

# Creating a Summer Internship of Your Own



## Do young adults truly know what they want to do for the rest of their lives?

There comes a time in every young person's life when reality sets in that the days of being enlightened and entertained in the classroom must come to an end. It is now that they have to face the question, "What do I want to do for the rest of my life?" This may sound daunting, because it is. Most young adults have no clue what they want to do. Nonetheless, it is important that they start getting exposed to different career paths and skill sets necessary to be successful.

Summer or part-time internships are a great way to get a taste of different career opportunities. Even better, internships often lead to full time job offers. On the flip side, good internships are extremely hard to find and the competition for positions is fierce.

Given the challenges in finding meaningful internships, there is another route that can yield even better results. This option involves thinking like an entrepreneur and creating your own internship! This consists of scheduling informational interviews with as many professional people in different career positions as possible. With informational interviews, your objective is not to inquire about a job opening, rather you simply want to better understand what people do for a living. In addition, you will hopefully impress them with your character and integrity. Thankfully, most professionals are happy to talk about what they do with almost anyone who asks.



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Be courageous and ask to meet with as many parents or friends and connections you know. Set a stretch goal of meeting with at least 10 different people a week for at least six weeks. Dedicate each week to a different career field and set meetings with people at different levels of seniority starting with the lowest rungs of the ladder and work your way up. By the end of each week, you should have a good grasp of a certain industry as well as individual roles and responsibilities in that industry. In the process, you're honing your interviewing skills in meeting with people in senior positions.

Every meeting is the equivalent of a first day on the job, which means that it is your only opportunity to make a first impression. Take advantage of the opportunity by being as professional as possible: dress appropriately, and arrive ahead of schedule. Send a written thank you note immediately following your meeting referencing key takeaways & impressions from each meeting.

An extremely important part of interviewing is not only answering your interviewers questions, but also asking the right questions. This will show your potential employer that you are serious about this position with your well-prepared inquisitions. Questions that you should ask vary from industry to industry, however, universal questions include, "How many people who you hired five years ago are still here?," "What is the biggest challenge facing the company today and how are you dealing with it?," "How do I compare with other candidates who have interviewed for this position?" and, finally, "What are the next steps and when should I hear back from you?"

The main point of a summer or part-time internship is to get exposure to different career opportunities and make a positive impression on senior professionals along the way. Internships are a valuable stepping stone towards a full time job; however don't freak out if you don't land a good one. With determination, creativity and thoughtful planning, you can create an internship of your own that achieves all your goals. If you make a positive impression, the odds of getting a full-time offer increase exponentially in your favor.

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