

What It Takes to Get a Summer Internship

Aaron Coplan and Dietrich Reidenbaugh
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Agenda

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Disclaimer

- This talk is a compilation of our experiences and resources
- No guarantees that things will go the same way for you
- Everyone and every company's experiences are different but we will try to give a general process outline

Ongoing Actions

You should ensure you are always doing the following things:

- Networking
 - Earn a good reputation, get to know professors
 - Get to know peers who may be able to refer you
 - Employers ask people they know at GW to refer students
- Personal projects or research
 - Gain skills beyond what you get in class (JS, Python, REST APIs)
- Do well in classes
 - Not everyone cares, but harsh reality is many places see GPA as only number that can relatively consistently be used to compare candidates
- Extracurriculars and/or other jobs
 - Soft skills matter - it's risky for employers to take people who have never held a job

Application Timeline

- Applications primarily take place in the fall
- Openings are usually posted in late August / early September and typically remain open through late November
- However, applications are usually handled on a rolling basis, so best to apply early!

Applications

What are you looking for?

- Don't be too picky, but have priorities to guide your search
 - Location
 - Areas of interest
 - Company size
 - Research
 - Paid vs. unpaid
- Do you want to work for the government?
 - May be interesting problems especially in defense
 - Serve your country
 - Easy to find in DC area
 - Pay usually not great, but benefits are
 - May need security clearance

TOP 10 CITIES FOR TECH JOBS

The San Francisco Bay Area remains the best market for tech jobs, but Atlanta and Toronto are moving up the ranks.



Job market

1 San Francisco Bay	6 Toronto
2 Seattle	7 Raleigh-Durham
3 New York City	8 Austin
4 Washington, D.C.	9 Boston
5 Atlanta	10 Dallas/Fort Worth

SOURCE CBRE
Jim Sargent, USA TODAY



Resume

- Study online examples carefully
- Employers only look for 6 seconds on average
- ONE PAGE!
- Have email and phone at top; full address optional
- Education at top; include GPA if it's good; list relevant classes
- Put skills, experience, and projects (including class projects) in most appealing order
- Start every bullet with unique action verb (see online for resume verbs lists)
- List experience and projects in reverse chronological order with months/years
- Remove irrelevant high-school jobs as soon as possible
- Don't include: photo, references, objective

Resume Reviews

- VMock
 - Automated resume review platform offered by GW Career Center
- GW Career Center
 - Online review service
 - Drop-in hours
 - Appointment with Dr. Sonya Merrill
- SEAS Career Services
 - Weekly drop-in hours

Take all suggestions with grain of salt, especially from non-CS people

Online Presence

- Update your profiles:
 - LinkedIn
 - Handshake
 - GitHub
 - Piazza
 - Yes companies actually use this
- Google yourself
- Make sure social media accounts are private/appropriate

Easiest Ways to Get Internships

1. Know people

- It's common for students to get internships from family and adult friends

2. Know people who know people

- Mention in conversations that you are working on your internship search; you never know whom people know

3. Get to know people

- Go to career fairs, employer events, etc.
 - Career fair this Friday
- Read emails from GW Career Center, SEAS Career Services, CS department
- When employers are specifically looking for GW students and sending recruiters here, your chances are much better than applying to random places online

- Apply to companies online too, but don't expect responses

Application

- Read job descriptions carefully
- You can still apply if you don't meet all requirements
- Aim high, but don't neglect realistic opportunities
- Cover letters often aren't read especially at large companies but can't hurt
- Find internships on company careers pages, Glassdoor, LinkedIn, Handshake, Piazza, other job search sites

Interviews

Interview Types

- Coding
 - Online Timed Challenge
 - Phone Interview
 - Whiteboard Interview
- Other
 - Behavioral Interview
 - Case Interview

Coding Interviews

1. Online Timed Challenge (HackerRank, Leetcode, etc)

- a. One or more coding questions on an online platform such as HackerRank. Complete them correctly within the time frame to be considered for the next phase.

2. Phone Interview

- a. Usually share a screen with the interviewer similar to Google Docs. Some companies are even stricter and make you have a webcam to make sure there is nobody in the room helping you.
- b. Typically 45 minutes to an hour
- c. Often 1 or 2 coding questions

3. Whiteboard Interview

- a. Similar to a phone interview, except in person and on a whiteboard.
- b. Sometimes these questions are pure coding questions, sometimes they are more system design related.

Behavioral and Case Interviews

1. Behavioral

- a. Tell me about a time where....
- b. Prepare for this by looking at your resume and coming up with answers to these questions (you can find a number of sample questions online).
- c. STAR (Situation, Task, Actions, Results)

2. Case

- a. Unique to the finance sector. More of a business analytics type question.
- b. Typically addresses critical thinking skills and your problem solving ability.
- c. There isn't necessarily one right answer, often they're looking for you to do some simple math, analysis of a situation, and make a supported recommendation based on the information.

Offers

Deciding on Offers

- What to consider:
 - Location
 - Pay compared to summer expenses
 - How established intern program is
 - Area of interest
 - Reputation
 - Glassdoor reviews
 - Start date and length
 - Company culture and people you would work with

Deciding on Offers

- 2-week offer deadline is typical
- Can ask for deadline extensions
 - Don't expect extension
 - Have reasons
 - A few days or another week is a typical extension timeframe
- Negotiations are less common for internships
 - Large company intern offers are usually non-negotiable
 - Can still ask for flexibility on start date, a week off for a conference, etc.
 - Make it clear what you need and why you need it

Hiring Process

- Reneging
 - Reneging is unaccepting an offer
 - It's not illegal, but don't expect to ever work for that company again
 - If you got offer through a connection think about bridges you may burn
- Background checks and drug tests
 - Usually 1 to 3 months before start date
 - Companies can withdraw offers if you fail
 - Make smart choices so you don't have to worry

Panel

Panel Q&A

- Seamus Malley (Mission Data)
- Julia Bristow (REU at UNT)
- Dietrich Reidenbaugh (Amazon)
- Aaron Coplan (Facebook)
- Zuri Lawrence (Capital One)

Helpful Links

- [Twitter Resume Guide](#)
- [Twitter Tips and Tricks](#)