

Internships: The Inside Scoop

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

DECEMBER 2007

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Importance of gaining an internship
- Why you need to be considering internship opportunities
- Tips for how to land the perfect internship

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Do you have what it takes?

Deciding whether or not to accept the position as an intern is the easy part. The only thing that requires effort is finding an internship that interest you.

In today's market, you will be competing for jobs with applicants who on paper, seem similar to you. To stand out, you will have to make yourself unique and attractive to potential internship programs. One way to do that is to secure an internship. While most applicants will highlight their GPA's, or mention a few student organizations they were part of, fewer applicants are talking about their work experience. Whether it is working in an office that is hands-on, or learning about something new, your commitment and ability to snag an internship shows good quali-

ties and will make you a more desirable candidate.

So, what's the first step? Secure an internship. Before you get worked up about not having the right one —make sure you at least have one opportunity. In

order to better prepare yourself for getting an internship, make sure you are keeping up with your college career center's website. There are plenty of employers that are sure to go through college career centers in order to locate qualified and interested applicants. You can

also find internship postings online at websites like idealist.org and even on www.hnbf.org.

Once you find and accept an internship, it is extremely important that you recognize that the hard work is not over. In fact, it has just begun. Make sure to stay on top of your intern duties, as well as your studies. At the end of your internship

assignment, your supervisor will be a good reference for future employment, so you want to make sure you leave a good and lasting impression on whoever that may be. Most importantly, learn as much as you can and get the inside look at a potential career.



Seek and you will find —the trick is to seek!

Do you ever find that the hardest part to getting anything finished...is actually starting? We all know that things won't get done without some initial effort, but for some strange reason, the first step is the hardest to make. Thankfully, you are not alone in your



area of weakness! Admitting is the first step towards overcoming, so let's all fess up, and move on!

The reality of it, is there is no reason that you should not be able to get an internship!

There are a variety of available resources to

help you land your internship. In fact,

the HNBF interns have put together a list of resources, tips, and inside information to help you "seek" and secure the best internship opportunities for you. In addition, if you can't find an established internship program in your home town, make one up. In other words, seek out the company or organization you want to work for an tell you you'd like to be an intern, for free! Most people will always accept free help and you will get a great internship opportunity!



Your time as an intern is a stepping stone to making your career a reality. What are you waiting for?



Fantastic Four: Reasons to Intern

1. Experience

The job market today is more competitive than ever. Want to rise to the top of the resume pile? Well, you can, with some experience. Internships are a great way for you to wiggle your way into organizations, agencies, and departments of your choice. Even if it is unpaid, or if you are mostly doing “busy/errand” work, it is great to be in the environment, learning about the daily activities that go on at your internship.

2. Professionalism / Self-Confidence

Internships provide opportunities to converse with colleagues who are may be two or three times your age and who have more work and life experience than you. Perhaps you are dealing with sensitive material and need to be trusted with confidential information or documents. Internships also provide a great

venue for your self-confidence to grow tremendously. As interns, you are expected to multitask, prioritize, and maintain a positive work environment—all while upholding company standards and professional ethics. This requires you to become confident in your ability to handle duties, and ask questions. Learning how to present yourself in a professional manner with lots of self-confidence is something you won't learn in the classroom, but it will help you in the job market.

3. Improvement in Oral and Written Communication

By interning, you are bound to be faced with people from all walks of life, ethnically, spiritually, racially, economically, at various stages in their career paths. As an intern, you will also going to add to the diversity of the community of people you interact with. There's no place to better learn the rules of communication than a

place that you can actually communicate! Be it through oral or written expression, your skills will improve as you gain experience at your internship.

4. Knowledge Straight from the Field

Your time in school has helped to prepare you for your future career path. As an intern, you will put those skills to good use and gain the real-world experience you can't find in a classroom. This is definitely a plus for employers when they are looking for a college graduate who is mature and can understand the requirements of the professional world. Don't you want to be the applicant everyone wants? Well, getting an internship is one way to become a hot commodity in the job market.

Resume Writing Tips

Make sure to include the following sections in this order:

Contact Info: Make sure this pops out to the reader and is professional. **NO EMAIL ADDRESSES THAT ARE INAPPROPRIATE!** Just put your name or initials @internet provider.com.

Education: As always, make sure to begin with the most recent, and work your way backwards. If you've got a high GPA, flaunt it! If you don't

think it is reflective of your ability, it isn't necessary to include it. You can also include any academic awards that you've received from your current institution.

Awards/Honors: These are different from your academic awards. These are anything that you have been recognized for from the community. Be prepared to write a brief statement explaining ones that are not nationally known, such as

scholarships and fellowships.

Experience: This is the meat of your resume. Be sure to write well keep it organized. Include any jobs, past internships, volunteer positions, and extra curricular activities.

Skills: List any skills that will be an asset to the company.

Interests: A short little section to personify your resume—but don't forget to keep it professional and make a good impression!



Ok, so you decided to make the effort to intern. You sought out prospective internships, you put

While You are Interning

effort into an outstanding resume, and you got the internship you have always wanted. Congratulations! You're there, now what do you do? Two words: *Take advantage.*

The internship you chose should be one in a career path that interest you. That way, you get to experience something before you commit to it for life. So, start making career moves even as an intern. You need to make sure that you are performing your tasks as efficiently as possible, showing that you care about your newly acquired internship. In addition, seize every opportunity for future success that the internship may have for you.

This can mean attending meetings or confer-

ences, deciding to research something new for the company, looking into how you can further company productivity, networking with future colleagues, building partnerships with outside agencies, or simply adding to the everyday functions to your working environment. Always go the extra-mile, because it may get you your first job offer.

Don't forget, your work product has to be great too! So ask questions and get constructive feedback. Remember, your internship provider knows you are just learning, so don't be afraid to ask for help.

Keeping the big picture in mind is key!

Think about what lies ahead and do what you can to reach those goals.

It's Over, Am I finished?

As the end of your internship approaches, you should be evaluating your experience. Was it good? Was it bad? What are some of the areas you found most rewarding about the internship? What about the least? These are some examples of the types of questions you should be thinking about.

Reflection on your performance, post-internship, is apart of the internship process most people

forget about. It is extremely important for you to take time to reflect about your experience as an intern and the work that you did. You need to evaluate, for yourself, to see if it's a good career fit for you.

If your supervisor does not initiate an evaluation process with you, you need to step up and ask! It

may be the case that your supervisor is busy, but send them an email and set up an appointment to meet one-on-one

POST INTERNSHIP TIP— Write down everything you do during your experience, so you can update your resume!

to discuss your performance.

Request that your performance

be evaluated from time to time. It says a lot about your ability to take criticism and use it constructively. If for no other reason, it's a good habit to have!

Focused on the Future

Above all...you have to keep the BIG PICTURE in mind. What was the point of your internship in the first place? For whatever field you are deciding to intern with, your time as an intern is a stepping block for getting closer to making your career a reality.

If for some reason the internship didn't offer you what you had

anticipated—that is ok. Don't dwell on it! It was a learning experience and will only add to your diversity as an applicant to future jobs!

If you have time to take on more internships before graduating from college—go for it! If you're looking to make a little more of a commitment, think about fellowships. Just remember that these are all at-

tempts at helping you close the gap between your life as a student and your life as a professional.

Don't waste any-time, and seize the opportunities as they come!

VOCABULARY:

Internship: A work opportunity, usually part-time, oftentimes unpaid, during the school year or summer, to experience work in a field of interest to you. Sometimes your school will give you credit for an internship.

Fellowship: Similar to an internship, but usually these are post-graduate (after you finish college) programs that are one to two years long and have a salary or stipend.

HISPANIC NATIONAL Bar Foundation

Igualdad a través de la educación ■ Equality through education

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The **Hispanic National Bar Foundation** believes that knowledge and diversity benefit everyone. Lack of opportunities, role models, information, and financial support prevent many Hispanics from becoming leaders and contributing their voices on issues that affect our communities.

The **HNBF** provides tools and resources necessary to ensure full and equal opportunity for Hispanics to become leaders in the global community, thereby ensuring a brighter future for all.

The Hispanic National Bar Foundation (the HNBF) is a Section 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to charitable and educational purposes. Founded in 1987 by Hispanic attorneys who overcame the odds, the HNBF was originally designed to provide financial support for the next generation of Hispanic leaders. Since then, the HNBF has evolved into a national organization providing not only scholarships, but also programs and tools to support and inspire educational achievement within our community.

Visit us on the web!
www.hnbf.org

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Things to wear to your internship:

- Suits (if you have one, or if not, a blazer over a skirt or pants is a way to dress up when appropriate).
- Dressy shoes with a closed toe.
- Conservative jewelry.
- Skirts that hit the knee.
- Large work bag to hold notes, folders, pens, etc.

Things to AVOID wearing:

- Jeans (unless your employer says it's ok beforehand)
- Sandals, flip flops.
- Lots of flashy jewelry, several rings, multiple bracelets.
- Low cut tops, anything that has skinny straps or is sheer.
- Low rise pants that are inappropriate when you bend over.

WAIT! What about an internship at the HNBF...

Internships with the HNBF provide students with a unique opportunity to gain comprehensive



insight into a National Hispanic organization. Along with gaining hands on experience interning with a

Washington, DC charitable institution, this position provides students with the opportunity to network with top U.S. attorneys in diverse legal settings.

The goal of this internship is to increase participation in foundation and non-profit settings



by giving students exposure to the operation and growth of a not for profit educational organization in a dynamic and changing legal environment.

If interning with the HNBF isn't good enough, check this out: The Executive Director of the HNBF can coordinate with your college or university, if the college or university is willing, and approve course credit for this type of community service/ voluntary work!



To find out about how to apply, go to the website at www.hnbf.org and send in your resume and cover sheet.