

Job & Internship Search

Getting Focused

Job and Internship opportunities are everywhere – it’s just a matter of opening your eyes to the possibilities around you.

One of the most important things you can do to start your search is to take some time to assess what it is you are really looking for. When looking for opportunities, the more you can clarify the **type** of position you are seeking, the better you will be able to **target** and **strategize** your search for the particular industry. Furthermore, employers like to see candidates who are sure of themselves and their interests. If you spend time reflecting upon what you really want and why, you come across as a much stronger candidate for a potential job or internship because you can better articulate your fit for the organization.

Ask yourself some of the following questions to uncover what type of job or internship you’re looking for:

- In what **environment** would you like to work? (Corporate, small business, educational, non-profit, healthcare, government, etc.)
- What **population** are you interested in working with or serving? (Children/youth, business people, educators, lawyers, healthcare providers, artists, etc.)
- What **topics** are you excited to explore? (Marketing/advertising, sports and fitness, education, art, social justice, environmentalism, etc.)

Search Strategies

There is no right way to find a job or internship! In fact, when it comes to the search process, diversifying your approach is an important key to success. The following are a few strategies to utilize:

1. Consult job postings or advertisements

One of the best places to start looking for positions is through general posting sites such as the Career Development Center job and internship posting system, Handshake. Handshake is available on the CDC website (<http://www.hamline.edu/cdc>) and allows you to search the most current positions that employers have posted through Hamline. In addition, in the “Internships” section of the website, you can find a page of “Internship Search Resources by Industry” with links to a variety of other general posting pages, and organizations that offer ongoing internship opportunities.

In addition, you may also find specialized posting pages for your field of interest. For example, The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (<http://www.minnesotanonprofits.org>) is a posting page specifically for jobs and internships in the nonprofit industry. Many professional associations also have internship postings through their websites, and students can often gain access by purchasing a discounted student membership.

Finally, many organizations will post their openings directly on their websites. Make a list of the organizations at which you would like to work or intern, or do some research to find out who is doing the work that you are interested in doing, and search their websites for current openings.

2. Participate in campus recruiting events

One of the great things about being a college student is having access to the recruiting program run through the school. Each year, the Career Development Center works with organizations to arrange information sessions, on-campus interviews and job and internship fairs. All of these are great ways to connect with employers to learn more about their organizations and apply for jobs. Find out about these opportunities by checking the CDC website and Handshake for updates.

3. Research who is doing the work you are interested in doing and make direct contacts

Not all jobs and internships are advertised. In fact, many seekers find opportunities by looking beyond positions listed online and contacting organizations directly to inquire about available opportunities. If you have an interest in working in a particular field, it can be helpful to step back and think about all of the different organizations that are doing the work that you are interested in doing. You may be able to develop a list off the top of your head, but it may also take some research. Some resources that may help include newspapers, libraries, local directories, business journals, area chambers of commerce, trade or specialty publications, and also faculty and alumni who are connected to that field.

Once you have created that list, visit the organizations' websites to see if they have positions posted or contact them directly and ask to speak to someone in Human Resources. Even if an organization is not hiring at the moment, be sure to ask how you can find out about future openings, and whether you can send them a resume in case a position becomes available. This is also a good time to do informational interviews to learn more about the organization and possibly get your foot in the door for the future.

4. Networking

When it comes to the job and internship search, professional networking is a great way to learn about organizations of interest, gain industry-specific advice for how to navigate your search, and learn about where to find potential opportunities. A good way to start is by connecting with people who are already in your circle – family, friends, professors, current and former co-workers, etc. Let people close to you know what you are looking for, and you would be surprised what connections they have that they would be willing to share with you.

The search is also a good time to be more intentional about expanding your network. Conducting informational interviews is a very helpful way to learn more about the job market in your field of interest (for more information on informational interviews, talk to a career counselor or see the CDC handout on networking). Alumni contacts are also a great way to network in your field of interest. The Career Development Center has resources to connect you with Hamline alums for informational interviews and job and internship search advice. Being active in professional associations, attending events sponsored by organizations of interest, or even volunteering for their programs or events are all wonderful ways to network your way into a field and increase your likelihood of finding opportunities.

5. Think Outside the Box for Internships

Just because an opportunity isn't called an internship, doesn't mean it can't be turned into one. When searching for internships, don't discount volunteer opportunities or part-time jobs as potential internship leads. As long as the experience offers you meaningful work in a supervised setting, it may very well qualify for internship credit. Consult with the Internship Program Coordinator if you have questions about a specific opportunity.

Furthermore, it is possible to create your own internship by approaching an organization and pitching the idea. Focus on selling your skill set and your eagerness to learn about the industry. Ask them what needs they might

have, or suggest areas that you might be able to be helpful. Be confident and upbeat, but don't be overbearing. For more information about how to best approach an organization, talk to a career counselor or seek the advice of networking contacts.

Resources to Help You Get Started

Great job and internship search websites:

- <http://www.hamline.edu/cdc>
The Career Development Center's website. Check out Handshake, our job and internship posting system, as well as "Internship Search Resources" in the "Internships" section of the website.
- <http://www.minnesotanonprofits.org>
The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits job and internship postings.
- <http://www.internships.com>
A national and international internship search database. Hamline has an account that you can access via the "Internship Search Resources" in the "Internships" section of the CDC website. Look under "Featured Links" on the right side of the page.

Resources for Company and Organization Research:

- **LinkedIn** (<http://www.linkedin.com>)
An online networking tool that allows you to research companies, search for jobs and internships, develop a professional profile page and connect with others to develop and maintain your network.
- **Minneapolis/Saint Paul Business Journal Book of Lists**
An annual publication that highlights the top 25 organizations in a variety of industries. Available in the CDC library.