

Internship Research: Things to Think About

What will you be doing?

- Will you have responsibilities that look good on a resume? Or will you be licking envelopes? Employers want people with meaningful, substantive work experience.
- Will your position give you an opportunity to learn whether this is something you want to pursue for a career? Will you have contact with the people who do what you want to do?
- Will you get paid? how much?
- What knowledge and skills does the job require? Will it use the skills you have?
- What knowledge and skills can you expect to learn? Does the organization have seminars and training workshops, or is training more informal?
- Will you be working alone or as part of a team? Does this match your own preferred style?
- Will you be meeting with a supervisor on a regular basis?
- If it is a large organization, will you rotate among positions? Will you be able to get a sense of different parts of the organization and what they do?
- What are the working conditions like? If it is an overseas internship, will you be roughing it, and are you comfortable with that?

Some questions about the organization

- What does the company or organization do?
- Do they hire former interns? Some companies find that internships are a cost-effective way of evaluating the merits of a potential employee.
- Will you be able to develop useful networks and contacts?
- Will you be able to get a letter of recommendation from a supervisor whose recommendation will carry weight?
- Is it a well-respected company or organization? Not a deal-breaker, but it helps.
- What is the organization's culture like (egalitarian/hierarchical? formal/informal? good corporate citizen or just profit? etc.) Does this match your own style?
- How do they treat their interns? exploitative or supportive? flexible with regard to working hours? overtime required? travel required? Talk to some interns, if you can.
- Is it in a nice location?
- How selective are they? What are the odds that you will land the position?