Internship Preparation

An internship is a powerful tool to prepare students for post-graduation success. An internship empowers you to integrate knowledge and theory learned in class with practical application and skill development in a professional setting. Completing an internship provides opportunities to develop a professional network, gain related experience (and a competitive edge!), and assess your “fit” within a particular organization or industry.

The checklist will guide you in preparing for an internship in a strategic manner. The Career Center and the Career and Internship Coordinator stands ready to help!

Step 1 – Assess Yourself!

_____ Meet with a Career Counselor to explore your values, interests, personality and skills to help identify potential areas of career interest.

_____ Identify a career industry, geographic area, and time of year to help focus your search.

_____ Make a list and begin researching potential career fields of interest.

*Not all students will begin with Step #1. If your internship search has a clear direction, begin with Step #2*

Step 2 – Get Your Tools Ready!

_____ Start early! Some internships have deadlines as early as six months prior to the start date.

_____ Attend the Career Center’s Jumpstart Your Future: Internship Success Series.

_____ Develop a LinkedIn profile and begin networking with FSC alumni and other professionals.

_____ Demonstrate your skills, abilities, and leadership in a digital portfolio. A great way to stand out!

_____ Work with a Career Counselor to develop a professional resume using Optimal Resume.

_____ Work with a Career Counselor to write a persuasive cover letter.

_____ Identify at least three professional or academic references (faculty member, academic advisor, employer, etc.). Create a “References” document to include names, addresses, and other contact information.

_____ Make a great first impression with a professional email address and voicemail message.

_____ Gather appropriate interview attire.
Step 3 – Start Your Search!

_____ Communicate your internship interests with friends, family, and your departmental internship coordinator.

_____ Search opportunities on the Career and Internship Coordinator Website.

_____ Investigate internship opportunities via professional organizations (American Medical Association, American Psychological Association, LinkedIn, etc.).

_____ Conduct research to identify companies of interest, as some internship positions are not posted. You can contact the organization’s Human Resource/Recruiting office to inquire about internship opportunities. You must understand the organization to “sell” your skills!

_____ Create a system for tracking employer contacts and internship search activities.

_____ Network, network, network! Attend the FSC Career & Internship Expo (spring semester) and the CCFCC Career Expo (spring semester at the University of Tampa) to connect with potential internship providers.

Step 4 - Finish Strong!

_____ Practice delivering your 30 second “elevator pitch” to introduce yourself to employers.

_____ Practice communicating how your education, experience, and campus/community involvement have prepared you for the position. Share the contributions you will make.

_____ Organize a hard copy interview portfolio to provide evidence of your skills. Consider including documents which demonstrate writing, design, research, project management, and data organization skills. Make a lasting impression by leaving the portfolio with the interviewer.

_____ Participate in Moc Interview Day to sharpen your interview skills.

_____ Follow up after each interview with a handwritten, personalized thank you note within 24 hours.