



APPROACHING INTERNSHIP SITES

Responding to an existing posting

- After you've identified some potential sites, it's time to let them know of your interest. If you are responding to a posting, review the internship description carefully. We suggest emailing a brief cover letter in response to an organization's posting unless they provide an alternative application process.

Creating your own opportunity

- If some of organizations/contacts you have identified do not have a current posting, we recommend sending a brief cover letter or making a phone call to request an informational interview to discuss what they do and how you could create an internship in a function area that aligns with your skills. Explain your specific interests and propose the idea of meeting briefly to discuss the possibility of doing an internship.
- Send the contact an email or call them and be prepared to address these questions:
 - *Why are you contacting them?* (Interested in doing an internship because...)
 - *Who you are?* (Student at HGSE, with background in X, interested in Y)
 - *If you plan to do your internship for-credit, you should explain the course and if there are any additional requirements for employers.* See course websites (A998, S997, T598) for these details.
 - *Why this organization interests you?* (Communicate your enthusiasm and passion for their work and how you could be a meaningful contributor by helping them with X)
 - *What is the next step?* (brief informational meeting to discuss possible internship via phone or in person in the next X days/weeks...)
- Before your meeting, think carefully about what you hope to learn and create open-ended questions to stimulate discussion.

During the meeting

- Act professionally in terms of dress and punctuality.
- If you plan to enroll in one of HGSE's internship courses (A998, S997, T598), bring any forms along with important dates you might need to review with your internship site as you never quite know the direction the meeting will go.

Ask questions about:

- Employer's priorities
- Their goals
- Possible areas to which you can contribute



Then, relating them to the employer's needs, discuss:

- Your work history
- What interested you most
- Why you came to HGSE
- What interests you about the organization
- What YOU bring to the organization vs. how they can help you

- Emphasize your passion, commitment and willingness to take on new projects. Even if they haven't hosted an intern from HGSE before, they will be more inclined to take you on and fulfill the employer responsibilities if you are enthusiastic and excited.
- Be assertive about telling employers what you are able to do without being arrogant, and emphasize that you are willing to learn what you don't know.
- If the organization isn't quite what you had in mind, you can still use the opportunity to network and learn about the industry and job functions. Ask about referrals and appropriate professional organizations to expand your network of contacts.

After the meeting

- Always send a thank you note.
- If you've identified several potential internship sites, do (or redo) a Gap Analysis to determine which make the most sense.