



## Creating an Internship

So, you are ready to start applying the theoretical skills you have learned in your classes. If so, it is time to start to consider an internship. An internship is a paid or unpaid position where you work with an employer to get practice in your field. It is much like the apprenticeship model humans have used for centuries to learn their trade. An internship can be in any industry. It is the last practical experience in any given field before you can consider yourself a graduate of a program. Many employers want employees with experience, and many would-be employees get this experience through internship programs.

There are two types of internship programs. One is an established internship program. This is also known as a formal internship program. This means that the company recruits interns on their own. They have a contact person inside the company who consistently looks for potential interns to fill positions. The internship program is built into their company's program, and many interns who demonstrate reliability and excellence can find themselves recruited from an internship position into a full-time position with benefits. Remember that each opportunity to interact professionally is how potential job opportunities can become available. The majority of people land jobs in the job market through networking and engaging with particular networks and brands. This means following companies of interest on social media and fostering a professional relationship with representatives of the company.

Some internships, however, must be established. These are primarily non-published opportunities that you get knowledge of either through submitting an unsolicited resume or networking. Everyone loves free help! This does not mean your internship has to be unpaid; however, as a novice pre-professional, they would be paying you substantially less than someone credentialed and experienced in your industry of choice. In exchange, while learning about your industry, you would gain skills and experience that can later translate into a full-time position.

How do you find these informal internships? The same way you would find a formal one, by researching your industry and market. Here are some examples.

- Fiona is a junior in college. She is majoring in English. She would like to work on marketing campaigns or be on the political scene as a journalist. She isn't quite sure. She has also considered being a college professor like her uncle, but that would include going to graduate school, and she isn't ready for that type of commitment or sure of taking on more school debt. Being savvy on social media, she starts to follow her favorite media

brands. She also looks at job posts in marketing or journalism to see what skills are in demand and what experiences and opportunities she would need to work in either field. She enrolls in a MOOC course on professional writing to make her resume look more competitive. There she meets others in her field of professional writing and learns that due to COVID-19, there is a need for virtual graders. She contacts her local board of education and finds out they need virtual assistants to help with classes. She submits her new resume and is accepted right away. Although this is not directly working on marketing or journalism, it allows her to find out if she would like to work in education.

- Melton is a middle school science teacher. He is really interested in moving from the classroom to a more administrative position. With COVID-19, many positions remain unfilled, and there are seemingly fewer positions open for would-be administrators. Nevertheless, he informs his building principal that he would like to take on more administrative roles. He also enrolls in an educational leadership certificate program, which after reading job advertisements for administration, seems to be a qualification. He shadowed his school's assistant principal and the Afterschool Program Administrator for a semester. After observing the school from an administrator's point of view, he made recommendations to institute a mentor program. Here, even though he is not yet an administrator, he has taken on administrator tasks under the direct supervision of those in the position. He is not receiving additional money for these tasks, however, if he does them well, he can add them to his resume, and it can translate to an administrator position.

These are all examples of how one can create their own internship experiences. This is a very common occurrence, and hopefully, you will find success with this strategy.