

# THE JACKSON SCHOOL INTERNSHIPS TOOLKIT

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## WHY DO AN INTERNSHIP?

Internships are widely regarded as an essential part of building your resume, making contacts in your industry, and developing skills that you can use once you graduate. To recruiters and hiring managers, time spent at an internship counts towards those years of experience they look for in a new hire. That said, the key is to make sure your internship works for you – paid or unpaid, it's important to make sure you get an internship closely related to your post-graduation ambitions.

If you're not sure what you want to do, an internship can be an ideal way to try out different options and see which one feels right. Applying for an internship can also be a more accessible way "in" to a position with an organization or company that has a highly competitive application process.

Additional benefits of an internship include:

- Developing new skills and refine the skills and strengths you already possess.
- Applying your knowledge in a practical setting.
- Develop a skill set portfolio to showcase in future job interviews.
- Learn about particular industries, companies, and organizations.
- Develop professional relationships (network) that will be mutually beneficial in the future.
- Enter the talent pipeline at the business you are interning with. On average, 56.5% of interns are offered full-time positions if they apply with previous internship experience.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN APPLYING

- Each position out there is not a one-size-fits-all for all candidates. Some positions can be done by just about anyone, as long as they have the right motivation and a strong work ethic. While for other jobs you may need specific knowledge and skills before you can even be considered to do that job.
- Remember that applying for any internship or job is the easy part, the hard part is the interview where you will need to convince the interviewer that you are the right person for the job. It is the interview that will sell you to the employer, so you better be prepared to convince the employer that you are the perfect person for the job. What knowledge and skills do you have that will help you meet the employer's expectations? What about your transferable skills that are relevant to many different kinds of jobs?

Other key characteristics that employers look for is a positive attitude, a strong work ethic, and the motivation and confidence to do a good job. In the interview, the interviewer will mostly looking to see if you will fit in well with the organization so it's wise to do some research on the company, its employees, the people it serves, as well as the services or products it sells.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK

### 1) *Do I meet the qualifications they're asking for?*

Meeting all of the requirements is not always the most important thing when interviewing for an internship or job. First off, you will want to be prepared to convince the interviewer that you are the perfect person for the job. You may decide to focus on your past experiences and all of the relevant skills you have that will help you to be successful. You may focus more on your personal attributes and how you feel this is the perfect job for you. Whatever you do you will want to show the interviewer that you know what the company is about and be able to convince him/her that you've got what it takes to do a great job.

### 2) *Is this an appropriate place for me to intern?*

It's important to ask this question for a number of reasons – you want to make sure that your internship organization is reputable, well-organized and is located in a place that is safe and easy to commute to. In addition to that, it's important to consider if the terms of the internship are ethical; organizations should not use interns as a substitute for paid employees, and should provide interns with professional supervision, evaluation, and mentorship. If in doubt, ask the Jackson Careers Office, fellow students, and Jackson alumni.

3) *Is there a way that I can get the skills I will need to be successful on the job?*

If there are skills listed for the job and there is an easy way that you can gain these skills, you may decide to work at getting the skills while you are still applying. Job descriptions will often provide a list of required and preferred skills. Focus on the required skills first and then you may decide to add additional skills to your repertoire. For computer skills, you might work with tutorials on Microsoft Office or you may decide to sign up for Lynda.com where you can learn many different skills required in the workplace. For example, many people say they know how to use excel, but have no idea how to use formulae, charts, pivot tables, or macros. Put yourself ahead of the herd!

4) *Do I really want the position?*

You may decide to apply for jobs even if you don't want them. Some may view this as a waste of time, but on the other hand you may get asked for an interview and then decide that this is really an opportunity you would like to have. If you do really want the position, then it's up to you to convince the host organization you can excel there.

## WHERE TO START WITH YOUR SEARCH

**1) Analyse Market Trends – locally, nationally, and internationally:** Find out where companies are expanding, and which skills are in demand. Resources such as the [Future Work Skills report](#) are also helpful in identifying wider employment trends, but there are other resources too: UW and Jackson School career centers, the Puget Sound Business Journal, Global Washington, Govloop and the American Foreign Service Association are just a few places that can give you an instant snapshot of private sector, public sector, NGO, and diplomatic career outlooks.

**2) Analyse how your interests fit with these market trends:** Evaluate which of your skills are your strongest and group them into “themes” using [The Holland Code](#). This will give you a better idea of how exactly your skills translate into a job.

**3) Think about when and where you'd like to intern:** Will you stay in Seattle? Go overseas? Intern during the academic year or wait until the summer and commit more time to your internship? Knowing where and when you'd like to intern will help you to narrow down your options and find out which organizations have the opportunities that work best for you.

## WHERE TO START WITH YOUR SEARCH (CONT.)

### **4) Create a shortlist of target organizations that fit the location and experience you're**

**looking for:** Creating a list of the places that are your top choices mean you'll be applying to (and thus more likely to get) an internship that is a priority for you. Find out what kind of people succeed at your target organizations, what kind of people get hired, and when the best time to apply is – typically, the larger the organization, the further in advance you have to apply to internships there. Don't settle for an internship that is dissatisfying!

### **5) Talk to people who do the sort of work you are interested in:**

Finding out what people like and dislike about their work and what a typical day consists of puts real flesh on the bones of job descriptions. Try to seek more than one opinion! Sites like [glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com) offer you the chance to get unvarnished perspectives from both current and former employees, and the Jackson School LinkedIn group has thousands of alumni that can be reached out to for their perspective as well. Networking can help to get you internships that aren't formally advertised.

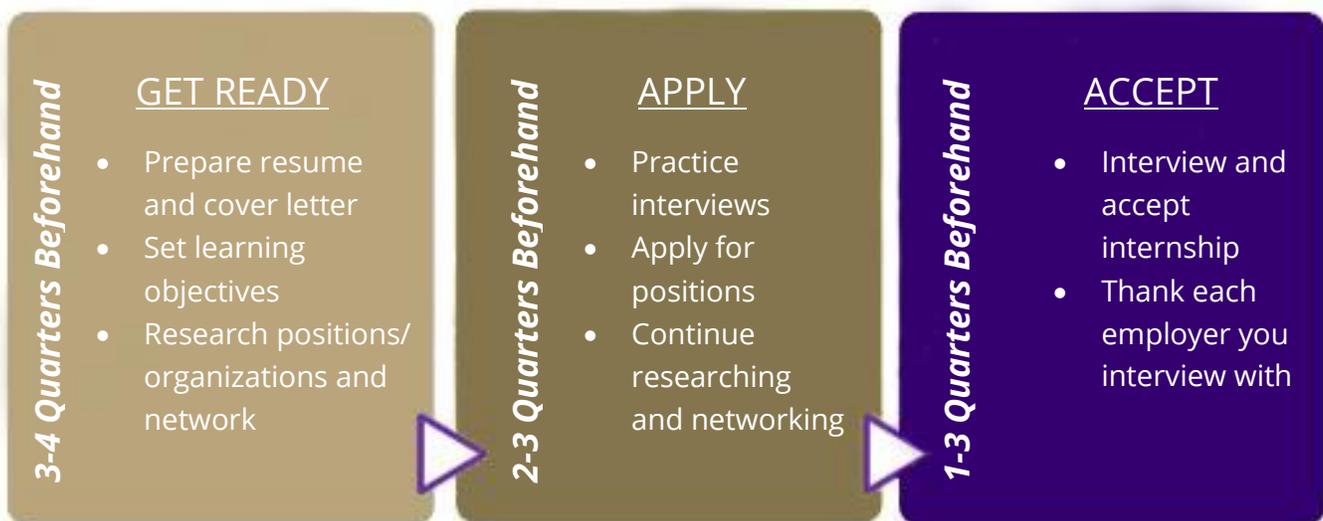
**6) Start building your application materials:** Being able to move on an opportunity rapidly is important, so make sure you have skeleton versions of critical documents ready to be customized at a moments' notice: resume (limited to one page, unless you are mid-career), cover letter, and current transcripts, and references can all be helpful. Good news – the Jackson School Careers Office can help you with all of these things!

**7) Start submitting applications!** There are more than a few ways to apply for the internship you're looking for: if you have a target organization or specific experience you're looking to get, the best route is to apply directly through that organization. If you're willing to keep your options open however, there are a lot of opportunities at places you might not have realized were available – we're going to give you some ideas about where to search on the next page.

## PLANNING TIMELINE FOR APPLICATIONS

It's never too early to start planning for your internship. Planning well in advance will maximize on the opportunities available to you. Some internship opportunities and organizations may move quickly, others may need to plan far in advance - it is advised to get prepared early.

Generally, the rule of thumb is the bigger or more prestigious the host organization, the further in advance they like to have their internship applications decided. For example, organizations like the Department of State or Google can have their application periods up to a year ahead of time! Others will hire interns to start in the same quarter they applied in. Below is a general timeline to assist you with the planning process.



## HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR EXPERIENCE

Getting Started:

- Set obtainable goals based on your aspirations and the employer's needs. Regularly refer back to goals as you progress in the internship. This will allow you to draw connections between your internship, academic coursework, and future career interests.
- If not clearly stated in the internship position description, determine the time commitment of the internship with your supervisor. How many hours per week would you like to work and what does your employer need? How long will the internship last?
- At the outset, you may wish to create a learning agreement or contract with your supervisor. This can be an informal conversation in which you discuss expectations, clarify your work assignments and begin to get a sense for the work culture (dress code, training opportunities and other office protocol).

## HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR EXPERIENCE

### At the Internship:

- Communicate with your supervisor on a regular basis to update them on progress you make or roadblocks you run into.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions. If you aren't sure how to do something or need clarification – ask! This is a learning experience – be open to new ideas and procedures and remember you are not expected to know everything. Asking questions will also demonstrate your interest in the host organization and the industry and prove that you want the work done right.
- Know and utilize the preferred communication style of the office. Do employees email each other, use instant messaging, or walk around to each other's desks?
- Pay attention to “unspoken rules.” These rules are important for fitting in at the office. What is the protocol for lunch? Does everyone stick to a strict schedule or is the office more flexible?
- Take initiative and show interest in the work you are doing, and how it contributes to the overall organization.
- Take advantage of being on the “inside” and request informational interviews or meetings with employees of interest to you.
- Measure your progress and document your work – Make notes for yourself as you go work on projects and keep copies of your work to include on your LinkedIn profile or e-portfolio.
- Be professional, positive and productive – Arrive at your internship on time, dressed in clothes appropriate for the setting. Don't take or make personal calls or check personal email, except on lunch break if approved by your organization. Be a positive and friendly presence in the office.
- Challenge yourself, but don't overextend – While it is understandable that you want to ‘show what you can do’ in an internship, one way to have an unsatisfactory experience is to get yourself involved in so many tasks or projects that you aren't able to complete them with quality results.
- Most employers look at internships as a mutually beneficial experience. Ensure you are learning and consciously developing skills while also working hard to advance the mission and work of the organization for which you are interning.

## HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR EXPERIENCE

After the Internship:

- Thank your supervisor and colleagues. While you have provided valuable support to an organization through your internship, they have also provided you with experience and the beginnings of your professional network. For those with whom you worked closely (direct supervisors) a handwritten note is appropriate. When an employer has a positive experience with an intern, they are more likely to serve as a reference for you, and, may remember you when permanent positions are available.
- Keep track of your duties and accomplishments – Write down your primary responsibilities; projects you worked on; things you particularly enjoyed, felt good about, received positive feedback for, or for which you received constructive criticism. These are great building blocks for planning your career.
- Consider a portfolio – Collect examples of the work you did, to showcase your contributions on-line or in interviews. When exiting your internship, be sure to get approval from your supervisor to use these materials in a portfolio. Some organizations may have security protocols which may prevent you from sharing your work with other employers.
- Update your resume – Highlight projects, outcomes, skills you developed, and the major components of the internship.
- Secure your references – Before leaving your internship ask your employer if they would be willing to act as a reference for you. Always inform them if you apply for a job and list them as a reference, and provide them with some background on the position for which you have applied. The more they know, the better they can tailor their recommendations to that specific position.

## RESOURCES TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR SEARCH

### **General Internship Search Resources**

Jackson Jobs: <http://jsisjobs.jobboard.io/>

Idealist: [www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org)

Global Jobs: [www.globaljobs.org](http://www.globaljobs.org)

WayUp: <https://www.wayup.com/>

Young Professionals in Foreign Policy Job Board: <https://ypfp.org/jobs/recent>

Foreign Affairs Job Board: <http://jobs.foreignaffairs.com/>

Husky Jobs: <http://careers.washington.edu/Students/HuskyJobs>

UW Center for Experiential Learning: <http://exp.washington.edu/>

IE3 International Internships: <http://ie3global.ous.edu/campus/uw/>

Intern Match: <http://www.internmatch.com/>

Global Washington: <http://globalwa.org/resources/careers-in-development/jobs/advanced-search/>

Internships Experience: <http://www.experience.com/entry-level-jobs/internships/>

### **NPO/NGO Internship Search Resources**

Idealist: [www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org)

Opportunity Knocks: [www.opportunityknocks.org](http://www.opportunityknocks.org)

Common Good Careers: <http://commongoodcareers.force.com/careers>

The Non-Profit Times: <http://www.thenonprofitimes.com/jobs/>

The Chronicle of Philanthropy Board: <http://philanthropy.com/section/jobs/224>

Global Washington: [www.globalwa.org](http://www.globalwa.org)

The Seattle Foundation Non-Profit Directory:

<http://www.seattlefoundation.org/npos/Pages/default.aspx>

Vocation Village Seattle Directory: <http://www.vocationvillage.com/seattle-nonprofit/>

ACLU Washington State:

International Rescue Committee:

PATH:

### **Seattle Internship Resources**

World Affairs Council [www.world-affairs.org](http://www.world-affairs.org)

Puget Sound Business Journal: <http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/jobs/>

Global Washington: [www.globalwa.org](http://www.globalwa.org)

Port of Seattle: <http://www.portseattle.org/Jobs/Career-Opportunities/Pages/default.aspx>

Washington State Dept. of Commerce: <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/forms/tradeintern/>

I Love Seattle (networking and NGO guide): <http://www.iloveseattle.org/>

Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle: <http://www.seattletradealliance.com/>

Washington Global Health Alliance: <http://www.wghalliance.org/Opportunities/Jobs.aspx>

World Affairs Council Young Professionals Intl. Network: <http://www.world-affairs.org/programs/ypin>

Net Impact Seattle: <http://www.seattlenetimpact.org/>

Seattle International Foundation: <http://www.seaif.org/>

Humanosphere: <http://www.humanosphere.org/about-us/>

## RESOURCES TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR SEARCH

### **Government/ Think Tank Internship Resources**

Atlantic Council (DC): <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/careers/employment-internships>  
Center for Strategic & International Studies:  
<http://www.csisopportunities.org/internships/application>  
Congressman Adam Smith's Office (DC & Renton, WA):  
<http://adamsmith.house.gov/students/internships.htm>  
DC Internships: <http://www.dcinternships.org/>  
International Trade Administration: <http://www.ita.doc.gov/>  
Rangel International Affairs Undergraduate Summer Program (DC): [www.rangelprogram.org](http://www.rangelprogram.org)  
Senator Patty Murray's Office (DC & WA):  
<http://www.murray.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/internships>  
The Stimson Center for international peace and security (DC):  
<http://www.stimson.org/about/employment/internships/>  
Pathways Program for US Government Internships: <https://www.usajobs.gov/studentsandgrads/>  
US Department of Agriculture: <http://www.dm.usda.gov/employ/sip/index.htm>  
US Department of Commerce: <http://www.commerce.gov/about-commerce/internships>  
US AID Internships: <http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/careers/student-internships>  
US Department of State: <http://careers.state.gov/intern>  
The Washington Center Internships (DC): <http://www.twc.edu/>  
Washington State Legislature Internship Program (Olympia):  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/INTERNSHIPS/Pages/default.aspx>  
White House Internships (DC): <http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/internships>  
Govloop: [www.govloop.com](http://www.govloop.com)  
Go Government: <http://gogovernment.org/>  
The National Bureau of Asian Research: <http://www.nbr.org/About/fellowsinternships.aspx>  
King County: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/audience/employees/careers/internships.aspx>  
The City of Seattle: <http://www.seattle.gov/jobs/internships.asp>  
The Washington State Governor's Office: <http://www.governor.wa.gov/office-governor/office/job-openings>  
The Washington State Legislature: <http://leg.wa.gov/INTERNSHIPS/Pages/InternshipPrograms.aspx>