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INTERNSHIP & FULL-TIME JOB SEARCH GUIDE

WHAT'S IN THIS GUIDE?

This guide is a starting point for students pursuing internships or full-time jobs. It includes:

- Typical timelines
- Search strategy best practices
- Offer and salary negotiation tips
- Succeeding in your first 90 days

Each section outlines tips for both internships and full-time roles. For part-time roles, please refer to CPD's Part-Time Job Search Guide.

Why Do an Internship?

An internship is a temporary, hands-on experience working with an organization. From a student perspective, internships provide:

- **First-hand knowledge** - Learn how a workplace operates and gain experience employer's value
- **Career clarity** - Discover what you do, and what you don't, want to pursue
- **Networking opportunities** - Build relationships that can lead to referrals and mentorship

Important Note

Internships should connect to fields you may want to pursue long-term. It's okay to explore different areas but only apply to roles you feel will benefit your future goals. If your main goal is income, a part-time job may be a better fit.

What Are the Benefits of a Full-Time Job?

A full-time job (typically 40 hours/week) may include:

- **Salary** - A fixed yearly income amount vs paid by the hourly time worked
- **Benefits** - Health insurance, retirement plans, and other medical expense options
- **Paid leave** - Paid vacation time, sick leave, personal time, parental leave
- **Additional** - Disability benefits, life insurance, education and certification reimbursement, pet insurance, professional development funds, & more!

TIMELINES

Internships

It is important to note that while organizations depending on industry have typical timeframes they follow, many internships fall outside of these. Many students begin their internship search during their junior or senior year, however unless an internship requires you to have a completed amount of

credit hours, it may be advisable to begin earlier. Some students begin their search in their freshman or sophomore year to give them more time to solidify their career path.

Internship Timelines by Industry

Media, Arts, Entertainment, Creative Industries, Healthcare, Social Impact, Nonprofit, & Government

- Spring internship recruitment – late fall through January
- Summer internship recruitment – February to April
- Openings frequently occur on an as-needed basis in these industries

***Students should be aware that many federal government internships and jobs require security clearances and background checks, which can often take weeks or months to complete.*

Finance

The process of securing an internship begins over a year in advance of a start date. The following is an example timeframe:

- First year – sophomore fall semester: Network, attend employer info sessions
- Sophomore spring (Jan–April) – Highly competitive application windows open. High volume of interviews
- Sophomore summer – junior fall semester: Final interviews and offers for the upcoming summer internship start date

Full-Time Job Search Timelines

For students graduating in May with their bachelor's degree, it is advisable to begin actively applying for full-time jobs anywhere from January onward within the last semester of their degree program. As full-time roles are often posted on an as-needed basis, networking is crucial to helping you stand out as an applicant. Career fairs, employer networking info sessions and events are great ways to connect with employers before applying to their open positions. For December graduates, beginning the active application process is advisable from September onward. From the time a job gets posted to starting the job, the timeframe can be anywhere from a few weeks to several months.

SEARCH STRATEGY BEST PRACTICES

Internships

It is best to have a combination strategy of identifying target organizations, using broader search sites, and keeping in contact with professionals in the field to increase your chances of securing an internship:

- Identify the geographic region(s) you want to do an internship in
- Identify your top target organizations, bookmark their websites and make sure to note when their internships may open up
- Tailor your resume toward the industry you're applying to
- Plan to attend the Fall or Spring Career & Internship Fair

Common Internship Programs for UNCG Students

- Campus Greensboro Internships: campusgreensboro.org/students/apply
- The Washington Center Internship Program: twc.edu
- SECU Internship Program: Opens early January in Handshake

Full-Time Jobs

- **Clarify** your top organizations, job titles, and geographic regions
Example: Volvo, Target, Wells Fargo, Bank of America, Cone Health
Target titles: Sales Rep, Marketing Assistant, Project Coordinator, Administrative Assistant
- **Begin looking through job postings** early to determine what skills, experience, certifications they require and prefer
- **Tailor, tailor, tailor!** You realistically do not have to only apply to one type of job, however, you must appear to the employer that you are targeting their type of specific position. List your sections and experiences in order of most relevant, to least relevant to that specific job. This order can change depending on the job!
- **Do not mass apply!** It's best to spend more time on applications you care about than sending general documents to many jobs. There is not a certain amount you need to apply to, but many people apply to 20-50 jobs before hearing back
- **Keep track!** Use an Excel sheet or application tracker website to note which jobs you have applied to on what dates

IMPORTANT NOTE: you will rarely find job postings that require 0 years of experience. Employers consider education, projects, internships, and other work experience as "experience." Students just graduating from college are typically qualified to apply to anything saying 1-3 years of experience required.

Common Sites for Full-Time Job Searching

Handshake, LinkedIn, Indeed, Glassdoor, GoinGlobal, FlexJobs, Remote.co, ZipRecruiter

Note before moving on to next section: Visit CPD's website for our Interview Guide to see question examples and tips on the best ways to prepare for interviews

OFFER AND NEGOTIATION TIPS

Internships

Internship offers typically will be delivered by phone or email. If you receive a call, ask them when they will also send a written offer via email. Thank them for the offer and confirm the date they need a response by.

There typically will not be much room for pay negotiation for internships, however it is good to discuss the pay rate at the time you also receive an offer as well as finalize expectations for work hours you will complete.

Receiving offers for a better opportunity after accepting another offer

It is never an ideal situation to renege on an initial acceptance. Going back after accepting an offer, in a worst-case scenario, would not allow you to be employed by that organization in the future. If you are okay with that possibility and you feel a new offer would be a better fit for your career goals, then it may be okay to go with the new offer. **The best way to communicate this to the first offer company is through a phone call explaining the situation in a very well thought out and professional manner as soon as possible.** Make an appointment with a career coach in CPD if you want to talk through this conversation ahead of time.

Full-Time Jobs

Full-time job offers will also typically come via initial phone call or email. If you receive a call, ask when they will send an official offer email with pay, benefits, and work hour expectations outlined. Thank them for the offer and confirm the date they need a response by.

Salary Negotiation Tips & Scenarios

Before a job search process, it is advisable to do research on what you should be expecting for a salary range for your position and industry.

If the salary of a job you're applying for is not listed in the application or discussed until the end of the job search process:

Find a typical pay range using Glassdoor, Salary.com, LinkedIn, and other online sources. Factor in your geographic location, education level, experience in the industry, position level, and skills. Federal and state government job salaries are public information and can be found online.

If asked about your salary expectations in the job application:

Put "negotiable" if the question allows for a text response. If it requires a number, then list the upper middle of your researched range. Example: The range you found for this role is \$55,000 - \$65,000 based on similar positions, list \$62,000 in the application.

If asked about salary expectations during the interview process:

You can respond by saying you would like to learn more about the role to see if it would be a good fit before disclosing that information

If asked about salary expectations after an offer has been made:

In most cases, a salary will be included with a job offer, so you will have a starting point with which you can negotiate from. If no salary has been provided yet, use the salary you found through researching the above sites. It's good to ask for slightly above what you think you would realistically be making to leave room for possible negotiation downward

You're provided with an offer and salary, however it's always advisable to ask whether there is room for negotiation. If the answer is yes:

Do not provide the organization with a salary range. This gives them the space to offer you the lower end of that range. Provide them with one solid number and reasonings of location, experience, and what others make in that same type of role as leverage for why you are asking for that amount. If the answer is no, there is no flexibility for negotiation, at least you asked!

Salary is not the only thing you can negotiate

Benefits such as relocation expenses, parking and transportation reimbursement, flexible work schedules, signing bonuses, start dates, and professional development funding are often negotiable, even if salary is not

Additional Considerations for Negotiating Salary

The person making decisions about pay for employees can be different depending on the organization. It may have to be taken to Human Resources after your conversation with the hiring manager and could take a few days to confirm or deny your salary request. It also may take several back-and-forth conversations before you both land on a number that is sufficient for both parties. It's always best to get your final offer letter and salary in writing before accepting.

Always keep in mind the minimum amount of money you need to be making to support yourself, your living expenses, and other responsibilities you have. This is why knowing the typical salary of someone starting out in your field of interest is very important before pursuing the job search process.

Maintain a confident and straightforward, not apologetic, approach to negotiating pay. Not attempting to negotiate leads to lower future pay, so start early!

SUCCEEDING IN YOUR FIRST 90 DAYS ON THE JOB

Starting a new job is a learning curve! Here are some tips to consider in the first few months of beginning a new career journey:

Learn the Ins and Outs of the Workplace Culture

- Observe how people interact with each other on a daily basis: is it common practice for the team to eat lunch together? How do people most often communicate with each other? Do people arrive and leave exactly on time, or does it vary?
- Ask Questions: Identify the way your direct supervisor prefers to communicate. Write down questions as you come across them and take note of the answers. It's difficult to remember a lot of new information at once!

Build Relationships and Listen

- Schedule one-on-one meetings with each of your new team members to get to know them. Ask about their professional journeys, but also be open to learning about them personally so you can begin building trust and positive relationships
- Meet with professionals outside of your day-to-day team to learn about the wider organizational culture and additional opportunities to get involved

Build Consistency and Begin Contributing

- Establish routines of task completion and ask often for feedback. Make sure your work is being completed correctly and according to supervisor expectations
- Take on small responsibilities before larger ones until you can demonstrate independent work reliability
- Offer insight and take initiative without overstepping: as you feel more confident and continue building trust with colleagues, you'll be able to take more ownership and offer improvement strategies that can help everyone out!

Career & Professional Development offers Internship & Full-Time Job Search appointments virtually and in-person. Schedule an appointment through Handshake with a career coach if you would like to talk more in depth about strategies, application materials, and other questions you may have before heading into a search process.