

## **Tips for Applying to Internships:**

I have always felt strongly about gaining as much experience as possible before I graduate from college. Because of this passion, I have worked for the United States Senate, several law firms, and a Fortune 200 company, to name a few. I didn't know much in the beginning, and definitely had plans that did not work out. Applying for internships at big companies or law firms can be overwhelming at first. I have gathered a few tips on how to land the internship you want, through lots of trial and error of my own.

While I still have a lot to learn myself, I have spent countless hours studying the process. I have developed some useful tips along the way to help make the process smoother. I hope these tips help you too!

### **1. Work Backwards**

This is probably my biggest life tip of all. Whether it's with a big goal or simply trying to learn an industry, I have found great success working backwards by finding someone who has worked or interned where you want to and then researching their background and experiences. For example, if you are applying for an internship at Google, you will find that engineering interns already know how to code and usually have experience doing so. On the other hand, White House interns typically have previous experience in leadership and working for a public office or campaign. I look people up on [LinkedIn](#), or just email them directly to find this info out. Once you know how they got there, you can develop your plan of action. Something that someone else, or hundreds before them have done is just more proof that you can as well. It may take longer for some people, but you can get there if you just find out who has already done it and how.

### **2. Plan Early**

Start out by making a list of everywhere you want to apply, and then research the application dates (interviews, deadlines, etc.) Most big internships start recruiting as early as July, with applications opening early fall. Typically, all applications are open from December-March. Every company is different, so check back on their website frequently for deadlines. Some people, including myself in the beginning, underestimate just how much time you must put into planning applications. When you plan early, you may find the company requires a writing sample, letters of recommendation, college transcripts, and more. I usually make some sort of spreadsheet or list so I can plan accordingly. The last thing you want is to miss a deadline at your dream company.

### **3. Don't Be Afraid to Try Something New**

Coming from someone who loves planning and things syncing together accordingly, I know trying new things isn't easy. While in college last summer, I felt I had gained as much experience as I could in the legal world, which only made me want to go to law school more. I also felt a deep calling to try other things while I still could beyond law. While I could have easily kept with my previous connections and stayed working in law firms, I decided to instead work in business for a Fortune 200 company last summer. It was fascinating learning how such a big company is run, and I learned a lot of new skills. I would have never had this experience if I hadn't of stepped out of my comfort zone. Because of this experience, I have since decided to work in business before I go to law school.

Don't be afraid to try a company or department you never thought you would end up in. Also, don't be afraid to apply for something you don't feel like is the right fit or that you don't have enough experience for, you may be surprised. The beauty of internships is they are just for a few months, and you don't lose a lot. Do your best, and try everything you can. College has a safety net for this purpose!

#### **4. Take Initiative**

The power of networking sites like [LinkedIn](#) are often overlooked. Most of my internships have all been from sending a lot of emails and reaching out to countless people. These internships were never posted online, but instead from me reaching out, introducing myself, and succinctly talking about the value I could bring. A lot of opportunities are never even posted online. Don't be afraid to reach out to HR or even the CEO of a smaller company letting them know your interest and value. A lot of companies do recruiting months ahead of time before applications even come in. Taking the time to reach out and show initiative to the companies you are really interested in can only help you.

#### **5. Be Prepared When You Interview**

Congratulations, you landed an interview! Make sure you have researched the company, it's structure, main people, and common interview questions. [Glassdoor](#) is incredible for previous interview insights. Make sure you bring a copy of your resume, as well as genuine questions about the position and company for the interviewer. Do a mock interview with your college if you have never done one. Find out the structure whether it is via phone, in person, and if it requires you to take any tests. A lot of companies have a multi-step interview process you have to stay on top of. Follow up after the interview with thank you email or note as well. You can do this!

Good luck to everyone applying for their dream internship or job. While internships can be both fun and challenging, remember they are not the end of the world- they're simply a learning experience. If you have any questions, feel free to send me a direct message or leave a comment. Please leave any tips you may have below, I would love to hear from you and learn something new!

-Jordan