

# GET THE JOB

## Securing the Right Internship

Graduates have traditionally found a smoother path to their first jobs by landing an internship while still in school. In fact, one survey from the National Association of Colleges and Employers said an internship can increase hiring chances by double digits. Former interns also earned higher initial salary offers.

Here's a look at internships, and how they can help as you enter the job market:

### HOW THE PROGRAMS WORK

Long before internships improve a student's chances for that first job and first paycheck, it sharpens their understanding of how a prospective industry actually works. They provide critical experience that will catch the eye of a hiring manager who doesn't want to lose precious time with lengthy training programs. In the meantime,



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students develop important working relationships with those who are already established in their chosen field. That provides a framework for reasonable career goals, both near and long term, while also

potentially opening doors through valued candidate referrals.

### EMBRACE THE CHALLENGES

Internships typically hap-

pen in addition to regular school work, so they'll chip away at your leisure activities on nights, weekends and during the summer. But if your goal is to leave college with the best possible job

prospects, it's worth the inconvenience. At the same time, internships should be challenging, interesting pursuits. This isn't the time to take it easy. Your intern experience should include real-world tasks if you want to stand out from the rest of your fellow graduates in a pile of resumes. You'll also gain confidence in your ability to make the transition from university life to work, which some find very difficult.

### PREPARE YOURSELF FINANCIALLY

Internships can involve some sort of monetary compensation, but the vast majority don't. They're meant to provide needed experience and critical knowledge, not a fat paycheck. That can make it difficult for those who hope to open new career doors down the road, but still need to pay bills. You'll have to supplement your income while working in these unpaid positions, either before the internship or in addition to your new responsibilities. Weekend jobs might bridge the gap, or shared living experiences with roommates or parents. It won't be easy, but the rewards — from earning needed job experience to perhaps meeting your future employer — might just be more than worth it.