GETTING INTO
INTERNSHIPS

An internship allows you to test your career objectives, helps you identify your talents, and directs you toward an appropriate career, while helping you acquire essential practical and professional skills you need in the world of work. It also lets you see how well you fit into a specific organization’s culture.

But finding an internship takes some preparation. Before setting out to find an internship, ask yourself these questions:

► Where do I want to do an internship? My hometown? Out-of-state?
► What type of work would I like to do? In what field?
► What type of organization would I like to do an internship for?
► What do I want to gain from an internship? What specific skills or experiences do I want to acquire?

Locating opportunities

After you’ve answered these questions, you’re ready to start searching for internships. Here are some suggestions for locating employers and internship opportunities:

► Visit your career services office. We have internship listings on HireVCURams and can help you locate other industry resources.
► Check with your academic adviser to see if your department maintains listings of internship opportunities in your field of study.
► Attend job fairs. Employers often use fairs to identify students for internships as well as for full-time employment. Check the “Career Events” tab on HireVCURams to find when fairs are being offered.
► Visit the websites of organizations where you might want to do your internship so that you can tailor your resume and cover letter to the employer.
► Contact the Chamber of Commerce of the city where you would like to work to obtain information about local employers.
► Network. Talk with friends, family, co-workers, supervisors, instructors, administrators, and professionals in your field of study, and let them know you are searching for an internship.
► Search LinkedIn’s VCU University page to connect with alumni in your field.

Applying for an internship

Each employer has its own application process. Does the organization want you to apply online? What is the deadline?

What will the employer need from you to make your application complete? Start the process early. Here are a few tips to get you started:

► Keep your resume to one page.
► Place contact information at the top of your resume. Include your name, address, and phone number.
► Use an objective near the top of your resume that is general enough to encompass all the opportunities you would consider but specific enough to let the reader know what type of position you seek.
► Your education section should include your degree, major and minor, anticipated graduation date, and name and location of the college you are attending. You may also want to include a list.
GETTING INTO INTERNSHIPS

of related course work.
► Describe your related experience using action verbs.
► Visit your career services office for sample resumes and have a career advisor review your resume. You will also need to write a cover letter to accompany your resume. See our Cover Letter handout for details.

Choosing an internship
Your final task is to select the internship opportunity that is the best match for you. Review your goals for doing an internship and choose the opportunity that best meets those goals.

An internship offers many benefits, including:
► Valuable experience. Many employers want to hire people who have experience and can step into the job and be productive right from the start.
► Information. An internship will help you make contacts, get ideas, and learn about the field.
► Practical application. You will have the chance to apply theories learned in the classroom to a real-world setting.
► When you return to the classroom after your internship, you will better understand the many nuances of business operations that relate to the theories you study.
► In many cases, an internship can lead to a job offer.

Courtesy of the National Association of Colleges and Employers.