

INTERNSHIP STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES

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Outline

- **Why** get an internship
- **How** to get an internship
- **What** to do during the internship



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Why?

MS and PhD students have overlapping but different goals in pursuing internships, affecting:

- Where you apply
- Things to target
- What you accomplish



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Internship goals for Masters students

- Marketable experience
- Differentiation
- Expanding your network
- Expanding your knowledge
- Have fun and make money



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Internship goals for Masters students

(cont)

Possible targets:

- Technical area,
Programming environment
- Experience base for specific positions
- What you accomplish
- A working program or
part of an application



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Internship goals for PhD students

- Working with experts in your area
- Being exposed to real-world motivation or field data for our research problems
- Rounding out experts advising you on



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Internship goals for PhD students

- Experiencing different research environments
- Expanding your network
- Expanding your knowledge
- Having fun and making money



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Internship goals for PhD students

Select a company or lab that has **active research in your area of interest**

gather credentials for later research positions

What you may **accomplish**

- Experimental prototype/product
- Paper
- Patents
- Part of your dissertation



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How to get an Internship

Be ready

Have a plan

Act on the plan

Do not feel discouraged



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Be Ready

- Be aware of **intern hiring windows** (Nov-Feb+exceptions)
- If on **F1 visa**, talk to your International Office
- Have a reasonable web page & great resume
- Sign up for **mock interviews**
- Gain good rapport with potential references
- **Practise** your "custom" **elevator pitch**



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Prepare and keep at it till you land an offer

Depth:

- Your research area or your main strength
- A programming language or tool or technique

Breath:

- Domain knowledge
- Algorithms, Data Structures, Design

Practice, practice, practice



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Network, Network, Network

- Through your **advisor**, research group, **alumni**
- **Conferences** in your area and general conferences GHC, CRA-W Grad Cohort
- **Career Fairs**
- People you have met at school through other activities
- **Professional groups** in your research area
- Local professional groups in your city (e.g., ACM, SWE, MeetUps)
- Professional social websites (e.g. LinkedIn, with caution)



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Act on the plan

- Express interest & share your relevant experience
- **Ask** about internship opportunities and potential projects
- **Ask** for tips on applying to their group/company
- At conferences or career fairs - follow up with **email**
 - Via email: Write a brief description of your interest and point to your website

Don't be shy. You don't lose anything by asking!



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Prior to Interview

- [Ask about interview format]
- Do your research
 - *gather information about company, products*

Interviewing

- Relax!
- Show motivation and interest
- Talk out each and every solution to questions
- Ask clarifying questions
- Ask about potential intern projects
- Follow up!



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On The Job!

An internship (like any relationship) is a two way street

It's an extended job interview.

It's also an opportunity for the company to recruit you.

Ask not what your company can do for you,
but what you can do for your company



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Strategies for Success

- Set concrete **expectations**
 - Working program ? Product / Feature Launch ?
 - Experimental results ? Paper ? Talk ?
- Show **Initiative**
- Keep track of your **progress** (or attempts at progress) and keep your mentor informed
- Work **independently** BUT ask for **help** when needed
- **Interact** with the entire team
- Network effectively
- **Have FUN!**



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Strategies for failure

Don't

- Get hung up on whether the work is directly related to your proposed thesis topic

Don't

- Ignore the culture



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After the job!

What happens after an internship?

- Convert to full time
- Come back next summer
- Continue a part time internship
- Continue collaboration (e.g. paper)
- Source of strong recommendation
- Keep in touch with your host | recruiter | friends



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