



INTERNSHIPS

WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

An internship should be a key part of your career exploration and preparation, where you can:

- Explore your career options by trying out a field or organization
- Gain valuable experience that makes you attractive to employers (i.e., build the resume)
- Apply academic knowledge to a practical setting
- Enhance your career network and make contacts in your target company/industry
- Gain new skills, which will help you succeed in future internships/jobs
- Get an “inside view” of a company’s culture.

You should try to obtain an internship in a career field that you are considering, even if you are not positive of the route you plan to take after graduation. Be strategic about your internship choice by considering your interests, skills, personality, and work-related values to ensure you choose a field that is the right fit. The Career Center can help you with this self-assessment process if you need assistance.

PREPARING FOR THE INTERNSHIP SEARCH

Focusing Your Search

Clarify your priorities in obtaining an internship by considering what you want to accomplish or gain through the experience. Determine if you prefer a structured internship, where there are often several interns working in teams to complete assigned projects, or unstructured internships, where you must be more proactive and find ways to add value to the organization. Also consider geographical location. Do you want to stay in New York or try another city? Do you want to intern in Israel? Think about where you plan to work following graduation, as internships may also lead to full-time offers if all goes well. Also consider financial resources and your availability. Can you accept an unpaid internship and perhaps supplement by working elsewhere part-time? Many organizations only offer unpaid internships, but require candidates to have completed internships prior to being hired full time. Think about how you can make this situation work for you and what sacrifices you are willing to make.

Timing Your Search

Make sure you do your industry research, as different fields vary in their recruiting timetables. Certain industries, such as accounting and finance, recruit many months in advance of when an internship would start. Other types of organizations may not post an internship opening until much later in the year. The Career Center recommends that you allow yourself several months in advance to begin preparing for the internship search. Researching fields and organizations, perfecting your application documents, and searching for positions can take a while. So be patient and start early!

Research, Research, Research

Before you start scouring the web for positions, it’s important that you do your research! You want to learn about both the industries you’re considering as well as specific organizations you may have targeted. Career research will allow you to be strategic in your internship search, will save you time from applying to positions that won’t be a fit, and will provide you with the necessary information to tailor your application documents. There are multiple methods and resources you can use to conduct this type of research, including:

- Online—There are multiple websites devoted to industry and organizational research. *The Vault* online library, which can be accessed **free of charge** through the Career Center’s website (www.yu.edu/career-center), is a great place to start. Review the Department of Labor’s website at www.bls.gov/oco and websites of specific organizations.
- Print—Visit the Career Center as well as any library and/or bookstore to find relevant books and periodicals. Read publications related to your field of interest, including magazines, newspapers, trade journals, and others.
- Professional Associations—Associations offer excellent opportunities to explore different industries and to network with professionals who are active in their fields. Most associations offer substantially reduced membership rates for students. By joining, you gain access to website resources, job listings, periodicals and newsletters, and invitations to local and national conferences and networking events. You can find listings of professional associations online.
- Informational Interviewing—Speaking with alumni and other contacts is one of the best ways to learn about an industry and organization. Be sure to do preliminary research before speaking with industry professionals. Use informational interviews to learn the culture of an industry or organization, what a typical day is like, and general career paths within the field. Remember to be professional and courteous, and do NOT ask for an internship directly. See the Career Center fact sheet on networking and informational interviewing for more information.

Application Materials

After researching your options and determining the best fit for your career needs, the next step is to perfect your application materials, which include your resume and cover letter. For tips on how to get started, see the Career Center fact sheets on resumes and cover letters. Remember to have these documents reviewed by a career counselor before you submit them for an opportunity. Stop by during walk-hours or schedule a longer appointment if needed.

FINDING AND APPLYING TO INTERNSHIP OPENINGS

Search Techniques

There are multiple ways to discover internship opportunities. You should never rely on only one search strategy. Instead, diversify your approach by utilizing several of the following techniques to increase your chances of finding a position:

- Networking—The most common (and successful) way in which students secure internships is through networking, so make as many contacts as you can. Join LinkedIn.com for online networking, attend alumni events and panels, participate in professional association meetings and conferences, speak with friends, family, and shul members, and leverage all of your existing contacts. See the Career Center fact sheet on networking for more information.
- YU CareerLink—Go to the Career Center’s web site (www.yu.edu/career-center) to log in to YU CareerLink, the Career Center’s online job posting system. Here you will find internships along with full-time and part-time job listings.
- On-Campus Recruiting—Select companies who have annual cycles for bulk hiring will visit Yeshiva to interview students for internships and full-time positions. Read Career Center’s weekly emails and check our website and YU CareerLink for details on how to apply for these opportunities.
- Online Postings—Search for select internship postings through general job boards, such as internweb.com, niche job search sites targeted at specific industries, and professional association websites. Visit www.yu.edu/career-center for access to internships.com, another resource available to YU students.

- Company Websites—Apply directly to organizations of interest. Most companies have a “careers” or “hire us” section of their site where they describe the application process in detail for both full-time positions and internships.
- Career Center Weekly Email—Check the weekly newsletter from the Career Center for select internship and fellowship postings.
- Career Fairs—On-campus and off-campus career fairs and networking receptions are held throughout the academic year designed for students to learn about a wide variety of organizations and positions. Check the weekly email and our website for upcoming fairs.
- Targeted Mailing/Prospecting Search—When you find an organization you are interested in that may not necessarily have a position posted, you can target the company directly by writing a strong cover letter focusing on the specifics of the company and how your experiences match the company’s interests. It is usually best to direct your mailing to a hiring manager for your department of choice.
- Jewish Community Opportunities—There are several Jewish communal organizations that offer summer internship programs. Shaar Avodah, JESNA, and the OU IPA Washington Internship are just a few common opportunities offered each year. There is also the Collegiate Leadership Internship Program (the CLIP program) through the Jewish Communal Fund. Check with the Career Center for more information.
- Department Listings—Check with your academic department or faculty members at YU to learn about internship opportunities in your field.

Following Up

Once you have applied, be sure to follow up within 1 or 2 weeks to ensure that your application was received. Reaffirm your interest in the position and ask about next steps in the process. Always be courteous and formal in your interactions with employers. If possible, try to reach a hiring manager or recruiter. Do NOT follow up multiple times and harass an employer. If you are unsure about when or how to contact an employer, ask a career counselor at the Career Center.

Interviewing

If you are fortunate and obtain an interview, you must prepare! Take advantage of the resources at the Career Center, including Big Interview online interview practice (available through www.yu.edu/career-center), in-person mock interviews, and our handout on “Interviewing Effectively.” Interviews are not always easy, so set aside plenty of time for preparation!

ACCEPTING AN OFFER

Hopefully you have applied to several positions and one (or more!) resulted in an offer. Remember that you do NOT need to accept on the spot. If you are waiting to hear from another organization that you prefer, simply thank the recruiter (very politely) for the opportunity and ask them when they would need an answer. You should usually be allowed 1-2 weeks to make your decision. Be appreciative and handle these conversations delicately. If you need assistance, contact the Career Center. As you weigh your decision, remember to take into consideration the people and the environment of the organization, the experience you will obtain, the skills you’ll develop, and the potential for future opportunities with the firm.

PROFESSIONALISM

Remember to be professional at all times! Dress appropriately. If you are unsure of what to wear, speak with the recruiter about the usual dress. “Business casual” means no jeans or sneakers. “Business attire” or “business formal” means a full matching suit. Never take advantage of company resources such as computers, complementary meals, and supplies. Consider it a privilege to work there and treat everyone and everything with respect.

TURNING YOUR INTERNSHIP INTO A FULL-TIME JOB

If an internship goes very well, and there is a need at the organization for a full-time employee, interns often will be given top consideration for the job. Employers like to hire internally, knowing that the candidate is already a fit with the company rather than taking a chance on someone else. Do everything you can to maximize your chances of getting offered a full-time position by proving to the employer that you can add value to the firm. Take your role seriously, be proactive, and go above and beyond the minimum. Try to be the first person at the office and the last one to leave, showing your commitment and work ethic. Build strong relationships by listening to and learning from others and make sure you tell your supervisor that you would want to stay if given the opportunity.

TOP TIPS FOR INTERNS

1. Don't be afraid to talk with people, both within your department and in other areas of the organization.
2. Be proactive – ask for things to do and ask to attend meetings and events.
3. Request feedback.
4. Ask questions.
5. Don't fear mistakes.
6. Learn all you can about the industry/company.
7. Read everything you can get your hands on.
8. Present yourself positively.
9. Don't gripe about the grunt work; work with a little humility.
10. Target a top performing employee as a role model/mentor.
11. Don't burn any bridges!

GENERAL INTERNSHIP WEBSITES

Vault: www.vault.com (choose “Find a Job or Internship”)

Monster.com: <http://campus.monster.com/>

SummerJobs.com: <http://www.summerjobs.com/>

Internships.com: <http://www.internships.com/>—(YU is a member school, contact the Career Center for instructions)

CampusCareerCenter.com: <http://www.campuscareercenter.com/>

CollegeGrad.com Internship Postings: <http://www.collegegrad.com/internships/>

Get That Gig.com: <http://www.getthatgig.com/>

InternJobs.com: <http://www.internjobs.com/>

InternshipPrograms.com: <http://internships.wetfeet.com/>

Internweb.com: <http://www.internweb.com/>

National Internship Directory: <http://www.internsearch.com/home.htm>

Rising Star Internships: <http://www.rsinternships.com/>

Craigslist: www.craigslist.org (select your city of interest)

Idealist: www.idealists.org

Hot Jobs: www.hotjobs.yahoo.com

Internships4you.com: www.internships4you.com