

Career Skills Development Guide

Advanced



We'll admit: the journey to landing that first role isn't easy, but it's worth it. After working through the **Intermediate** steps, it's time to identify your strengths and use them to land an internship. Check each accomplishment off as you master them.

Identify your strengths

Investing time & resources in self-assessment tools helps you identify your strengths & interests.

- » **Define yourself:** Take a Myers Briggs personality test or strength finder test to define your personality dimensions. The Career Center may offer a free or discounted test.
- » **Research the Enneagram concept:** Complete the questionnaire to understand your type, using the results to frame your career path considerations.

Perfect your cover letter

A great cover letter is additive to the resume. This is your chance to tell a hiring manager why you're the best fit candidate. Tell your story.

- » **Differentiate yourself:** Get noticed – use creativity up front to pull in the reader.
- » **Highlight accomplishments:** Use action verbs to showcase past successes. Be descriptive.
- » **Be authentic:** Recruiters notice when you are being too fake. It's ok to put a little personality into your letter.
- » **Proofread:** Like your resume, proofread & spell check. Have several people look it over before it's finalized.

Find an internship

Relevant work experience is essential to secure an interview and land that first job.

- » **Prepare before you start:** Brainstorm a list of companies or roles you'd like to see on your resume. Use your self-assessment results to inform a list of opportunities that fit you.
- » **Begin with your interests:** Search for companies that interest you. If they don't have a formal internship program, reach out to schedule an informational interview - it may lead to a potential opportunity.

» **Reach out to your network:** Leverage your network connections to search for opportunities.

- Talk to friends about how they have found their internships to spark your creativity on how to find one for yourself.
- Visit the Career Center to ask about opportunities affiliated with your university or how to connect with alums.
- Leverage family/friend connections.

» **Differentiate yourself:** Stand out as a candidate. Get creative. Create a portfolio. Find a way to show the hiring manager why you're the best fit.

» **Don't give up:** Keep looking until you find an internship.

Nail the interview

Impressing the company is challenging but manageable with these tips.

- » **Think of questions:** Use your informational interview experience to determine potential questions for your interview.
- » **First impressions count:** You have 7 seconds to make an impression. Dress appropriately, walk in with confidence, and have a firm handshake.
- » **Prepare, prepare, prepare:** Do background research on the company. Hiring managers can tell who has done their homework, and it definitely sets you apart.
- » **Prepare questions:** Show you are curious & interested in the company by asking about business decisions.
- » **Bring a relevant sample:** Demonstrating your work shows initiative.
- » **After the interview:** Always follow up with a thank you note.

Advanced Life Skill: Preparation determines success. Be informed before making big decisions or going into that first interview.