

Summer Internships

Russ Joseph, Northwestern University
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Who am I?

Russ Joseph

From: St. Thomas, USVI

Education:

- BS Carnegie Mellon
- PhD Princeton

Now: Associate Professor, Northwestern

Research:

- Computer Architecture
(Power/Reliability Aware Systems)

Fun:

- Running (Eight Marathons)
- Golf

Internships: Telephone company, Microsoft (2), Agere (Bell Labs), IBM (2)

Meredith Ringel Morris

<http://aka.ms/merrie>

- Principal Researcher & Research Manager at Microsoft Research
- Affiliate Professor @ UW
- HCI, CSCW, Accessibility
- CS Ph.D. from Stanford in 2006
- I did internships at Lockheed Martin, AT&T Labs, Mitsubishi Electric Research Labs, MSR
- I've mentored 50+ interns at MSR

Practical Value of Internship

- Experience
- Improve resume (+ papers)
- Networking (reference letter writers)
- Try out potential career alternatives
 - Industrial Lab, National Lab, Startup, Nonprofit, Academia
- Live in a different area
- See different work environments
 - research, product, etc.
- Steer your academic work, inspiration for thesis
- Access to unique data, equipment, etc.
- Remember why you are in school



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Getting Started: Finding An Internship

- Common Intern Hiring Windows
 - December - February (for summer internships)
 - Many places offer school-year internships, as well
- Professors' and advisors' contacts
- Apply to large national programs
- Career Center
- Network!
 - Conferences, Workshops
 - Career fairs
 - Professional meet-ups

Formal Process: Preparing your application materials and yourself

- Get your web page up-to-date
 - A good webpage includes a CV, links to publications, work examples (github, videos, etc.), and a nice headshot
- Research the company and its technical directions
- Create a 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
- Actually submit your application!!! (Ahead of deadline)

Informal Process: Increasing Your Odds

- Contact specific mentors at the company
 - Or have advisor (other faculty) help
 - Short email
 - Similar to elevator pitch
 - Establish connection (we met at conference X...)
 - Logistic concerns: Timing constraints, other offers, etc.
 - Attach resume
 - Avoid: Offending, SPAM, Wasting recipient's time, making them do unnecessary work
- Take advantage of networking opportunities at conferences and workshops

Exercise

Elevator Pitches

- Break into groups of 4-5 and have each person give their 60 second elevator pitch
- Spend time discussing techniques that were particularly effective



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Interview: Putting Your Best Foot Forward

- Before the interview
 - Ask about the format of the interview
 - Research the company/group/personnel
- The Interview
 - Show motivation and enthusiasm
 - Ask clarifying questions
 - Ask about 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

You will be one of many candidates that the interviewers see.. Why will you be remembered?



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Interview: Common Questions

- What are your strengths/weakness?
- What was your favorite / least favorite project and why?
- Tell me about your research. Why is it important?
- Interviewer describes their own research, and wants to hear intelligent ideas, questions, or feedback from you
- Give an example of how you handled a difficult situation
- Puzzle/Brain teaser
- Coding Challenge (read the book “Cracking the Coding Interview”)
- What do you do for fun?

Interview Exercise

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

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

- Before the Start Date
 - Ask what to prepare
 - Agree start/end + any necessary time off
- On the Job
 - Do a good job!
 - Understand expectations and deliverables (of your role and broader project)
 - 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
 - Find a mentor
 - Have fun!

Post Internship: After Job, 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