

Summer Internships

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Practical Value of Internship

- Experience
- Improve resume (+ papers, explore patents)
- Try out potential career alternatives
 - Industry
 - National Laboratory
 - Academia (teaching internship)
- Live in a different area, work and community culture
- Experience different work environments, tools, practices
 - research, product, etc.
- Sharpen your research area at school
- Widen professional circles (another letter of support writer)



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Decision for an Internship

- Will it take away or enhance your dissertation research?
- Is it the right time?
 - Do you need the time to complete the writing of your dissertation?
 - Are there publication/other deadlines you might miss?
- Is it the right kind of internship?
 - Will it build up your skill set?
 - Will it lead to publications, employment, or new collaborations?

Getting Started: Finding An Internship

- Common Intern Hiring Windows
 - November
 - February
- Professors and advisors contacts
- Apply to / through large national programs (ACM/ACM-W, IEEE, SHPE, NSBE, SWE, NACME, GHC, Tapia, etc.)
- Campus Career Centers, LinkedIn, Conference Exhibitions
- Network!
 - Conferences
 - Career fairs
 - Professional meet-ups

Preparing your application materials & yourself

- Keep your web page updated – highlight experience
 - Link in a copy of your CV (get critiques)
- Create/update your LinkedIn page
- Do mock interviews
- Identify at least three references
- Develop and practice an ‘elevator pitch’
- If on a visa, know what paperwork is expected

Interview: Putting Your Best Foot Forward

- Before the interview
 - Ask about the format of the interview
 - For behavioral interviews use STAR Method (describe Situation, Task, Action, and Result)
 - Research the company/group/personnel
- The Interview
 - Show motivation and enthusiasm
 - Ask clarifying questions
 - Ask about/share particular projects
 - Talk through as you answer technical/complicated questions
 - Be ready to ask a few questions of each interviewer
 - Ask about their decision timeline
- After the Interview
 - Send thank you notes to the folks that you meet
 - Follow up in ~1 month

Interview: Common Questions

- What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- Tell me about your research?
- What is the largest project you worked on? What was your role?
- Give an example of how you handled a difficult situation
- Puzzle/Brain teaser
- Coding Challenge

Now That You Got the Job, What's Next?

- Before the Start Date
 - Ask what/how to prepare
 - Agree start/end + any necessary time off
 - Understand what expenses will be reimbursed / process for repayment
- On the Job
 - Do a good job!
 - Understand expectations and deliverables
 - Keep your supervisor informed of your progress
 - Interact with the people around you (learn the culture)
 - Attend talks and seminars
 - Work independently but don't be afraid to ask for help
 - Have fun!

Post Internship: What's Next?

- Keep in touch with host, recruiters, etc.
- Ask about the hiring process for full time
- Ask about the potential for returning next year
- Write a paper about the work – understand what information can and cannot be shared



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Exercises to try back at school

Exercise #1: The Elevator Pitch

Elevator Pitch Requirements:

- Duration should be no more than 60 seconds
- Sections should include:
 - Problem area background / motivation
 - Problem statement
 - Technique created / used
 - Results
 - Conclusions

Exercise Activity:

- Form groups of your peers / advisors
- Practice giving elevator pitch
- Group members help critique with a focus on 3 areas
 - Clarity
 - Timeliness
 - Story Completion

Exercise #2: Mock Interviews

- Pair up with one person
- Play the interviewer and the other the interviewee
- Then switch roles

- Format
 - 5 minute questions
 - 3 minute feedback

Questions?

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