



Get Your First Remote Internship

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Get Your First Remote Internship © 2022

Deepak Kumar Version 1.0 - October 2022

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Introduction

Like every student, I aspired to attend a prestigious engineering college. However, I ended up at Yeshwantrao Chavan College of Engineering in Nagpur with an Information Technology branch. I wasn't sure what was ahead when I first enrolled in college. My first year of college consisted of only passing the semester examinations and learning the fundamentals of C programming.

When I started my sophomore year I started exploring things such as what skills I could learn, opportunities for second-year students, and everything. I lacked at one point because there was no one to guide me along the right route, so it was up to me to sort things out. I began learning a little web development and completed a Deep Learning specialized course by Coursera. I afterward recognized that I had made a huge mistake by attempting to try two things at once. As I became more interested in web programming, I pursued it. I obtained some open-source experience and applied to Google Summer of Code, but I was turned down. Rejection was simply a redirection for me.

After completion of sophomore year, when the third year started everyone started talking about placements and internships. I was the one too but when I heard about the low packages offered by companies and the bond. This was something I felt I couldn't settle for. I thought of going through off-campus placements. I boycotted college placements completely and thought to focus on off-campus. Once I was clear of this I again started to check for the things I need to do. I reapplied for Google Summer of Code and was selected this time. After, completion of GSoC now it was time to find an internship. I started applying on LinkedIn and contacting recruiters, but I never heard back. So I spent some time selecting a different method.

I learned about the Angellist website. I reapplied for the position that matched my qualifications but received no response or a rejection email. I later learned about cold emailing and cover letters. So, using all of this, I began taking a fresh approach, and the outcome was positive. Finally, I was able to secure a remote internship as well as a remote job with a good organization.

How will this book benefit you?

"To write a book, you must first become the book," famous entrepreneur and investor Naval Ravikant once said. The things I have mentioned in this book are exactly what worked for me to get a remote internship. If you have gone through the introduction you might have realized I have tried different things but only a few of them worked for me. So, if you are someone the same as me looking for a path that can help you to get a remote internship then this book is for you. If you are someone who is struggling to get responses from recruiters on applications then this book can help you with it. This book is not a sort of roadmap or shortcut path but I have shown exactly what you need to do. You need to follow the process, put your efforts and I believe you will see the results.

1. Getting Yourself Prepared

Interview Preparation

This is the first step I consider before applying to a remote internship. If you are not prepared enough and just randomly applying with the hope to get a remote internship it won't help you in any way.

Let's consider the case of two candidates who want to get a frontend developer remote position namely Jenny and Edward. Jenny is in 3rd year of his college, and he started applying for internships 4 months before the completion of 3rd year. The only preparation he had made before applying is prepared his resume. After, 3 months of applying he is still receiving rejection and is not able to get an internship. Now let's see Edward he is also in 3rd year of college, he started applying for internships 2 months before the completion. He had prepared his resume well, added good projects, revised all the concepts, and crafted good answers for a personal introduction. He got a remote internship just after a month.

Now if you have read the above story you might have realized it doesn't matter whether you start too early or late. If you are well prepared there's a good chance for you to get an internship soon. You can position yourself now either as Jenny or Edward. If you are Jenny don't worry this section will get you there.

a. Cover the basics

Before you apply for any position make sure you are clear with all the basic concepts of that field. If you are applying for a frontend developer role having a good grasp of HTML, CSS, and JavaScript is definitely a plus. What to cover varies from role to role and your skills. But to keep a check on basics list out major skills about the position you have mentioned in your resume. Do some research about topics to cover, and prepare with that. This will save you time and help you to follow a structured path too.

b. Add projects

The only way to show your skills to the employer is by showing them you have built great projects. This is definitely going to help a lot in your application, as this is the place where you can stand out from other applicants. Let's take an example, for a frontend developer role one applicant has added 3 projects on HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. The other applicant has added 3 projects but the applicant has developed one project on basic HTML, and CSS, the second one with HTML, CSS, and JavaScript which includes form validation, and dynamic rendering of content, and the third one using React as the frontend framework. You can see now both applicants have added an equal number of projects but who would have the greater chance of getting selected for an interview?

c. Data Structures and Algorithms preparation

This is one of the most common questions asked, do I need to prepare for DSA, what's the level of DSA I need to prepare for? My experience says that the level of DSA you need to prepare varies from company to company. One thing which applies to every company is that you must have knowledge of basic data structures and algorithms. If you go for the product-based company then they definitely ask you DSA questions which are of LeetCode medium/hard questions. If you are applying to a remote startup then they are more focused on your problem-solving, and thinking skills to a problem rather than asking "Invert a binary tree".

d. Open source contribution

Contributing to open source definitely helps as apart from coding it shows your other skills of collaboration, project flow, and coding standards. A point to remember is that contribute to the project which matches your skillset. Fixing a README header is not going to help you.

Prepare the right resume

Now you are ready for the next step of your preparation. I believe this stage of preparation comes after the first step I mentioned above. Say, if you are not prepared for the interview, and haven't developed good projects what will you add to the resume? Following the interview, the preparation step is important before you move to get your resume ready. So, now it's time to prepare the right resume.

a. Choose the right template

I have reviewed a lot of resumes of different people from LinkedIn, Twitter, and community channels. This is the major mistake students do as not having a good template for their resume. Remember the recruiter spends less than 30 seconds on your resume.

Let's move to choose the right template now. Basically, the template is a format you follow for your resume which includes, layout, text font, etc. My suggestion would be to select a LaTeX template from a site like [overleaf.com](https://www.overleaf.com). Choose a one-column template, with no photographs, and black text color would be preferable. Always export your resume in pdf format and save it as `yourname_resume.pdf`.

b. Elements of a resume

These are the 5 elements of a resume that every resume must have:

1. Education: This section should have your current education details. It's not necessary to all the education details from 10th standard to university. Just including university education detail is fine.

2. **Work experience:** This section should include your professional experience details. You can include internship experience, open source contribution, programming club experience, etc. For applying to a remote internship not a lot of work experience is a must but having at least 1-2 is good.
3. **Projects:** For an intern, I believe this is the section of your resume which will help you a lot to increase your chance of selection. Try to build and add good projects. Deploy all of your projects and add a clickable link for it to check. Doing this would definitely give you an edge. If you have read the interview preparation step you already know how you can add good projects.
4. **Skills:** This section should include all the skills you possess. Here's an example from my portfolio site of how you can add it properly.

Languages: C/C++(STL), Python, JavaScript

Libraries and Frameworks Used: React.js, React Native(Familiar), Flask, Numpy, Scikit-learn, Pandas, OpenCV

Softwares Used: LaTeX, QtCreator, Git, VSCode

Environments: Linux, Windows

Others: Machine Learning, Frontend Development

5. **Achievements:** The section includes your best achievements in your college. Whether it is winning a coding competition or a leadership position. I would prefer to add achievements which is more technical, shows leadership skills, and are team player.

These are the 5 must content every resume should have. You can add 1-2 more sections if you want. It depends upon you but makes sure your resume should not more than 1 page long. You must also include your Github, Email, and Linkedin profile clickable link in the header.

c. Craft the perfect resume

You now got the building blocks of a resume, now it's time how to piece this together to create a perfect resume.

1. Try to rephrase the sentence in XYZ format: In one sentence, it includes what you've accomplished (X) + the qualitative results (Y) + the skills or experience you utilized to achieve the outcome (Z).
2. Don't make any grammatical mistakes. Use Grammarly for this.
3. Use consistent spacing everywhere.
4. Don't use any infographics like your personal photos. It's not ATS-friendly.
5. Use keywords like implemented, improved, utilized, and optimized to show the impact you have made.

Get Your Cover Letter & Portfolio ready

Having your portfolio is definitely an add-on to your application process. In your portfolio, you can mention each of your experiences that you couldn't add to your resume. Many of the positions I applied for asked for a project I was proud to work on, I shared a few of my projects but in feedback, they mentioned that it's a good choice to share your portfolio. You are a developer so I don't expect you to be good at design. So, here's a tip on how to create a portfolio. Search for the design of portfolios on the web, you can find good designs on sites like dribbble. Choose the design and code it on your own. Once it's completed deploy your portfolio on Netlify. After, doing this you would have a live portfolio to show the world!!!

For your cover letter, I won't say it's compulsory to prepare as most companies don't ask for it. But during my process, I remember a few companies asked me to upload a cover letter along resume for application. So, if you have some time prepare it in advance.

2. Application Process

I consider this as the second step in the process of getting an internship. The first question when you think of a remote job is where we can find it. Let's begin with that.

Where to apply?

I have been asked many times a question "Where can I find a remote job?". In this section, I will be showing you various ways to find trusted remote jobs.

a. Remote Jobs Site

i. AngelList (angel.co): This is one of the first sites on my list, the reason is I got my internship from here which finally turned into a remote job. This site has a list of different jobs ranging from startups to big firms. You can choose different filters and look for all the remote job positions in your country, a company that is accepting worldwide developers.

ii. RemoteOK (<https://remoteok.com/>)

iii. WeWorkRemotely (<https://weworkremotely.com/>)

b. LinkedIn Search

If you use LinkedIn then you might have many people attached the hiring icon to their profile pic. You can reach out to them and ask about the position they are hiring for and if it's remote. Do make sure that you craft a proper message the first time when you ask for it.

c. YCombinator (<https://www.ycombinator.com/jobs>)

I found later when I was exploring the YCombinator site that they have added a job section too. Most YCombinator startups are hiring for a remote intern position if you have good experience with development. So, this is definitely a good place to check for a remote job.

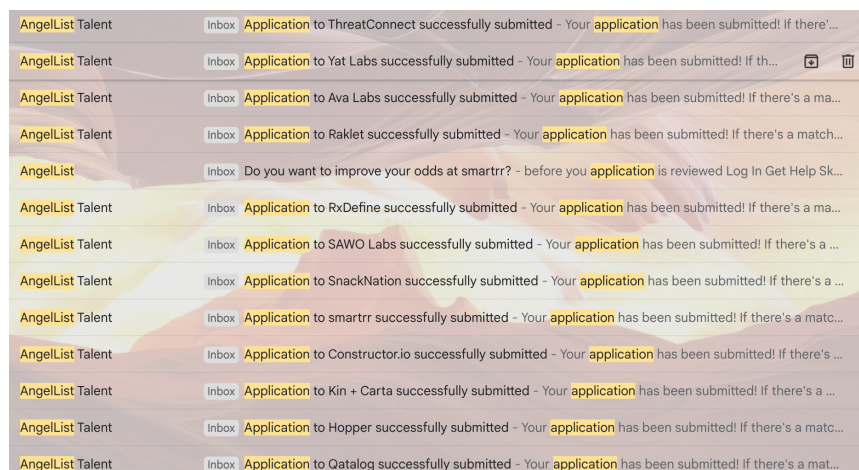
The above three places listed by me would be good enough for you to find the list of good internship positions to apply for. I don't want to add a long list of remote job sites, just added the best one which you can use.

How to apply?

You found the internship to apply for now the thing is how to apply which can help you get noticed. I have applied to more than 100 internships during my phase, initially, I was not getting any reply instead than a rejection email but I tried a few different approaches and it worked for me. Let's discuss the different ways of applying.

The First method

You found an internship job application on Angellist or any other site. You submitted your resume, added a brief cover letter which they asked and you're done. This approach is followed by more than 90% of students. When I started applying for internships I was also following this same approach. I was receiving most of the rejection emails following this approach or no response. See the image below I remember during this month I was not receiving even a single response.



Don't go with the first approach anymore!!!

The Second Method

Before we discuss this approach see the results of this approach below first:

The image displays three screenshots of job application acceptance notifications. The first two are smaller, side-by-side notifications from MyServicecube and Rita Personal Data. The third is a larger, centered notification from Talenox.

Your application to MyServicecube was accepted!
Your application to MyServicecube was accepted! Schedule an interview to move forward in the process

- ✓ You applied about 22 hours ago
- ✓ You matched today
- ✓ Schedule your first interview

Your application to Rita Personal Data was accepted!
Your application to Rita Personal Data was accepted! Schedule an interview to move forward in the process

- ✓ You applied about 23 hours ago
- ✓ You matched today
- ✓ Schedule your first interview

Your application to Talenox was accepted!
Your application to Talenox was accepted! Schedule an interview to move forward in the process

- ✓ You applied 2 days ago
- ✓ You matched today
- ✓ Schedule your first interview

You can see in the above screenshot that changing my approach was helping me to get shortlisted very quickly and get into the first round. Now, let's discuss this approach. Whenever you find a job application on Angellist there's a company profile and the hiring person's name. So, the first thing you need to do is address the person in your

cover letter personally. Instead of starting your cover letter with “Hey there”, start with “Hey [name]”. The second thing I did is tweaked my cover letter as per the role. For example, if the role is asking for React experience. Just mention what’s your experience with React and the projects you have developed. Now just submit your application using the updated cover letter and resume. If you are really serious about getting an internship following this approach would take just 10-15 mins of extra time before application.

Here’s a sample cover letter I used:

Hello Shrey,

My name is Deepak Kumar. Currently, I am pursuing B.Tech in Information technology from Yeshwantrao Chavan College of Engineering, Nagpur.

As my personal major project, I worked on a few machine learning and React.js based projects. In React.js, I created a Customer Analytics Dashboard for customers to analyze their sales and marketing activities.

I also had the opportunity to work on other open-source projects. The Google Summer of Code was the most exciting of them all since I worked on the GCompris project to add datasets for each child group based on their ages for different activities. The tech stack I worked on here was JavaScript, QML, and C++.

Prior to this, I worked on a few personal side projects based on React.js and a few full-stack projects too. I am a quick learner who is eager to learn and apply new skills as part of my day-to-day responsibilities. I am an open-source developer, therefore I am used to working collaboratively with remote teams.

As a Frontend Developer, I am excited to learn more about the prospects available at your company [company_name]. I am available for an internship position and can start ASAP.

Link to portfolio: <https://deepakkumar.netlify.app/>

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Regards,
Deepak

Update this sample cover letter as per your profile. This is just for the reference of one cover letter format you can use. Let me tell you one thing more this second approach work for applying at many places. I have used it to reach out to the hiring person on LinkedIn too if I don't hear anything back on my application. Also, this approach can be used for cold-emailing recruiters.

What's next after the application?

You have now applied for a few jobs which fit your profile now what to do next? Here you will fall into three categories:

- (a) either you got shortlisted
- (b) the application got rejected
- (c) didn't hear anything back

If you fall into category (a) start brushing up your skills for the interview and plan for it. If you fall into category (b) then just "Keep applying". One rejection can't decide your application or skills. Better opportunities might be waiting for you so just take it as a redirection for a better opportunity. If you fall in category (c) then you can try for a follow-up email to the hiring person on LinkedIn. This is the approach I used to follow. But remember at least wait for a week before you send them a message for follow-up.

One thing to remember is that just don't apply and sit to hear back on your application. Keep applying to multiple internships opening.

3. The Interview

In this chapter I would like to discuss a common pattern of the interview process I encountered during my journey. I would also like to discuss a few ways you can use to get yourself familiar with the company interview process so you can prepare in a better way.

Interview Process Pattern

The interview process I encountered was a 3-4 step interview process which was structured in the following way:

Round 1: In most of the companies I got shortlisted this round was of two different types. The first type can be that they will send you a development-based small task and you need to develop it and submit it as per their guidelines. The second type would be an online assessment on a platform like Hackerrank. In this online assessment, they will ask a few development-based questions and 1-2 questions about basic data structures and algorithms. You can expect any of these types in round 1 of the interview process.

Round 2: This round is based on the first round. As if you are asked a development task they will ask you about your approach to implementation, ask a few questions about it how to extend, and a few questions related to similar development concepts. If you have appeared for the Hackerrank test they will ask you to explain the code and ask some development-based questions.

Round 3: If you have cleared the first two rounds then this round can be an internally tie-breaker round by the employer between different candidates if this is the last round. This round is with a senior team member of the company they discuss your past round and ask a few development-based questions.

Round 4: This round is similar to the 3rd round with some extra behavioral questions.

Know about the interview process

If you got shortlisted for the interview then it's good to be a bit familiar with the interview process. This can help you in your preparation a lot. The first approach you can use is to search about the company interview experience online for the internship position, Glassdoor would also be a good site to check out. The second approach is to connect with a few people working there and ask them if they would like to share your interview process. These are the two approaches I followed to get familiar with the interview process.

The Final Step

Once you appeared for the interview, you know what can be the expected result. If it's positive then wait for a few days to hear back. If you got selected, Congrats on your first remote internship!

If you didn't get selected then just ask for feedback as the first thing. This will help you to not repeat the same mistake in the next interview. Analyze yourself and check if you want to brush up on any skills which you lacked here. Keep applying!!!

Thanks for reading this book, hope this will benefit you in your journey of Getting a Remote Internship!!!

Get 25% off on my next e-book by sharing feedback in any of the following ways:

Send it to my email: deepakdk2431@gmail.com

Share on Twitter by tagging me

Here's a surprise giveaway:

5 out of the first 300 readers who have given feedback would receive a free "1-1 call of 30 mins with me for guidance"!!!