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Careers Advisory Service

Quick 10 Tips



Internship Guide

Quick 10 Tips Internship Guide

Getting started: Your step-by-step playbook from search to standout.

In today's fast-moving and competitive job market, a degree alone is no longer enough. Employers are looking for candidates who can demonstrate more than academic knowledge; they want individuals who can adapt, communicate, and contribute from day one.

An internship is not just a requirement for graduation. It is your first real step into the professional world, a chance to gain hands-on experience, understand workplace expectations, and begin shaping your career direction.

What Makes Internships So Valuable?

Internships give you a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Instead of only learning concepts in lectures, you get to apply them in real-world situations. Here's what you gain:

Real Work Experience
Employers rely heavily on past experience when evaluating candidates. Internships provide proof that you can handle workplace responsibilities.

Transferable Skills
You develop essential skills such as:
- Communication
- Time management
- Teamwork
- Problem-solving
- Adaptability

These skills are highly valued across all industries.

Professional Connections
During your internship, you meet professionals, supervisors, and peers. These connections can open doors to future opportunities.

Career Clarity
Not sure if a job suits you? Internships allow you to test different roles and industries before committing long-term.

Higher Employability
Many companies use internships as a recruitment pipeline. Performing well could lead to a full-time job offer.

Before You Start Applying

Preparation is key to securing the right internship.

1. **Start Early**
Many internships have early deadlines. Applying early increases your chances and gives you more options.

2. **Know Your Goals**
Ask yourself:
- What industry interests me?
- What skills do I want to gain?
- What kind of role fits me?

Having clear answers helps you focus your search.

3. **Build a Strong CV**
Even without work experience, you can stand out by highlighting:
- Relevant coursework
- Projects
- Extracurricular activities
- Volunteering

Make your CV clear, concise, and tailored to each role.

How to Get an Internship?

Career Centres
Your university career service is your best starting point. They offer guidance and consultation, such as CV reviews.

Career Fairs
These events allow you to meet employers, learn about opportunities, and make a strong first impression.

Networking
Sometimes, opportunities come through people, not job portals. Talk to seniors, alumni, and lecturers.

Hidden Opportunities
Not all internships are advertised. Aside from applying through job portals such as JobStreet and Indeed, sending speculative applications to companies you are interested in can uncover hidden roles.

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Landing and thriving in your internship: Strategies to get hired, excel at work, and build your career.

Applying the Smart Way
Getting an internship requires more than just sending applications; it requires strategy.

Tailor Your Applications
Avoid sending generic CVs. Customise each application based on the company and role.

Write Professional Emails
- Your email is your first impression. Keep it clear, polite, and concise.
- Always check attachments before sending!

Follow Up
If you do not hear back, a polite follow-up shows initiative and keeps you on the recruiter's radar.

Building Your Online Presence
Your LinkedIn profile is your digital CV.

Optimise Your Profile
- Use a clear headline that reflects your goals
- Highlight relevant skills
- Showcase achievements with examples

Show Your Value
Instead of saying "good at teamwork," demonstrate it:
- "Collaborated with a team of 5 to organise an event with 200 participants"

Get Recommendations
Testimonials from lecturers or supervisors strengthen your credibility.

Your First Day: Making a Strong Start
Starting your internship can feel overwhelming, but preparation makes all the difference.

Dress Professionally
First impressions matter. When unsure, dress more formally.

Be Observant
Pay attention during briefings and take notes.

Introduce Yourself
Get to know your colleagues; it helps you feel more comfortable and builds rapport.

Ask Questions
You're not expected to know everything. Asking questions shows your willingness to learn.

How to Stand Out as an Intern
Being a great intern is about attitude and initiative.
- Take initiative
- Be proactive
- Embrace challenges
- Solve problems
- Seek feedback
- Build relationships

The Reality of Internships
Internships are not always perfect, but they are always valuable.

You Might Feel Lost at First
That's normal. Every intern goes through a learning curve.

Workload May Vary
Some days are busy, others slow. Use slow days to learn or ask for more work.

You'll Learn Unexpected Skills
Even small tasks can teach valuable lessons.

Professional Communication is Key
Clear, respectful communication is essential in the workplace.

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Finish strong and plan ahead to turn your internship achievements into long-term career advantages.

Handling Workplace Challenges
Internships may come with challenges, but knowing how to handle them is important.

Set Boundaries
Maintain a healthy work-life balance and communicate your limits professionally.

Address Issues Early
If problems arise:
- Speak to the person involved (if appropriate)
- Escalate to your supervisor
- Contact HR if necessary

Know Your Rights
Understand your internship contract, including:
- Responsibilities
- Working hours
- Allowance
- Duration

Ending Your Internship the Right Way
Your final impression matters just as much as your first.

Reflect on Your Experience
Ask yourself:
- What did I learn?
- What did I achieve?
- What skills did I develop?

Write these down while they are fresh.

Track Your Achievements
Include details such as:
- Projects completed
- Team collaborations
- Measurable results

This will help you update your CV and prepare for interviews.

Update Your CV & LinkedIn
Once your internship ends:
- Add your experience to your CV
- Update your LinkedIn profile
- Make your achievements visible to recruiters

Secure a Reference
Ask your supervisor if they are willing to:
- Act as a referee
- Provide a recommendation

This can be extremely valuable for future job applications.

Stay Connected
Your internship network is one of your biggest assets.
- Connect with colleagues on LinkedIn
- Keep in touch occasionally
- Maintain professional relationships

You never know when these connections may lead to future opportunities.

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