

# How to Create Your Own Internship

## Why Create Your Own Internship?

- Unable to find an internship at a company you want to connect with
- Having trouble finding an internship in a specific field of interest

## Benefits of Creating an Internship Opportunity:

- Expands your network in a field directly related to your future career goals
- Strengthens and develops specific skills
- Provides networking opportunities at a company of interest
- Gives you the ability to build your resume with experiences you find beneficial

*Those who complete internships within the same company they want to work for also have an advantage for entry-level positions compared to those who completed internships elsewhere.*

**Brainstorming, Planning, and Researching** will help you stay organized and focused on the internship search. Before contacting anyone, think about the kind of internship you want to participate in and the types of companies that you are interested in learning more about.

## Some exploration questions to think about when planning...

- What motivates you? In other words, what are your values and passions?
- What work environment or culture do you see yourself in?
- What are the learning objectives/overarching goals that you hope to work on to develop the skills valued in your field of interest?
- What do you want to learn from the internship experience? Check out the **National Association of Colleges and Employers** competencies to gain a sense of what employers are looking for and what you would like to work on.
- What opportunities are available for someone with your interests and background?
- What skills do you want to gain or improve on?
- What are your strengths and how can you apply them?
- How can you connect your interests to an on the job experience?

*Tip: While thinking about the skills you want to develop and where you want to complete the internship, look at internship postings to get a sense of what is available and how you can write your internship proposal.*

## Two Approaches to Creating an Internship

1. Requesting an informational interview
2. Contacting an employer inquiring about internship opportunities

## 1. Informational Interview

If a company is not offering internship opportunities, before requesting your own internship, you can also reach out to someone from a company or field of interest about an **informational interview** before you discuss the possibility of interning with them. Informational interviews help you learn more about the company and if you would be a good fit, while building your network.

*Utilize your network when requesting internships. After identifying companies of interest, do not hesitate to ask friends, family, or student organization members where they completed internships.*

### The person you interview can:

- Provide you with general career advice
- Be aware of an internship that is not posted
- Refer you to someone in the same field that is looking for interns
- Keep you in mind if any opportunities come up

If the interview does not lead to an immediate internship, it can help you find a long-term mentor in someone who is currently working in your dream industry or at your dream company.

*Tip: Always send a thank you to someone that gave you the opportunity to participate in an informational interview.*

For more information about informational interviews, please see our **Career Guide**.

## 2. Proposing an Internship to an Employer

Contact an employer via email or phone to express interest in creating an internship with their company.

**Be confident:** when you contact an employer about a potential internship, you are demonstrating self-motivation, passion, creativity, initiative, and taking the time to research a company or field that is the right fit for you.

- If emailing an employer, provide a **tailored cover letter** and **resume**.

### When contacting an employer:

- Have a concrete idea about how you will express your interests, goals, and how you are going to advocate for the opportunity.
  - When defining what you want to do, think about where you are now and where you want to be in the future.
- Be flexible and open to learning about what the employer might offer you.

Remember, internships are learning experiences, so it is normal if you do not have all the specifics in mind. If you want to take the initial contact a step further, you can also include an **internship proposal**. An internship proposal is a unique internship posting that you created.

### Benefits of an Internship Proposal

- Sometimes employers do not want the burden of supervising an intern without a structured program.
- If you reach out to an employer stating you are willing to do anything for them, you can potentially come across as lacking direction.
- You are more likely to stand out because you have a goal-oriented plan!

## Proposal Email

Your initial email should be sent to a contact in the area of interest or Human Resources. In the email you will want to include:

- A clear and concise description of what you would like to do for the organization
- An explanation as to why you have chosen the specific company (this should be tailored to each company you contact)
- Your goals and learning objectives
- How you think the company will also benefit from your internship role
- Your specific knowledge/skills/background and/or previous experience and how to apply to your goals and internship responsibilities
- Your availability and desired time frame for the internship
- Potential tasks and assignments you want to complete

Be aware that it is okay to follow up in a week or two if they do not respond.

## Get Creative!

If you are having trouble creating an internship, think about starting an independent project, blog, YouTube channel, or film. These avenues will engage people via your social media presence and help you start developing skills on your own.

Proposing an internship and finding someone that agrees to the opportunity can take time. Do not give up or feel discouraged if it is taking longer than you expected. Don't get demotivated if you don't hear back. Be patient and persistent.

**For any further questions stop in the Fleishman Center to speak to a Career Consultant.**