




# INTERNSHIPS 101

MAKING INTERNSHIPS A PART OF YOUR CAREER PLAN

CAREER CENTER - ASPIRE ACT ACHIEVE

# WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

- It is an on-site work experience for students and recent grads that is related to your career goal or a field of interest.
  - It is a supervised work experience where you learn more about the profession and industry.
  - It is an experience in which, ideally, the emphasis is on learning and professional development, which should involve the guidance of a mentor.
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# AN INTERNSHIP IS NOT—

a part-time or  
full-time job or  
volunteer  
position

an opportunity to  
perform routine  
work, replacing a  
regular employee  
and serving as  
“free labor”



# WHY SHOULD I INTERN?

- To learn more about a career or an industry
- To gain practical experience and develop marketable job skills
- To apply skills and knowledge learned in the classroom to on-the-job experiences
- To beef up your resume
- To make important contacts that may lead to future job offers
- To evaluate potential employers and work environments




# AN INTERNSHIP CAN - - -

- Be paid, unpaid or stipend-based, and/or involve academic credit
- Last from two weeks to one or more years in length
- Require a commitment of 5 to 40 hours a week
- Be highly competitive or relatively easy-to-get
- Serve as a gateway to a full-time job with that particular employer
- Be a required part of your curriculum in order for you to graduate
- Be a good experience or a bad experience, but at least it will be a real life work experience



# QUESTIONS TO ANSWER BEFORE SEEKING AN INTERNSHIP

1. **Determine what you want out of the internship.** Do you want a work experience directly related to your desired career, or do you want to “check out” a career of interest?
  2. Are you interested in an internship at a particular organization, or a particular type of organization?
  3. *Do you have the time to complete an internship?*
  4. Realizing that many internships do not pay, *can you afford to complete one?*
  5. Are you a junior or senior? (The great majority of internships are designed for upperclassmen).
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# FIND AN INTERNSHIP

## SEARCH

1. Cal State LA's Handshake
2. Company websites
3. [internships.com](http://internships.com)  
[internjobs.com](http://internjobs.com)  
[internshipprograms.com](http://internshipprograms.com)  
[thinkintern.com](http://thinkintern.com)  
[internmatch.com](http://internmatch.com)
4. Career Center's internship binder

## NETWORK

1. Family and friends, parents of friends, neighbors
2. Professors, Cal State LA alumni
3. Employers at career fairs
4. People you meet in relation to your membership in professional societies

# DEVELOPING YOUR OWN INTERNSHIP

Consider developing your own internship for an employer that may not have an existing internship program.

- I. Determine what you want to do and what you'd like to learn
- II. Determine *where* you want to do it
- III. Make the contact and make a proposal

## The Proposal

After doing your research, clearly describe what you are offering to do for the employer, what you'd like to learn, what you can offer and why you think they will benefit from your work. Tell them the dates and times you are available and be ready to talk about compensation.



# COMPETING FOR INTERNSHIPS

- Realize that some internship competitions require your GPA be at a certain level (for example, 3.0+)
- Prepare a resume and get it reviewed by a counselor
- Practice interviewing (mock interviews, Perfect Interview)
- Dress professionally for the interview – treat it like a regular job interview



# WHAT'S THIS ABOUT ACADEMIC CREDIT?

1. **Employers cannot dictate that a student intern receive class credit.** Whether or not an internship qualifies for class credit is a determination made by your academic department.
2. It is possible for students to get credit for internships if they are allowed to enroll in 395, 398, 399, or 498 Co-op Education classes. Only 12 CSULA departments offer Co-op Education.
3. A student must work 100 hours a quarter in order to earn one unit of credit.
4. Remember that to receive credit for an internship **you** must pay a fee, just like any other class you register for.



# SOME LEGAL CONCERNS

## Workers' Compensation

Under California law, other than a few specific situations (CA Labor Code § 3352), organizations must provide workers' compensation to interns, whether or not they are paid.

## Unemployment Compensation

Interns are not entitled to receive unemployment compensation when their internships end.



# THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNSHIPS

- ✓ Approximately 60% of 2012 graduates who took part in a paid internship received at least one job offer, according to NACE (National Association of Colleges & Employers). This is compared to 37% with unpaid internships, and 36% with no internships.
- ✓ In a recent Forbes article, it was reported that 69% of companies with 100+ employees offered full-time employment to their interns in 2012.
- ✓ Internships.com reports that 66% of employers believe that interview performance and “relevant work experience” are the most important factors in hiring decisions, surpassing both academic performance and the college’s ranking/reputation.



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