

# Internship Search Strategies

## **BEGINNING YOUR INTERNSHIP SEARCH**

*Not many people realize that one needs to be prepared to begin an internship search. The following is what you need to have in place before you even start applying for opportunities:*

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

- If you would like to earn credit, contact your department to find out about the academic requirements and procedures.
- Determine if you are looking for a paid or unpaid internship. Keep in mind some industry to not offer paid internships.
- Understand what types of positions you want to pursue and what skills you have to offer. Career Services offers appointments, self-assessment tools, and resources to help with this process
- Know your geographical limitations. Make sure you take travel cost into account.
- Know what kind of work environment suits your needs.

### **GOOD TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS**

- Prepare to be proactive about fitting the internship search process into your busy schedule.
- Set aside time each week to focus on internship search strategies.

### **GENERAL BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- Develop a solid draft of your [resume](#)
  - This can and should be tailored to specific positions as you begin to apply. It helps to get as much feedback as you can on your resume – Career Services has a resume review service, and our Career Counselors are happy to address resume writing concepts and best practices in individual appointments
- Create a solid draft of a [cover letter](#) that can be customized to fit specific positions

### **THE NEXT STEP**

*Once you have a solid resume and cover letter it's time to identify your target industry and develop a multifaceted strategy.*

### **CONDUCTING THE SEARCH**

Once you have prepared for your internship search, you are ready to begin targeting specific employers for certain opportunities. General components of this process are listed below. However, these elements do not need to be approached in the order listed. It is very likely that you could be in between search cycles for different positions – for example, you could be interviewing for one position and tailoring a resume for another. All of these components are dynamic – these processes are ongoing and do not stop until your goal of securing an internship is reached. Typical elements can and will include:

#### **RESEARCH/KNOWLEDGE**

- Be well-versed in the industry you are entering, the internships you would like to secure and companies that capture your interest
- Utilize the Internet to locate companies and Internship opportunities
- Review Career Services' handout [Student Guide to Online Internet Searching](#)

#### **CUSTOMIZED RESUME & COVER LETTER**

- Companies like to see targeted attention – be sure to relate your skills as best you can to the position requirements they seek

[Type text]

### INTERVIEWING SKILLS

- Informational interviews with industry professionals are a good practice ground
- Career Services also provides a mock interview service.

### NETWORKING SKILLS

- Build your networking community by attending industry related events (these can be on-campus, through professional organizations, or career fairs).
- Be visible to personal and professional contacts by maintaining contact every few months; stay in touch with internship supervisors, faculty members and other friends/family members who have been invested in your career development.

### **HOW TO SUPPLEMENT YOUR SEARCH**

*Listed above are the general components of a typical internship search. You can add more depth to your search by using some of these approaches:*

### JOIN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Become a member of an industry association (Career Services has lists available of professional organizations associated with specific Emerson majors)

### **READ INDUSTRY PUBLICATIONS**

- Become well-versed on industry trends; know what is going on in the industry. Who are the up-and-comers? Who are the movers and shakers? Who are the trend-setters?
- Most publications dedicated to specialized industries have list internship opportunities in the back sections

### **SUBSCRIBE TO ONLINE NEWSLETTERS**

Many industry organizations have specialized newsletters that are sent on a regular basis that focus on related trends and

- These include internship and job postings (most subscriptions are free and can be found on an organizations home page.)

### **NETWORK ONLINE**

- Become a member of an online networking community; these communities are based on the theory of “six degrees of separation” – we are connected to everyone in some way, shape or form. Most members are asked to join at someone else’s invitation; you can also sign up on your own.
- You can search for those who have similar interests/professions as you. Some examples include: **LinkedIn.com**; **Friendster.com**; **FACEBOOK** (*Employers look at digital footprint. Clean up your digital dirt before you embark on the internship search. You want to project a professional image.*)

### **INTERNSHIP SEARCH TIPS**

- *After applying for a position, always follow up to check on the status of your submission and to see where the search committee is in the hiring cycle. Do not call the Hiring Manager if the internship description specifies “No Phone Calls.”*
- *Establishing a professional network can be intimidating – focus on developing relationships that will be meaningful for both parties; Seek out people who have common interests and who you can look up to as a mentor and will want to be involved in your career development. Simply asking people in your network for a internship will not contribute to an ongoing relationship*
- *Develop a “30 second commercial” that describes your skills and how you plan to use them for a particular position – this can help you in both interviewing and networking situations. Keep an address book of professional contacts you meet;*
  - *Before filing business cards, write a couple of notes on the back so you can have a reference point for further conversations.*