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Welcome to the Internships@State (I@S) toolkit for students. Whether you are seeking an internship on- or off-campus, this toolkit will help you learn what you need to be successful. Such as:

- What an internship is
- How to find an internship
- Making the most of your internship
- Wrapping up your internship

The I@S program was developed to provide students the opportunity to find internships right here at Michigan State University. Having an internship at MSU allows students to:

- Save money: Keep local housing, decrease travel expenses
- Continue taking courses while interning
- Work in over 240 departments in almost any career field
- Be actively engaged in the business and operations aspects of MSU
- Work in a large organization: MSU employs over 30,000 people worldwide

If you have any questions please contact:

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Please remember this toolkit can be used by either students interested in participating in an internship on or off campus.
What is an internship?
Internships mean different things to different people. The National Society for Experiential Education defines an internship as “A carefully monitored work or volunteer experience in which an individual has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning through the experience”.

An internship is:
• An on-site work experience directly related to career goals and/or fields of interest
• Supervised, emphasizing learning and professional development
• Evaluative, providing system for feedback and communication
• Either paid, unpaid, for-credit, or not-for-credit

An internship is not:
• Routine, repetitive tasks unrelated to identified learning goals
• A job that does not offer career related learning opportunities and experiences
• Unsupervised, non-evaluated experiences

An internship is not doing tasks in a workplace but rather learning and growing professionally.
Why do you need an Internship?
Internships allow you to apply what you’ve learned in the classroom to a professional setting.

MSU collegiate Employment Research Institute found that: 50% of employers surveyed agreed students should have one internship, while the other 50% believed students should have at least two and 10% of those said at least three.

What does this mean?
Students are going to have to gain work-related experiences (internships/co-ops) earlier, as soon as their freshman or sophomore year, and plan on having more than one before graduation...

12 competencies employers seek in college grads...
1. Working in a Diverse Environment
2. Managing Time and Priorities
3. Acquiring Knowledge
4. Thinking Critically
5. Communicating Effectively
6. Solving Problems
7. Contributing to a Team
8. Navigating Across Boundaries
9. Performing with Integrity
10. Developing Professional Skills
11. Balancing Work and Life
12. Embracing Change

For a full description on The 12 Essentials for Success go to: www.CareerNetwork.msu.edu/resources-tools/career-guides.html
Internships allow you to:

- Take what you’ve learned in the working world back into the classroom through projects, papers, etc.
- Test out a field. You can try out different career fields and employment settings. Would you buy a car without driving it first? Why then would you spend 4+ years working towards a career you haven’t “test driven”?
- Gain experience in the 12 competencies mentioned in the 12 Essentials for Success.
- Network, meaning make contacts in the industry you are interested in. Many companies hire their interns upon graduation. Think of internships as an extended interview.
- Potentially earn academic credit. Some degree programs offer internship or independent study credit.

If you would like to gain credit for your internship, please contact an advisor or faculty member in your department to see if the internship is eligible for credit.

Graduating with an experience allows you to:

- Select a career with confidence.
- Create more contacts through networking.
- Receive more job offers upon graduation.
- Move up in a company quicker.
- Make more money.
To set up an appointment at Career Services with an advisor go to http://careernetwork.msu.edu/

What if I can’t find an internship?
What if I didn’t get the internship position?
What if I don’t have the time for an internship?
What if I’m a senior and I haven’t had an internship?
What if I don’t have any experience?

Internships are competitive. Sometimes it’s about being at the right place at the right time. If you are struggling with landing an internship, don’t be discouraged. You may need to start with some non-paid experiential learning opportunities. Strive for a well-rounded experience at MSU. The more bases you cover, the more likely you will be selected for the next internship.

There are other areas to gain the experiences employers are looking for. While internships are important, they are just one piece of the experience puzzle...
Before you begin
Before you start searching for an internship, think through some of these questions to make sure you are prepared for the internship search...

- Is your resume complete?
- Do you have a cover letter based on the type of internship you are looking for?
- Do you know the number of hours you are available to work?
- Geographically where can you intern (can you relocate)?
- What do you want to learn?
- What type of experiences would you like to have?
- What kind of duties would you like to do?
- Where do you lack experience?
- Are you looking for a paid/unpaid internship?

The I@S program has internships running throughout the year and starting at different times throughout the semester. Some are as short as six weeks while others can run up to two+ years in length... check out available internships on http://msu.joinHandshake.com

Where to begin
You can never start looking for an internship early enough. Internships are competitive and have application deadlines. Spend time researching requirements for applying. Ideally you should start searching for an internship about 6 months before you want the internship to take place, especially if you are looking for an internship during the summer months.

Remember, internships can take place year round. Even if you are looking for an internship to start within a couple of months it’s not too late to land an internship.

Career Services offers help with resumes, cover letters, mock interviews, workshops and more. Check out the website: careernetwork.msu.edu.
Where to start looking for internships or other experiential learning experiences

If you are an MSU student, here are some resources available to you. You can find internship and other learning experiences that will help build your resume and pave the road to future employment... Remember even if you don’t get an internship right away, by gaining experience in your field you’ll make yourself more marketable for that dream internship.

- Handshake is MSU’s job posting system, where you can search for internships, on- and off-campus job listings and seasonal employment. You can also search for on-campus interviews, workshops, and other career events. To register and log-in, go to msu.joinHandshake.com.

If you are searching for internships on Handshake, use the “internships” filter in your job search. If you are looking for Internships@State specifically in the keyword search enter “MSU” with NO other filters.

- Working on campus is a great way to start building your resume while earning money. Each year MSU hires over 17,000 student employees. Some of these positions may grow into an internship after a little experience and networking.

- Venture is a database of undergraduate research, scholarship and creative opportunities available on campus for MSU undergraduate students. Undergraduate research combines research and teaching in a discovery-based process. Working closely with faculty and learning more in-depth about different fields of study, you gain real-world experiences that prepare you for careers and/or graduate school. Their website is http://venture.msu.edu.

- Career Services links you to all campus-wide career fairs, speed networking, etiquette dinners and more. Check under “Events” or search the site for other opportunities at www.careernetwork.msu.edu.

- Student Organizations provide valuable information regarding internship opportunities. Check with members of your student organization to see where they may have interned in the past. Join today and start networking! Go to http://studentlife.msu.edu/student-organizations-activities

- Faculty. Many students feel intimidated by the thought of asking a faculty member to sit down and discuss future career options with them. However, many faculty have professional contacts in the field and are a great resource.

- Center for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement provides beyond-the-classroom learning opportunities that are service-focused, community-based and integrated with students’ academic programs. Go to http://www.servicelearning.msu.edu
Other resources available to find internships

Searching for an internship is like searching for a job. Don’t expect to spend a couple of hours at it. Be patient, you’ll need to spend time researching and exploring the best opportunities available.

- Web resources: There are many web resources available to find internships (just Google “Internships”). As with anything you find on the web make sure you do your research and learn as much as you can about the organization, types of internships they offer, where they are located, etc. You can also find internship sites specific to your career field or areas of interest. Such as:
  - Employer website employment pages
  - Career Tools search at http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/CareerTools

- Networking (ask around): Contact individuals you may know who work in your field of interest. Find out if their company is hiring interns. Even if they aren’t, don’t get discouraged. Ask if they would be willing to have a volunteer come in and work for a few hours a week. Sometimes you have to start volunteering in order to be considered for internships down the line. Many jobs and internships are found by word-of-mouth. Ask your friends and classmates about their internships, job shadowing or volunteer experiences.

- Informational Interviews: Informational interviews are a great way to meet a professional in your career field and discuss what they do on a day-to-day basis. To learn more about informational interviews check out MSU’s Career Network website at: http://careernetwork.msu.edu/students/exploring-options

- Job Shadowing: Job shadowing gives you a chance to observe daily office activities, ask questions, and consider the potential pros and cons of a particular industry or profession. You will also discover what workplace skills and career-related experiences are essential in your chosen field.

- Non-profits: Non-profit organizations are a great way to gain valuable experiences. Some even have internship opportunities. Narrow down the type of organization you would like to work at, and search by geographic location. Google is a great place to search for non-profits!

The Career Services website has additional links where you can research employers by fields of interest and geographic regions. Go to CareerNetwork.msu.edu/resources-tools/career-resource-tools and click “internship & job listings.”
• **Volunteering**: If you have little to no experience, and getting your foot in the door for an internship requires experience. Consider volunteering. There are many agencies that are searching for volunteers and some may even be interested in doing an internship, especially once they get to know you and see your work ethic. The web is a great place to start searching for volunteer opportunities in your area. Again if you can narrow your search down by type of organization or geographic location, you’ll be that much closer to getting started. Many websites are available including Volunteer Match at: [http://www.volunteermatch.org/](http://www.volunteermatch.org/).

• **Professional Organizations (PO)**: No matter what you’re getting your degree in more than likely there is a PO affiliated with that field. Professional organizations are a great way to begin networking by finding a local chapter in your area. Most PO’s also have discounted rates for student membership. In addition to a targeted Google search, be sure to check with relevant student organizations on campus. Often PO’s have student chapters right on campus!

• **Cold-calling** is a technique many students pass over. There are online services and databases but nothing beats speaking directly to someone. Like anything else: Start with a Google search. When you call looking for an internship, be prepared. Do research about a company before contacting them. Write down questions you want to ask ahead of time. Don’t be discouraged if they say “no”. In fact prepare for this as well. How will you react? What will you say next? Perseverance is often a quality employers look for, so keep trying. Make your phone call from a quite place with no distractions and have a pen and paper handy to jot down all names, contacts, and directions so you don’t miss anything. Don’t be afraid to ask if there is someone you can meet with in person to discuss job shadowing, volunteering or internship opportunities.

To learn more about job shadowing check out the Career Passport (on page 25) at [http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/resources-tools/career-guides](http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/resources-tools/career-guides)
Applying
So, you’ve narrowed down the companies or organizations you want to apply to. Now what? Applying for an internship is very important as it is often the first contact you may have with that organization. First impressions are everything!! Applying and interviewing are all about demonstrating your professionalism, experience, and standing out from the crowd.

Some good practices to remember when applying are:

- Cater your resume and cover letter to the specific company and position
- Avoid trendy slang
- Have contacts ahead of time who can provide you with a letter of recommendation if needed
- Make sure your “References” know they are being used as references (ask their permission first before putting their name down)
- Follow up with a phone call to see where the organization is with the interview process (if you haven’t heard back from them)
- Even if you don’t get selected for an interview send a “Thank You” note. You never know when the other candidate(s) selected may not work out and the employer has to go back to their candidate pool

Career Services can help you prepare through our one-on-one advisor meetings, resume reviews, workshops and other career related events we offer at http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu.
Interviewing for internships follows the same protocol as preparing for full time professional positions. Here are a few tips:

Research, Research, Research.
- Make sure you’ve done your homework and have researched the organization/company you’ll be interviewing with.
- Know what they do, how they do it and where they do it (products, services, etc).
- Find out as much as possible about the internship you’ll be interviewing for, as well as the location where you’ll be working (may give you more insight into the position).

People skills
- Have a firm handshake
- Smile
- Make eye contact
- Speak clearly (don’t mumble or use slang)
- Be yourself

Practice, Practice, Practice
Practice your response to common interview questions.
- Why do you want this internship?
- What skills do you bring to the table that other interns don’t?
- What are your short & long-term goals?
- Why should we hire you?

Identify questions you will ask
- What would the day-to-day duties of this internship be?
- How much do you rely on your interns for everyday tasks?
- What do your interns need to do to set themselves apart from the others?
- Make sure your questions are specific to the company or position you are interviewing for.

Overall
- Arrive 10-15 minutes before the interview is scheduled to begin
- Dress professionally
- Get a good nights sleep the night before
- Always follow up an interview with a handwritten “Thank You” note

If you don’t get the internship, it’s O. K. to call back requesting constructive criticism. It is very important to stay friendly and open-minded to what they have to say. The information they provide will be useful in preparing you for the next internship interview!

For additional interviewing tips, check online http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/jobs-internships/interviewing
Before you start your first day, find out:

- When do you start (date, time, number of hours per week, duration of internship, etc)
- Pay rate (if paid)
- Where do you report
- Whom will you report to on the first day
- What is the dress code
- What should you bring the first day (identification, paperwork, etc)
- Where should you park

Remember to:

- Get a good night’s rest the night before
- Shut off your cell phone when at work (and no texting during working hours)
- Figure out what you’ll do for lunch
- Get your outfit picked out the night before
- Allow yourself enough time the first day so you’re not rushed
- Be there 10-15 minutes before your official start time

Before you begin

Think about documenting your internship experience. Doing so will make it much easier promoting your internship experience during an interview with future employers. One way to do this is through “Internship Portfolios” which usually consist of:

- Internship job description
- Learning contract (or agreement)
- Samples of work you completed during your internship
- Mid/final internship evaluation
- Letter of recommendation from internship supervisor
- Any other documents/information related to your internship experience

It’s best to collect this information throughout your internship experience instead of trying to collect it afterwards. Check with your internship supervisor to make sure you can use your work in your portfolio.

You may also want to consider journaling your internship experience. This should be done regularly, at least weekly. Just take a couple of minutes to write (or type) some of your experiences each week. These may include:

- Challenges you faced
- What went well
- What did you learn
- What do you need to learn
- What are you most proud of
- Names and contact information of people you have worked with

Journaling your experiences helps you remember what you worked on throughout your internship (helpful when updating your resume). Journaling is also useful in determining future career opportunities through remembering what you liked or didn’t like during your internship.
Making the most of your internship
To have a successful internship make sure you start by discussing with your supervisor:
• What your specific duties/responsibilities will be
• What will your supervisors responsibilities be
• How will your supervisor provide you with regular feedback, guidance and support
• What training will you receive
• How (and when) will you be evaluated
• Will you be expected to evaluate the internship or organization upon completion of the internship and how will this be done
• What will you need to do if you will be absent from work (if you are sick who do you need to notify and how)

Another successful component of an internship is the on-going and regularly scheduled communication/feedback between you and your supervisor. Sometimes this is written right into the learning agreement.

Ideally you should meet with your supervisor weekly to discuss progress, discuss any concerns or questions either party may have, as well as to identify any training needs or performance issues that need to be discussed.

During the regular student/supervisor meetings, as well as with the mid and final evaluations, you should be able to find out:
• How well are you meeting the goals/responsibilities agreed upon in the beginning of the internship (or in the learning agreement)
• How are you doing developing professional skills related to the field
• Areas you need to improve on
• Suggestions for ways to improve (further training, specific courses, etc.)
• Overall performance

MSU’s I@S requires students and internship supervisors to complete the Learning Agreement within the first week of starting the internship. Students and supervisors must also complete a mid and final internship evaluation. If a student is doing an I@S for academic credit the student will be required to complete all necessary paperwork required by their faculty advisor and will not be required to complete the I@S Learning Agreement.
1. **Be reliable**

Be on time every day and do not skip over anything that is expected of you, in fact it’s best to do more than expected. Build your reputation as someone who can be counted on to finish a project!

2. **Bring Energy & Enthusiasm**

You are a new member to the team and you want to be a positive addition. Be grateful for the job and the opportunity to prove yourself. Don’t be afraid to bring new ideas to your supervisor. Remember, you are looking at things from a new perspective and that is a main reason companies hire interns! Fresh thoughts and fresh ideas are great for business.

3. **Balance Self-Sufficiency with Asking Questions**

Show up with some confidence and skills of your own but know that an intern, or any new employee, is expected to have questions. Be sure to show gratitude and prove that you are learning quickly.

4. **Dress Well**

Avoid trendy clothing. Look around the office. Even though some may dress casually, look up to the leaders in the office. Your clothing reflects your status in the company and dressing for success will give your co-workers a positive perspectives of your potential.
5. **participate**

Show initiative and seek out opportunities. Participating in internal and external meetings, even as an observer, exposes you to the bigger picture and offers more opportunity for networking.

6. **stay flexible**

You may be moved around a lot within the workplace. Be willing to do whatever work is asked of you, even if you feel it’s beneath you. Gladly taking on projects that no one else wants, it’s an opportunity to make something out of nothing.

7. **attention to detail**

Check over your work thoroughly and be conscious of your progress. You are being evaluated as a potential employee and you don’t want to make mistakes that could have easily been prevented. Spell-check emails, double-check numbers, and make sure you are spelling names correctly.

8. **network**

Meet everyone you can while you are interning. The people you work with have a lot of connections themselves. If you make contacts, you will have more people willing to help you out professionally in the future.
**Before you go:**

Before your internship is complete there are a few things you will need to do:

- Finish any evaluations required
- Return any company property
- Leave contact information
- Gather business cards from contacts you have made
- Keep up the momentum (don’t slack off the last couple of weeks)
- Send a “Thank You”

Meet with your supervisor to discuss:

- Any unfinished projects that need attention
- Your overall performance
- Any opportunities for future full time positions
- Letter of recommendation and/or reference permission
- Any paperwork that needs to be completed
- Your appreciation for the opportunity to intern

Talk with multiple people you have worked with throughout your internship. Ask them what they thought of your performance and if they have any recommendations on areas you can build on, or where you may need to get more experience. Also ask where you did well. It’s best to know both your strengths and weaknesses.
Selling your internship

Putting an internship experience on your resume is one thing, but talking about the experience sets you apart.

What goes into a professional portfolio?

A professional portfolio is not the same as a personal portfolio. Your personal portfolio is a good starting point, but be sure to include only relevant and appropriate items in a professional portfolio. The type of company and the job you are interviewing for will help determine what is relevant. If you’re not sure whether something is too personal for a professional portfolio, leave it out.

The materials in your portfolio depend on the kind of work you’re looking for; a graphic artist will have a very different portfolio than a journalist. However, anything in your portfolio should show only your very best work. Check for typos or misspellings as carefully as you would on your resume.

Don’t forget to include of your experiential learning with your internship experience in your professional portfolio.

Organizing your portfolio

How you organize your portfolio is also important. You can arrange the contents in chronological order, by project, type of experience or any other way that you choose. Make sure the order makes sense to the reader. A random jumble of clippings won’t impress an interviewer, no matter how wonderful the content.

Folder-type portfolios are easy to carry and can be left with an interviewer, if requested. You can also use a good-quality three-ring binder or a zippered portfolio, depending on your budget. Just like your resume, cover letter and personal appearance, your portfolio is a representation of you. Make sure it is neat, clean and well-organized.

Some tips to remember:

• Make sure your portfolio is well-organized and has a consistent appearance.
• You may want to add a caption or short note explaining the relevance of each component of your portfolio.
• Use copies in case an interviewer wants to keep it.
• Don’t put in anything too personal. Consider your portfolio public knowledge, since you don’t know who may see it.
• Keep your portfolio current, just like a resume.
Handshake
Don’t forget that the Career Services Network is available to help you prepare for your future. Our Handshake system is a great place to start searching for internship opportunities both on- and off-campus.

How do I get an account?
- msujoinHandshake.com
- Click “student log in”
- Enter your MSU NetID and Password
- Update your profile information

How do I upload a resume?
In Handshake, click the “View Your Profile” tab. Then scroll down and click the “Manage Document” button.

How do I search for jobs?
- In MySpartanCareer, click the “Jobs” tab
- View postings and change to “all jobs listings”
- Enter your search criteria, such as on-campus, full-time, etc.

It is important to keep your profile and resume information up to date. When applying for jobs, Handshake compares the requirements of the job with the information in your profile. If your personal information is not up-to-date, Handshake will assume you are not qualified for some positions. Also be sure to upload a current resume each time you search for jobs.

Where can I get help with my resume, job searching strategies, or interview preparation?
Make an appointment with a Field Career Consultant in your college or a Career Advisor through the appointment system at http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/advising.

Need help with the Handshake system?
- Call (517)355-9510 Monday-Friday 8am - 5pm.
- We’re at room 113 Student Services Building

To create a resume that will get the attention of an employer, you need to make a GREAT FIRST IMPRESSION! Bring your resume to a Career Services office during Drop In Hours for tips and tricks from the pros. Find hours at http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/services-locations/career-advising-drop-in-hours
I@S participants can find their internship forms under the students section on the I@S website: http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/resources-tools/faculty-staff/internships-at-state

References
12 Essentials for Success. Website: http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/exploring-options/career-guides

Career Passport. Website: http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/exploring-options/career-guides

National Society for Experiential Education. Website: http://www.nsee.org

MSU Career Tools. Website: http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/careertools

MSU Exploring Options. Website: http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/exploring-options

MSU Internships Information. Website: http://CareerNetwork.msu.edu/jobs-internships/internships-folder