



All About Internships

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Internship – as a college student, you’ve heard or seen the word a million times. Is doing an internship or gaining experience in the field you ultimately want to work in really that important? **YES.** According to a survey conducted by VaultReports.com, 81 percent of 1999 college seniors completed at least one internship before graduating and 61 percent completed two or more. Translated, this means that to compete in the job market, you need to have the experience of at least one internship, if not more. Below are some frequently asked questions related to internships and career-related experiences. For more information, talk to your academic advisor or your CASNR career development coordinator.

What is the difference between an internship and a career-related experience?

There is actually no difference. Any position (paid or unpaid) that allows you to gain insight or “meaningful” experience in the field in which you ultimately want to work, or in which think you want to work, can be called an internship. Additionally, you should realize that you can become more knowledgeable in your field of interest by working in related areas and not just in the exact area related to your major.

Where should I look for an internship?

You would be amazed how students acquire their internships. First, tell everyone you know that you’re looking for an internship, and then get busy! Internet searches, the CASNR Career Services job board and Web site, OSU 7 of 10, newspapers, your classmates, family members, the Potential Internships binders, *The Internship Bible*, and many other resources are good places to start. Perhaps you find a place you’re interested in working, but notice they are only advertising part-time jobs and not internships...remember, it’s the same thing as long as you’re getting good experience related to your career area! Talk to the staff of CASNR Career Services & your advisor for other resources.

What can I gain as an intern?

Not only do you gain experiences that look great on your résumé, you also make some real

connections. Holding a position in your field of interest, if only for a few weeks, allows you to see first hand the world at work. Consider it an audition for a career. You have not yet dedicated your entire life to this field, and in most cases, there is time to make some adjustments or to forge straight ahead. Additionally, you have the opportunity to really impress your supervisor with your skills, and in some cases, if you’re a good match for the organization, you may land a future job offer. Some companies even consider an internship part of your training period, shortening the training time you actually have to spend once employed full-time with an organization. Additionally, you may make connections that open doors for other internships in different areas or with different organizations. Most of all, you gather “real world” information you can take back to the classroom. In some cases, you may also earn a little money.

How many internships should I do?

As many as you can! Remember, everyone does one. Ok, maybe not everyone, but strive be exceptional! Take advantage of as many experiences as you can. Multiple internships will prepare you well and could increase your starting salary.

Where can I do an internship?

Anywhere you want to! From Washington, Oklahoma to Washington, D.C., there are

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Oklahoma State University ♦ 136 Ag Hall ♦ Stillwater, OK 74078-6017
405.744.5395 ♦ FAX: 405.744.5339

<http://www.casnr.com> ♦ careerservices@casnr.com

experiences available everywhere. Don't limit yourself to what you're familiar with. This is your opportunity to do some exploring and discover not only what it is that you want to do in your future, but also what sort of environment you would like to live in.

How long does an internship last?

Depending on the nature of your internship, it could last between 3 days & 2 years! Most common are summer internships, but internships can also be done on a part-time basis. You may choose to spend a fall or spring semester at an internship site. You may miss a semester of classes, but will gain invaluable experience. A valuable and meaningful internship doesn't have to meet any time requirements (unless completing internship for course credit). The most important stipulation should be that it allow you adequate time to understand a process or acquire additional knowledge related to a particular career.

What if the organization I want to work with has never had an intern?

Help them understand. Can you explain what an internship is? Are you able to outline what you would be able to contribute to the organization through an internship? What are your strongest selling points? Employers who do not have previous experience with internships may be intimidated by the term and may not understand how valuable they could be. If you believe you would be able to contribute to the organization and that you would have a meaningful internship at that location, convince them that you're just what the organization needs!

What about money?

If the organization you're working for doesn't offer a paid internship or position, then you have to make a decision. Remember, just

because you don't receive a paycheck doesn't mean it's not worth doing. Do you believe that the opportunity that is available to you will benefit you in the long run? Will it benefit you enough to forgo salary for a little while? What will be your return on the time you invest? What other resources can you call upon? Is it possible to volunteer at the internship part-time and hold a paying position for the other part of the time? Does your college offer an internship scholarship? Check out your options before turning it down. Some outstanding internship locations believe that the experience and the name of their organization on your résumé are payment enough. You have to be the judge.

How do I act once I've landed the internship?

Like a sponge! Learn everything that you can. Learn the names of everyone you meet. Keep your eyes and ears open, and keep a journal. Develop business cards to hand out. This is your opportunity to show the entire organization what you're capable of. Go above and beyond their expectations. If you like the organization, show them why they can't live without you! Most importantly, respect the fact that you've been selected for this position. Many others probably applied, but you were selected. Don't abuse that honor.

What "tools" do I need to get an internship?

The same tools you need to land a full-time job.

- Well-written professional résumé
- Eye-catching cover letter
- Examples of what you're capable of
- Strong interview skills
- Knowledge of the organization

Will an internship really make a difference in my career path?

YES