



The Step-By-Step Guide to Getting an Internship in D.C.

Step #1: Do Your Research

- ☐ Find out what internships are available in your career field of interest
- ☐ Assess your goals in completing an internship
- ☐ Use the “Finding an Internship in DC” section of the **UCDC web site** for hundreds of links.
- ☐ **Other resources:** Alfreda Brock’s email announcements, other UC campus’ UCDC website, the UCDC website at <http://www.ucdc.edu>.
- ☐ Join the UC San Diego UCDC LinkedIn and Facebook pages to connect with alumni and current interns.

Step #2: Develop a Prioritized List

- ☐ Consider how competitive the internships might be based their popularity (i.e. State Department, popular Senators, U.S. Attorneys Office)
- ☐ Develop a list of 15-20 organizations you want to intern with and rank them according to your interest level
- ☐ You should have a couple that are your ideal or top choices, a few that you also want, but are your second choices, and few back up organizations
- ☐ *Never apply to just 1 or 2 organizations because you think they are a sure thing!*

Step # 3: Tailor Your Application Materials

- ☐ *Turn your Letter of Intent into a Cover Letter*
 - Revise and edit your letter to reflect the organizations to which you are applying, such as company name, what skills/experience you have to offer as well as why you want to work for them. Always customize your letter!
- ☐ *Resume*
 - Tailor the objective to the career field, while also editing the skills and experience sections to reflect the field.
- ☐ *Include Additional Material*
 - If they ask for a writing sample, find out what they want. Most writing samples will be 2 – 3 pages long, either an article you’ve written or a piece of your best paper. You can also write something especially for the position.

- They may also ask for your recommendation letters or transcripts or just a resume and cover letter. Follow instructions!

Step # 4: Send Your Application Materials

- ☐ Follow an organization's instructions about how to apply (i.e. via email, regular mail, or even on-line on their web site)
- ☐ Properly address and stamp envelopes so your application doesn't get lost
- ☐ Be sure you have the correct email address if emailing your application
- ☐ Be aware of any deadlines to apply; some organizations have earlier deadlines than others

Step #5: FOLLOW UP! Contact the Organizations

- ☐ Allow a few weeks for your application to arrive and for them to process it
- ☐ Contact them via email or phone to make sure it was received and to see where they are in the selection process
- ☐ If you are having problems contacting them, let Alfreda Brock know and she may be able to find accurate contact information for you

Step #6: Prepare to Interview over the Phone

- ☐ Almost all DC organizations will interview students over the phone
- ☐ Utilize resources at the UCSD Career Services Center to prepare for your interview. Read the "Interviewing" section of their "WSDM – Career Communication Guide."
- ☐ Attend the Career Services Center's *Interviewing to Win* workshop for more detailed information on how to better prepare and use Interview Stream to practice
- ☐ Contact the UCDC coordinator at AIP regarding for help with specific questions
- ☐ Prepare questions for the employer that will help you decide if this is the best organization to work with. For example:
 - How much of my time will be spent on routine administrative tasks versus getting involved in more important projects?
 - How much training and supervision are your interns provided?
 - May I contact one of your current interns to ask about their experiences?
 - What is the dress code for your organization?
- ☐ If you've interviewed with organizations but haven't heard back from them in a while, contact them again to see where they are in the selection process

Step#7: Select the Internship that's Right for You

Many students get offered multiple internships and have to decide which one to accept. Consider the following suggestions:

- ☐ Review which organization is offering the right opportunity for you to meet your goals. Ask for time to get back to them if you need to consider options.
- ☐ Think about the type of organizations (i.e. government, non-profit, NGO) and where you might like to work after graduation
- ☐ Consider financial or other perks/benefits of each organization
- ☐ Take into account the time commitment required for each position and which fits your schedule better
- ☐ Once you accept an offer, stick to your commitment.

Step #8: What To Do When Your Options Run Out

If you have:

- ☐ Applied to 15-20 organizations, tried to contact them about the receipt of your application, but can't get a hold of anyone or haven't heard from any about an interview, and you're leaving for DC in a month:
Then you need to:
 1. Apply to a few more organizations to give yourself some more options.
 2. Contact Alfreda Brock and let her know the status of each application, what you've done so far, who you've spoken or not spoken with. She may be able to see what's happening with your application.
- ☐ Interviewed with some organizations but haven't been offered a position yet, you don't have any more interviews lined up, and you are leaving for DC in a month:
Then you need to:
 1. Apply to a few more organizations to give yourself some more options.
 2. Contact Alfreda Brock to see if she knows of any "hidden" internship positions, let her know where else you applied, and ask if she can help.
- ☐ Contacted organizations and Alfreda, interviewed for some positions, and applied to more organizations, but still haven't secured an internship, and you are leaving for DC *right away*:
Then you need to:
 1. Let Alfreda know before you leave that you haven't secured an internship yet and you are still looking
 2. Let her know the status of the ones you've applied to and possibly interviewed with
 3. Tell her you'll be coming to see her when you arrive in DC about finding an internship.