or department head to discuss the possibility of a directed or independent study.

EXED 2010 Internship for Career Decision-Making is an elective offered by Career Services for full-time, undergraduate students interning at companies that require they receive academic credit. Internships must be approved in advance. Students complete journal entries and a variety of other assignments related to the company and industry in which they are working.

Internship Resources

- HuskyCareerLink (HCL) — www.careerservices.neu.edu
- SimplyHired — www.simplyhired.com
- Indeed — www.indeed.com
- Princeton Review — www.princetonreview.com/cte/search/careerSearch.asp
- Craigslist — www.craigslist.com
- Non-profit internships — www.nonprofitjobscoop.org and www.idealists.org
- Federal internships — www.usajobs.gov (use keywords: Student Temporary Employment Program)
- Washington Center for Internships — www.twc.edu

Sample Internship Résumé

Your Name

000 Huntington Ave. Boston, MA ▪ a.student@neu.edu ▪ 000-123-4567

EDUCATION

Northeastern University, Boston, MA

Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies, May 2013

GPA 3.0

SKILLS

Computer: Proficient in Microsoft Word and PowerPoint; familiar with Access and Excel

Language: Strong conversational ability in Spanish

EXPERIENCE

Really Trendy Clothes, Boston, MA

Sales Associate, September 2006 August 2007

- Promoted sales and assisted customers in selection of clothing
- Coordinated and marketed store specials and floor displays
- Inventoried and replenished stock
- Trained new employees on store policy and sales techniques

The Green Family, Boston, MA

Babysitter, August 2004 September 2006

- Supervised two elementary school aged children in after school activities three times a week
- Planned entertaining and educational activities for the children
- Assisted children with homework

VOLUNTEER

Books On Tape, Boston, MA

Reader, (once a month) January 2005 January 2006

- Read and record text books, instruction manuals and fiction

INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

Diving, snow boarding, and intramural lacrosse. Have traveled extensively in South America.

Student government representative and debate team member.

Sample Internship Letter

Dear Ms. O'Connell:

I am writing to apply for the Event Planning Intern position that you advertised on the HuskyCareerLink at Northeastern University. I recently completed my first-year at Northeastern where I am pursuing a degree in Business. My education combined with my organization skills and office experience qualify me for this position.

Last year I was Assistant to the Director at Northeastern Hillel. In addition to organizing the Director's office and schedule, I also maintained the membership database and processed member data. I promoted and coordinated special events being run under Hillel auspices, which grew to a position on the Hillel General Board as Publicity Chairperson, then to Vice President of Administration on the Executive Board. I am interested in taking my experience in this area and building a career in event planning for nonprofits.

In High School, I took a position as an office assistant in a local business. The business' client and accounting files were difficult to find in the disorganized office, so I identified office filing mechanisms to form an improved way of working in the office. I created separate, easy to use filing systems for the client and accounting files. I did all of the strategizing and organizing myself, and it made the office work more efficiently.

I would be happy to meet with you to discuss my qualifications in greater detail. Please feel free to contact me at k.smith@husky.neu.edu or 617-999-9999.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

Kaitlyn Smith

Subject: Editorial Intern

Dear Mr. James:

I am currently a first-year student at Northeastern University where I am pursuing a degree in English. I am interested in the Editorial Intern position that was listed on our Career Services jobs website. As an English major I have developed strong editing skills and attention to detail, and I am eager to gain additional hands-on experience before I begin co-op next year.

My supervisor at the Gap, where I am now working, would tell you that I am responsible, motivated, and a quick learner. For example, one customer recently went out of her way to speak with my manager to praise my customer service skills. These personal characteristics will serve me well as I develop professional experience.

Enclosed is my resume for your review. I will follow up with you next week to discuss the possibility of an interview. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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Once You Have An Internship, How Do You Make The Most of It?

- **Develop goals and expectations.** You should begin your internship with a clear set of goals and expectations. What skills would you like to develop? What knowledge do you hope to gain? What type of training will you receive? What kind of projects do they usually give interns? Sit down with your supervisor as soon as possible to clarify mutual goals and expectations.
- **Demonstrate professionalism.** Dress according to the standards of the company, be consistent and punctual, and complete your work in a timely manner. Find out what the company's policy is regarding personal phone and computer use, including cell phone use, texting, and Facebook.
- **Maintain a positive attitude.** Be enthusiastic and diligent about every task, no matter how mundane you may consider it. A good attitude does wonders for impressing supervisors, and may lead to more challenging tasks. Remember, even company presidents sometimes do their own photocopying!
- **Show initiative.** Be proactive – if you have completed all current projects, ask for more work. If you see something not getting done, offer to do it.
- **Be an active learner.** Demonstrate your interest in the department/company/industry by asking questions and observing as much as possible. Keep up with industry news by reading relevant trade publications so you can understand the context in which your organization and internship operate.
- **Network.** Make an effort to get to know your supervisors and co-workers – they can be excellent sources of information and feedback, potentially refer you to new opportunities, and even serve as references for you later. Ask about their experiences in the field and get their advice.
- **Reflect.** Check in with your supervisor regularly to review your progress on assigned tasks and receive feedback. The whole point of an internship is to gain new knowledge and learn new skills, and you want to make sure you're on track. Also, check in with yourself, and reflect on your own achievements and what you learned about yourself.
- **Follow up.** At the end of your internship, be sure to thank your supervisor and co-workers, and follow up with email thank-you's. Stay in touch! This keeps your networking going, and creates good will for future references and opportunities.

Where Have NU Students Interned?

(partial listing)

Atlantic Records	MTV	Biogen
Merrill Lynch	Special Olympics	Saks Fifth Avenue
Cape Cod Baseball League	Arnold Worldwide	Vinfen
Dana Farber Cancer Institute	KISS 108	Puma
EMC	MA Land Court	Project Bread
Riverbend Music Center	BBC	UBS



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