

# MGMA Career Center



## INTERNSHIP GUIDE FOR INTERNS

### WHY BE AN INTERN?

11 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD GET AN INTERNSHIP:

- 1. Career exploration** — Take this opportunity to explore a career you have been interested in while expanding your education. A specific job might sound exciting until you start working in the field every day.
- 2. Application of education and training** — An internship is a great way to apply what you are studying in school or any other training you've received. It allows you to apply your skills and grow in new areas.
- 3. Learn from experienced workers in the field**
- 4. Learn about workplace environment/** — cultural fit
  - [Tips on company culture for job seekers](#)
- 5. Learn how to negotiate political climate**
- 6. Discover what you like and do not like about the career/job**
- 7. Discover your strengths and areas you can improve**
  - [Professional Development Dashboard](#)
- 8. Grow your professional presence**
- 9. Add experience to your résumé** — Firsthand experience is important to include on your résumé when you apply for jobs .
- 10. Network opportunities** — Meet others in your field.
- 11. You could be hired into a permanent position with the organization**

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN AN INTERNSHIP:

Many programs range from three months to a year, so you need to make sure it is the right fit. Make sure your goals for a successful internship align with those who are sponsoring the internship. You should ask the following questions prior to accepting an internship:

- What kinds of tasks/projects will you be involved in?
- To whom will you be reporting? How much time will they devote to working with you?
- What is the culture of the organization? Make sure you are familiar with the organization's mission statement beforehand.
- What made previous interns successful?
- How will the organization help you grow in your field?
- How many internships have they sponsored and have any interns been hired after the internship?

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## SEARCHING FOR AN INTERNSHIP:

- Research job roles and opportunities in your area of education and training
- Review job descriptions and qualifications for positions of interest
- Write out your goals
  - What do you want from the internship — Are you focused on skill development, enhancement of current skill set, résumé building, meaningful experience, future job with organization?
  - Go through the process with thought and intention to make sure you are spending time in your area of interest.
- Reach out to others who currently work in the field and inquire about roles that interest you.
- If currently a student or a recent graduate, check with your school on available internships.
- Use the web to search for internships. Many organizations have provided internships for years.
- Ask colleagues/peers if they know any organizations that have internships and then reach out to those organizations.
- Check with professional organizations such as MGMA to find out if they can help connect you with internship opportunities.

## PURSuing AN INTERNSHIP:

- **Develop a résumé** — Make sure your résumé is up to date, detailed and concise. Use MGMA's [resources résumé](#) resources to help you develop a résumé that stands out .
  - [Best Practices for Resume Writing](#)
  - [Resumes](#)
- **Draft cover letters for each position you apply for** — Cover letters tell prospective employers who you are, why they should hire you and what makes you stand out from other candidates.
  - [How to Write a Cover Letter: The All-Time Best Tips](#)
  - [Cover Letters](#)
- **Prepare for interviews** — Make sure to practice possible interview questions that you may be asked as well as ones you would like to ask. Make a list to take with you to your interview.
  - [Job hunting success: How to nail the phone interview](#)
  - ["Scenario-style" interviews improve hiring odds](#)
  - [Thoughts on interviewing: You, attorneys, staff and physicians](#)
- **Find a mentor and ask for feedback** — Find someone willing to mentor you, review your résumé and cover letters, and practice interviewing.
- **Curate your social media professional presence** — It is important to develop a professional presence that highlights your experience, skills and connections.
  - Create a profile on LinkedIn, one of the largest professional social media platforms.
  - [9 Things to Avoid on Social Media While Looking for a New Job](#)

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## HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR INTERNSHIP:

- Set clear goals — What do you want to get out of the internship? How will you define “success” when you have completed the internship?
- Treat the internship as a real job.
- Use a notebook or tool to track projects and due dates. Always be prepared to take notes.
- Jot down names of individuals you meet and work alongside. This will come in handy for “thank you” letters later.
- Make sure to meet all deadlines.
- Own your mistakes.
- Ask questions. You are learning and you will not know everything.
- Seek a mentor — either the person supervising you or someone you feel comfortable asking questions and running ideas by.
- Participate in as many meetings and events at the organization as possible.
- Talk with others outside the department you work in to find out what they do and how it connects to what you do.
- Wear professional attire even if others do not.
- Act professionally and avoid slang.
- Adhere to workplace culture
- Make a list of what you enjoy and do not enjoy about the role/position and if there are other roles that might be a better fit.
- Talk with others and network. This is your chance to meet people in your field of interest. Take time to have lunch with them.
- Stay positive.
- Seek feedback regularly. Find out what are you doing well and what you could do better.
- Keep in touch when the internship is over. Make sure to thank all those involved.

## WHAT TO DO ONCE YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE INTERNSHIP:

- Send “thank you” cards to those you have worked with as well as connected with.
- Ask for a letter of recommendation from your internship supervisor or others with whom you worked.
- Ask if you can list your sponsor or others you worked with as references on your résumé.
- Talk with the organization’s HR representative about possible employment opportunities.
- Update your résumé.
- Update your professional bio with the job experience (e.g., on LinkedIn, on your MGMA profile).
- If you have not already, ask someone to mentor you.
- Start looking for open positions in your area of interest, using your internship experience to guide you.