



# All About Internships

## Ready Reference ♦ C-1

College of Engineering, Architecture & Technology ♦ Career Services

**Internship.** As a college student, you've heard or seen the word a million times. Is doing an internship or gaining experience in the field you ultimately want to work in really that important? **YES.**

According to a survey conducted by *Vault.com*, 74% of 2007 college seniors completed an internship before graduating and 52% completed two or more. Thus, to be competitive for the best opportunities, you need to have at least one internship on your resume. Below are some frequently asked questions related to internships and work experience. For more information, visit CEAT Career Services or talk to your academic advisor.

### **What is an internship?**

Any position that allows you to gain insight or meaningful experience in the field you ultimately want to work in, or think you want to work in, can be called an internship. It's also important to realize that you can become more knowledgeable in the field by working in related areas and not just in the exact area related to your major.

### **Where should I look for an internship?**

You would be amazed how students acquire their internships. First of all, tell everyone you know that you're looking for an internship, and then get busy! Internet searches, the HIRE System, newspapers, your classmates, family members, The Internship Bible, and many other sources are good places to start. Talk to CEAT Career Services and your advisor for other resources.

### **What can I gain as an intern?**

Not only do you gain experiences that look great on your resume, you also establish valuable connections. Holding a position in your field of interest, if only for a few weeks, allows you to see first hand what goes on. Consider it an audition for a career. Additionally, you have the opportunity to really impress your supervisor with your skills. If you're a good match for the organization, you may land a future job offer. Some companies

even consider an internship part of your training period, shortening the length of time before you are eligible for benefits once employed full-time with the organization. You may make connections that open doors for other internships in a different area or with a different organization. Most of all, you gather "real world" experience you can take back to the classroom.

### **How many internships should I do?**

As many as you can! Remember, the majority of engineering and technology students have at least one internship prior to graduation. So be exceptional and take advantage of as many experiences as you can. Multiple internships will prepare you well and could increase your starting salary!

### **Where can I do an internship?**

Anywhere you want! Internships are available locally, nationally, and internationally. Don't limit yourself to what you're familiar with. This is your opportunity to do some exploring and discover not only what it is that you want to do in the future, but also what sort of environment you'd like to live in.

### **How long does an internship last?**

Traditionally, CEAT students participate in internships during the summer. While a valuable and meaningful internship doesn't have to meet time requirements, it should allow you adequate time to understand a process or

acquire additional knowledge related to a particular career. You can obtain longer periods of work experience through the CEAT Cooperative Education Program (Co-op). See Ready Reference C-4 for more information about participating in a Co-op.

### **What if the organization I want to work with has never had an intern?**

Help them understand. Can you explain what an internship is? Are you able to outline what you would be able to contribute to the organization through an internship? What are your strongest selling points? Employers without previous experience with internships may be intimidated by the term and may not understand how valuable interns can be. If you believe you would be able to contribute to the organization and that you would have a meaningful internship at that location, convince them that you're just what the organization needs! The CEAT Career Services Coordinator has resources for the employer, and will be happy to help him/her develop an internship program.

### **What about money?**

CEAT students are usually always paid a competitive salary for internships. You may, however, locate a very special internship offering a unique experience, but at a lower salary. Remember, just because you don't receive a large paycheck doesn't mean the internship is not worth doing. Do you believe that the opportunity will benefit you in the long

run? Will it benefit you enough to live with a lower-than-average salary for a few months? What will be your return on the time you invest? Check out your options before turning it down. Sometimes an outstanding internship location or a terrific experience with a special organization will more than offset a lesser salary. You have to be the judge.

### **How do I act once I've landed the internship?**

Like a sponge! Learn everything that you can. Learn the names of everyone you meet. Circulate your OSU student business cards. This is your opportunity to show the entire organization your capabilities. Exceed their expectations and show them why they can't live without you! Most importantly, respect the fact that you've been selected for this position. Many others probably applied, but you were selected - don't abuse that.

### **What "tools" do I need to land an internship?**

The same tools you need to land a full-time job.

- Well-written professional resume
- Attention-getting cover letter
- Examples of your capabilities
- Strong interview skills
- Knowledge of the organization
- Initiative and persistence to make it happen

### **Will an internship really make a difference in my career path?**

YES!