

# CREATING YOUR OWN INTERNSHIP

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## Identify Organizations You Want to Approach

- Pinpoint products/services of interest to you
  - Decide types of people or populations you want to serve or work with
  - Use events/trends of interest to point you toward fields/industries/organizations
- Locate geographic areas you want to try out while interning
  - Identify cities/regions where you find plenty of possibilities related to your ideal internship/employer
  - Consider cost of living in certain locales (summer apartment rents in some cities, living with relatives, etc.)
- Align with industries/organizations whose missions/values/cultures match what you want

## Locate Contacts at Targeted Organizations

View Careerolina current and archived internship postings at <http://careers.unc.edu/resources/careerolina.html>. Reading current or past openings can help you identify inside contacts to help you get to the “right” person. You can also search the “employer directory” in Careerolina to find contacts at organizations that don’t necessarily have a posted position.

Use LinkedIn, a social networking site used for making professional connections. Use the advanced people search to find UNC alums, as well as professionals in industries and organizations that you’d like to talk with.

You can find additional links to alumni by using the Alumni Advisor Network, at <http://careers.unc.edu/resources/alumni-advisor-network.html>.

For contact names within organizations that have hired interns previously, see UCS’ e-Leads database at [http://eleads.unc.edu/index.php?school\\_id=UNC](http://eleads.unc.edu/index.php?school_id=UNC).

## Describe Your Ideal Internship

**Description/Tasks:** Using employer buzzwords or phrases from job descriptions to specifically describe high priority responsibilities, skills needing development, and special projects desired. For ideas view internship descriptions posted in Careerolina.

**Desired Outcomes:** What do you want to get out of the internship in the short run? How does it fit into your long term goals?

**Relevant Qualifications:** What specific skills and background have you acquired through work experience, study abroad, courses, activities, volunteer work? Which of these items would you like to use or transfer into your internship?

**Compensation:** Paid (salary, commission, stipend) or unpaid; perks in addition to or in place of salary: parking, mileage, housing allowance, training, products/services offered by the organization

**Availability:** When can you start/end? Full vs. part-time. Summer and/or during semester? Virtual vs. on-site.

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## ***Find Out What These Organizations Need***

Now it's time to call an alum or other key contacts at the targeted organization. If you leave two voice mails and get no reply, try one to two email contacts.

If can't reach the desired person, **try asking questions of receptionists and assistants** who may be able to give you basic information (especially if they have previously sponsored interns).

When conducting the interview **use consultative selling techniques**. Ask questions about what work is not getting done, what problems need to be worked on, and what projects have been put off. This is your opportunity to find where your interests and skills overlap with these potential opportunities.

**Conduct investigative research prior to making the phone call.** What are some of the problems and current issues organizations in this industry have been facing? What are competitors doing that your target organization should be doing? How are similar organizations using interns to help? Once you have gathered this data, share it during your phone conversation. This will make a great first impression and show them you are serious about wanting to help as an intern.

## ***Develop a Proposal to Fill Needs***

Revise your "Ideal Internship" description based on your research. Keep in mind that you will have to **make compromises around the employer's needs** based on the data you gathered. Add a section on how your internship will benefit the organization. Next, email your proposal to you target contact and mention a date that you will follow-up by phone.

## ***Follow-up and, If Necessary, Renegotiate***

**Follow-up by phone within one to two days** to ensure that your proposal was received and read. Thank the employer for considering your proposal. Be ready to compromise to satisfy the needs of the internship site. Be sure to keep in touch with the contact even if nothing happens immediately.