Department of Communication Studies

Internship Program
2011-2012
Frequently Asked Questions about CMST Internships

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How do I ...?

Find an internship? Talk to friends and family. Talk to recent graduates. Look through the Yellow Pages (hard copy or online) for the city in which you are interested in interning, and look under a variety of headings such as government offices, non-profit organizations, communication consulting, consulting, etc.

Also check career-related sites for job postings in your area of interest (such as public relations, human relations, or marketing, for instance) and contact these businesses to inquire if they also have internships. Often, if a company can’t find the right candidate for a job, you can fill the spot temporarily as an intern or assist the person currently covering the job. Look at our internship board outside PAC 215. Or, if you don’t have time for any of that, try one of the web sites listed under “Where can I find...?”

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Where can I find ...?

No luck so far, huh? Well, try one of these sites for internship searches in the geographic area/city/state in which you are interested in working:

General Internet searches for job, career, and internship information:

- www.acinet.org
- www.accessjobs.org (non-profits)
- http://www.asla.com/ (home page for the American Seminar Leaders Association)
- http://www.astd.org/astd (home page for the American Society of Training and Development; lots of free articles on training and trends!)
- www.brassring.com (technical jobs)
- www.careerbuilder.com
- www.careerhunters.com
- http://www.careerowlresources.ca/
- www.careerplanit.com
- www.careers.wsj.com
- www.collegegrad.com
- www.employmentguide.com
- www.flipdog.com
- www.hotjobs.com
http://www.iabc.com/ (home page for the International Association of Business Communicators; lots of great resources but many are members-only)
www.idealist.org (non-profits)
www.internabroad.studyabroad.com
www.internship4america.com
www.internshipprograms.com
www.job-hunt.org
www.jobbankusa.com
http://jobstar.org/tools/career/index.cfm
www.jobweb.com
www.jobs.net
www.latpro.com
http://www.learn-jobs-careers.com/
www.quintcareers.com
http://www.rmis.rmfamily.com/sites.php?site=humansalar (check out this one! Salary info from all different kinds of fields!)
http://www.siliconbeachtraining.co.uk/resources/softskills_resources.htm (HUGE portal of links to training resources; not all work but many have free info!)
www.snagajob.com
www.swiftjobs.com
www.tcm.com/trdev (training and development portal)
http://usatoday.salary.com/jobassessor/layoutscripts/joel_start.asp
http://usatoday.com/money/jobcenter/front.htm
www.wageweb.com
www.careerbuilder.com
http://worktree.com/
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Why doesn’t …?

…the department “find” you an internship? We believe your best experiences and best chances of success come when you initiate an internship contact that is of interest to you. Additionally, the internship search process is a great warm-up for the job search process you will have to embark on after graduation.
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Who is …?

The Internship Director? Dr. Tammy Swenson Lepper, PAC 204, can help you by giving you information about the program, forms for the paperwork you need to fill out, and ideas for internship sites and searches.
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What is …?

…required to complete an internship? You must first contact a site supervisor and make arrangements for the internship, and get a letter (or e-mail) from your site supervisor confirming the internship and describing your duties. A **three-credit** internship requires at least 90 hours of onsite work; a **six-credit** internship, at least 180 hours of onsite work.
Then, you must complete an internship registration form (available from the internship Director or from the CMST Office in PAC 215), as well as a 2-3 page proposal to be approved by the CMST Academic Committee and full department. A model proposal is attached for your reference.

The proposal should include the following:

- A description of the company you will be interning with and the job duties you will be doing
- A narrative identifying at least two communication theories that you think (on the front end) will be relevant to your internship, with an explanation of why you believe they will be appropriate
- Any other discussion you care to include about why/how this internship will draw on your previous coursework in the major
- A copy of the email/letter you received from your site supervisor confirming your internship offer

After approval (or revision) of your proposal, you will be registered for the internship via the Dean’s office; you will be sent a registration code to use online by the Dean’s administrative assistant (for fall or spring), or registered online by the Dean’s administrative assistant (for summer internships).

During your actual internship, you will complete a midterm and exit interview with your onsite supervisor and the CMST Internship Director. You should also keep an observation log so that you can track the theories you identified in your proposal and log examples of communication-related behavior. After completion of your internship, you must complete a 6-8 page analysis paper (depending on the number of credits you are taking for the internship), and a five to 15-minute live or videotaped presentation summarizing your internship experience (to be shared with other students at our fall or spring internship meetings).

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When is ...?

...the next internship meeting? We have meetings once each fall and spring semester. Check with Dr. Lepper or meet with her one-on-one to find out when the next meeting is planned. Back to top

Last revised by TSL: 9/15/11
Hints From a Former Intern to Make Your Internship a Success

As you begin considering where to find an internship, you need to ask yourself several questions. First of all, what time will work best for you? A six-credit, 180-hour internship might be easier to complete during the summer, especially if you can complete it in combination with a full-time job at your site location.

Next, what do you expect from the internship experience? The more carefully you pick your site, the more return you might receive from your investment of time and effort.

Consider these suggestions from one former CMST intern:

**Keys to Successful Interning**

• **Your interests and skill set** (know what you do well and match it to the employer’s needs)

• **Organized hiring process** (has this company had interns before?)

• **Orientation** (will you receive an introduction to the company’s culture, policies, and procedures before you jump into your job?)

• **Mentoring** (do you have at least one ‘point person’ who is willing to serve as your contact while you are on the job?)

• **Gradual increase in responsibilities** (will you have the chance to suggest other duties or projects if you prove yourself early on?)

• **Strong company leadership** (is the company stable, and not in the midst of crises and change such as takeovers or downsizing?)

(Credit/thanks to CMST graduate Erin Agar!)
Hints for Successful Internships From a Winona-Area Employer

The concept of a student internship as a mutually beneficial relationship between student and employer has been repeatedly proven across all the segments of the economy. A quick search of the World Wide Web finds a wide range of listings for programs that seek to provide meaningful work experiences outside the confines of the classroom.

From the employer’s standpoint, a qualified intern can be a valuable asset to the company, particularly where departmental resources are outstripped by demands. In referencing the issue of “qualified,” two factors come to mind. First is the issue of personal and academic maturity. As a generalization, students are best suited to assume an internship at the end of their sophomore or junior year. A student joining Peerless as an intern is expected to jump right in; there is no training period per se. The ability to relate to others in the company as well as work independently is a major requirement here at Peerless. The second qualifier would be in the area of business skills. From a marketing viewpoint, this means the ability to use a PC to conduct Internet research, as well as perform analytical tasks using programs such as Excel.

In addition to contributing during an internship, there is the issue of future employment. Assuming that a position is available, an internship is an excellent means to gauge the fit between the student and the company providing the internship. It’s a little like the courtship that takes place before the commitment of marriage.

Beyond the immediate employment possibilities, the issue of the first job cannot be overlooked. While extracurricular activities and after-school jobs are relevant, the impact of an applicable internship on a resume cannot be underestimated. To that end, a student is best advised to seek and internship that is relevant to the degree and personal career goals he or she is pursuing.

At Peerless, we have had an internship program in place for over ten years. We have had students join us in accounting, information services, manufacturing and marketing. Students have come from Winona State and St. Mary’s. While we have considered drawing from the local two-year college, it has been our experience that the amount of time available for the pursuit of an internship is very restrictive. We have found that for the internship to be meaningful, a student should be able to spend at least two to three half days at Peerless. Underscored during the interview process is the fact that school comes first. If a paper or pending exam is an issue, those events come first; Peerless comes second.

If a student sees the value of an internship, he or she should contact not only local companies that have internship programs but also smaller companies that have yet to seize the moment. In short, the student may need to sell the company on the mutually benefits of starting an internship program. It certainly has been my personal experience that an intern can be a valuable adjunct to a marketing department. So in summary, if at all possible, a student is well advised to seek out internships available, or potentially available, in the local community either during the course of the school year or during the summer break.

—Written by Rich Kuroski, Marketing Director, Peerless Chain, Winona
The purpose of this proposal is to create a basic understanding of the intended internship with the sales and marketing department of the WinCraft, the Larlu division. I will be discussing the following in this proposal: the background of WinCraft, the duties of this internship, and the application of theories.

Before I expand upon this internship, it is necessary to take a brief look at the background of WinCraft. WinCraft is a privately held company established in 1961. Forty-five years ago, WinCraft began as a four-person business serving high schools, and has now grown to serve schools, colleges, corporations and retail professional sports, racing entertainment, outdoor, and home décor. A great deal has changed during the years, yet people still depend on WinCraft for friendly customer service, quality products, and on-time delivery. WinCraft is a recognized leader in retail licensed and promotional products. WinCraft provides customers with a broad selection of collectible and home décor products from our 25 major product families. WinCraft has over 300 licenses for sports teams, and WinCraft offers licensed products for the consumer seasons and major events. WinCraft is located 1124 West Fifth Street in Winona, Minnesota. I contacted Joe Durand, the Senior Vice President of sales and marketing, enquiring about a possible internship. It happened that there was an available position for an internship in sales and marketing.

As a college student, I will be able to offer a perspective that will be helpful to the marketing and sales department of Larlu. I have some insights with regard to effective ways of marketing to an audience that increasingly relies on technology. A focal point of my internship will be marketing through social networking. In addition to focusing on the social networking aspect, I will be available to learn and assist with various tasks of Larlu’s sales and marketing department. Some of the duties and tasks I will be completing are the following:

- Researching other similar companies utilization of social networks
- Analyzing the effectiveness and efficiency of social networks
• Creating online social networking site
• Linking main Larlu website to social networks
• Building fan base for company and new products
• Stressing important connections to certain teams

Some of the social networking sites that will be focused on during this internship are Facebook, Linked-in, Twitter, and blogs. For each of these social networks, I will try to determine the following questions: What are they? How does each site differ or compliment each other? Who do they reach? How can WinCraft best take advantage of the site? What strategy would be most effective? How will we measure results?

I will also help with developing advertising materials, special offers, and e-flyers that can be used to sell WinCraft products to customers. I will have her prepare editorial submissions for our products to our industry trade publications: ASI Counselor, PPAI-PPB magazine, and others. I will be working on this internship from approximately January 11, 2010 to April 30, 2010 for three/four hours per week (90 on-site hours for a 3-credit internship). My availability is the following: Mondays-11am-1pm, Wednesdays-11am-1pm, Fridays-8am-10am and/or 11am-1pm. These are a bit limited hours, but I can be flexible with my schedule.

As far as my application of theories, I will be connecting Social Presence Theory and Medium Theory to my internship. Both these theories have similar aspects; however, Social Presence Theory focuses on the social perception of degree of presence and Medium Theory focuses on the medium of the message. The information involving these theories comes from the University of Twente, Netherlands.

In 1976, Short, Williams and Christie founded Social Presence Theory (SPT). SPT focuses on the awareness/perception of the audience based on the amount of social presence of interaction partner. The main concept is that a medium’s social effects are principally caused by the degree of social
presence, which is available to its audience. Social presence represents the audience's sense of awareness of the presence of an interaction partner. In my internship, WinCraft serves as the interaction partner. In this process, the audience comes to know and think about the company, their characteristics, and their qualities. Moreover, increased presence leads to a better company perception. Basically, it is beneficial to build the fan base of WinCraft through social networking sites to maximize their web presence. This increase in presence creates a better perception of the company through emphasizing numerous social ties. In essence, having a large presence on the web boosts the image of the company.

Since this internship focuses on utilizing technology to benefit WinCraft, it is beneficial to consider Medium Theory. Medium Theory (MT) by McLuhan focuses on the media effects on the perception of the audience. McLuhan founded the notion that media channels are integral forces that must be considered to understand how the media influences both society and culture (the media is the message). MT focuses on the characteristics of the media, rather than focusing on the conveyed meaning or information reception. MT emphasizes that new media impacts the perception of individuals in society or consumers. Since the internet is the main medium that will be utilized for this internship, it is important to consider the impact of the internet on the perception of the audience. In this internship, I will be looking at the characteristics of social networking sites to determine the benefits of utilization of this medium. Also, I will try to determine if there is a positive perception associated with WinCraft utilizing social networking sites to maximize their influence.

Now that I have discussed the background of WinCraft, the duties/hours of the internship, and the theories applicable to the internship, I look forward to see my ideas expanded upon in this internship.
National Kidney Foundation Internship

In the summer of 2009 I took on a 6 credit internship with the National Kidney Foundation. The National Kidney Foundation (NKF) is a non-profit organization which works to raise money for the kidney disease community. The division office I worked at was responsible for Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Iowa. At the NKF, I was able to help out the office and work towards the same noble goals. Kidney disease is a chronic disease that affects 1 in 8 adults. The mission of the NKF is to help increase the kidney community by motivating medical professionals, kidney patients and their family and friends to help raise money to go towards helping kidney patients with expenses. The NKF provides many opportunities for everyone to come together. They have different events available to the public so that the public has a variety of dates and events to choose from.

The NKF has a few main events that they do each year. These consist of the Kidney Walk, the Great Chefs of Minnesota Gala, and the Golf tournament. The kidney walk was a valuable addition to my internship experience. It was one of the events that I participated in most. People sign up in teams on the NKF’s web site and then talk to friends, family, and neighbors to acquire donations. Once the participants gather all their donations, than they come to the registration table at the kidney walk location to turn their money in. If the participants raised $100 then they received a t-shirt and if they raised $300 or more then they received a sweat shirt for their hard work. The shirts are custom made each year to have the date and location of the kidney walk. The really great thing about the kidney walk is the event is not just in one location. They have many locations where they host the kidney walks in order to get the most people involved as possible. I chose to attend the Rochester Kidney Walk on July
26th, 2009. However, I had more involvement with the planning of the Twin Cities Kidney Walk. With the Twin Cities Walk I actually got to look for entertainment and try to contact people. Therefore I was doing a lot of cold calling/setting up of an important part of the event. I contacted all the mascots I could think of for a mascot challenge we thought would be fun. I also was looking for jugglers, magicians, clowns etc. to perform for the participants while they were waiting for the walk to begin. I was responsible for sending emails and letters with all the information to each entertainment person and mascot asking them to participate in our event. I managed to get many of them to respond and commit.

The second event I worked on was the golf tournament. I did not have much involvement in the planning of the event because they start planning it very early in the year. I ended up designing all of the silent auction signs which were used to advertise the different packages we had in the auction. I used logos, relevant pictures, and specific type faces on the signs in order to get the desired affect for each item at the auction. An example of this is a package or rare wines. I used elegant pictures of grape vines to border the sign. The grape vines were doctored in Adobe Photo Shop so that they held a slight tint of color. Then I used a legible script font to give the impression that these were up-scale, elegant and sophisticated wines. I used publication design background to really make the signs stand out. At the actual event, I was responsible for helping register the golfers and give them their golfer-gifts along with managing the game ‘Beat the Kid’. During the tournament we had 24 golfer teams competing. On the course, each team would stop at the hole I was on and had the chance to try to hit the golf ball as close to the pin as possible. If the high school student was closer to the hole the golfer lost and if the golfer was closer than they got to choose a free gift out of the box. It was $10 to play the game if they had not previously purchased a bonanza ticket for $150 to be able to play all the games offered at the tournament. The Golf Tournament was held on June 29th, 2009. The Golf Tournament was open to amateur golfers and consisted of a luncheon, 18 holes of golf, dinner, and a program with both silent and live auctions. I had the opportunities to take part in all of the aspects of this event.
When I wrote my proposal to intern with the NKF I was under the assumption that I would be working on 3 different events while I was there; the kidney walk, the gala, and the golf tournament. However, I was not available early enough to be involved in the Great Chefs of Minnesota event. I was saddened to find out that I would not be able to attend nor work on anything for the event. The events I worked on most were the kidney walk and the Golf tournament as described above. I also helped out with different projects around the office for events like the Kidney Screening which was put together by two other ladies in the office. The projects I worked on for the screenings were random and usually consisted of stuffing envelopes or folders. I spent many hours stuffing envelopes with promotions and thank you cards to help offset the work load of the other ladies in the office.

One thing I learned about the NKF and the office I worked in is how much of a community they are. Everyone within the organization and office worked to form a community who can support each other and work well as a team. This fact alone speaks volumes about the organization and their mission, and how much it relates to me as a professional/student, and the classes I have taken. I feel like the NKF and the events coordination field is truly where I am meant to be. I enjoyed my internship very much and found that it related to my communication background extensively. I used the skills I learned in my rhetoric and persuasion courses to persuade and inform people about the NFK and the mission to promote Kidney disease awareness. I especially used my persuasion skills while I was responsible for cold calling people to procure donations. I made use of my small groups course in the fact that I mainly worked with the other ladies in the office rather than independently on projects. I always had the input of the team on any project we were working on. To efficiently work in a group, communication lines and cooperation is extremely important to maintain a healthy group atmosphere which is what we accomplished at the NKF. Before I started my internship, I figured that I would have to do some sort of research. However, I did not think I would do as extensive of research as I ended up having to do. One
project I was not expecting to do was research on Iowa. I had to find all the media stations in the Des Moines metro area, all the hospitals, dialysis clinics, and nephrologists in Iowa. The project was extremely extensive and took a lot of my time. It ended up taking me 3 weeks to finish while also continuing to work on other projects. I definitely was thankful for all the research work I had done through my classes which prepared me to take on the large task of Iowa.

I was surprised to find out exactly how much my training in college had relevance to what I was working on at the NKF. I imagine that this will be the case no matter where I go. I am really happy with my experiences at the Kidney Foundation and have been able to take a lot of valuable information and skills away with me. Among the things I can apply to my experiences at the NKF are a few theories that have given me some insight into the reasons behind the experiences I partook in. The first theory I found that applies to my beginnings of a relationship with the people at the NKF is Uncertainty Reduction Theory by Charles Berger. Uncertainty reduction theory is a theory that describes how people react to reduce their uncertainty about the people they are interacting with. When I first started at the NKF I was very nervous and uncertain about what it would be like working there for a summer. I wanted to reduce my uncertainty in order to become more comfortable in my surroundings. I knew I would have a lot of future interaction with the ladies in my office and knew I would want to get to know them. Because I knew I would see them more during the summer I was driven to try to find out who they were as people and what their jobs were like. I wanted to know more so I wasn’t so uncertain. Another condition that drove me to reduce uncertainty was the fact that they had something I wanted. When I started my internship they were the ones who held the power to keep me there for the length of my internship and they had the ability to help me either network my way into a job somewhere else or get a job within the company. Nothing has panned out on the job front, but that will come in due time. However I did finish my internship and therefore my reduction of uncertainty was a good move based on the conditions.
The ways in which I reduced my uncertainty were varied. I used nonverbal communication to let them know I was friendly and I also picked up on their nonverbal to know they were happy I was there. We also had many interactions with verbal communication to try to get to know each other. There was a lot of talking and asking basic questions at the beginning of the internship as compared to the end of the internship where basic questions were no longer the main form of communication. I found the basic questions as a way to also gather information about the other people to know more about their personalities and who they are. There was a good amount of self-disclosure once most of the barriers were down. Once we all became comfortable with one another personal stories were then shared. We found similarities between each other that provided comfort because we felt like we were the same. All these ways to reduce uncertainty led to a liking of the other people to me and me to them. In the end of the internship the uncertainty was greatly reduced due to all these ways we communicated to reduce uncertainty about each other.

The second theory I found insightful was a section of Symbolic Interactionism theory by George Herbert Mead. The looking glass self is a concept that is widely known. I found the assumptions behind the theory very useful to what I know about myself. The looking glass self theory states that we look at ourselves in a certain light based off of how we perceive we look to another person. When I was at the NKF I found myself taking on another personality/role based on how I felt they perceived me. The ladies I worked with viewed me as a professional and someone who was there to work and work hard. Therefore the pictured I painted of myself and they way I acted reflected what I perceived they thought of me. I put myself in their position and thought about how they saw me and that is what I became. It is interesting to realize that one can completely change their personality and attitude depending on the situation they are faced with.

The theories I just explained helped me with my understanding of my experiences at my internship. The last few thoughts I have fall on what they company can do to improve their internship
program. To help the intern learn more about event coordination they should be taken everywhere with the people they are shadowing. Going to more meetings would benefit the intern so that they know how to handle giving pitches about the events, especially for non-profit. I personally thought it would benefit the intern to shadow each person once to see what they really do and the jobs of each position.

I feel like I had more of an involvement in the event planning (calling people, trying to get entertainment, donations) in the last few weeks of my internship which made me really excited about the event. More time being involved with calling and contacting people would be something I would have liked to see happen. It was really fun when I finally got someone to commit to the event; then when I went to the event it is really rewarding to meet that person and see the role they played. I found that my role in the internship mostly consisted of research and designing publications. I did not feel like I got to see as much as I would have liked of the behind the scenes part of event planning. I do feel like everything I did at the internship was important and valuable. I just would have liked to have done more with the events. I look forward to still to being involved in the future with the events and see the other side.

Overall, I had a lot of fun at my internship and definitely would do it again if I had the chance.

The NKF was a great organization to work for and I would recommend them to any CMST student. When I left the NKF they told me I was the best intern they have had. It meant a lot to me to know the work I did was beneficial and valuable to the organization. The NKF was an excellent place to intern.