

Finding an Internship or Traineeship in the USA

Before applying, you'll need to spend some time searching for an internship in your chosen career field. If you haven't started yet, don't wait!

The more time you allow for your search, the more successful you will be. The resources in this section will help you get started.

On the final pages you'll find examples of strong U.S. style resumes and cover letters, as well as tips on performing well during your phone or webcam interview.

About IST Plus

For more than 10 years IST Plus have been providing international programmes for students and young people across the globe.

We work with the best partners worldwide to make sure our participants and university partners get the best experience and support throughout the process.

For more information please see our website:

www.istplus.com

Alternatively email info@istplus.com or call 0207 788 7877



Some helpful tips and guidance on getting your perfect position

Define Your Goals

Before you begin your search, you should think about what you want to accomplish from your training. Although it's important not to limit your options too much, being clear about what you want will help narrow the search.

Here are some questions for you to consider when defining your internship goals:

- Are there specific skills you want to work on, or knowledge you want to acquire
- Are there specific companies that you would like to work for?
- What kind of organisation do you want to train with? Non-profit or for profit, big corporation or small company, small office or large office
- Is the type of organisation more important or less important than the training you will receive? How long do you want to train for?
- Do you need a paid internship or would you be able to accept an unpaid position? You may want to find out what is typical for your career field.

Are you looking to work in a particular city or location? Do you have specific academic requirements such as needing to gain academic credit?

As your first step, list your goals in order of priority and keep them in mind as you start to explore opportunities. Not only will this help you to find the right opportunity, having clearly defined goals will also **impress potential employers during the application process.**

Your Cover Letter and Resume

U.S. companies expect candidates to send a cover letter (or email) and an American-style resume.

Internship searches are competitive—some companies receive hundreds of cover letters and resumes and may spend only a short time looking at each one.

A well-written cover letter and resume will catch their attention and help you make a strong first impression! A good cover letter and resume should convince them to grant you an interview.

Keep in mind that the information provided here is general in nature. You should do whatever is appropriate for your career field

Writing an Effective Cover Letter

The cover letter is your first opportunity to convince a company that you're the perfect candidate! It should contain a short introduction, two or three specific examples of relevant skills and experiences, and a brief closing paragraph requesting a phone or webcam interview. If your cover letter is interesting to read, the hiring manager is more likely to want to learn more about you.

As an international candidate, you should also mention that you're applying for a J-1 Visa through IST Plus and CIEE. Your search for an internship or training position will be more successful if employers know that they're not responsible for your work authorisation documents.

Some employers will be unfamiliar with the J-1 Visa, so you can refer the hiring manager or Human Resources representative to the CIEE Host Company website for more information on what it means to host an international intern.

Here are some additional tips:

If possible, find out the name of the specific person who will read your documents. It will be worth the effort.

Address your cover letter to that person. If you can't find a contact name, address it to "Hiring Manager," or "Human Resources Manager."

To increase your chances, make contact with more than one person at each company.

Send your materials to both the Human Resources department and to the hiring manager for the position you're interested in.

Create a well-written standard letter, but adjust the content for each different position you apply to.

Remember, you are trying to convince them that you are the perfect candidate for that position, and every position is different.

When highlighting relevant skills and experiences, be as specific as possible, and use examples that highlight those skills.

Tell the reader about a project you worked on or a process you improved.

If teamwork is one of your strengths, tell them why.

Give a specific example of how you have solved problems.

Ineligible Occupations

Under US State Department regulations we are not able to sponsor interns in the following occupations:

- **Au pairs, maids, or any other domestic work such as baby-sitting or housekeeping**
- **Camp counsellors (for this you must apply for our Camp USA Programme)**
- **Medical trainees or anything involving hands-on therapy, counselling administering treatment or making diagnoses of medical, psychiatric, or psychological conditions**
- **Pharmacy positions directly related to dispensing medication to patients**
- **Veterinary trainees involved in hands-on care of animals**
- **Pilots or crewmembers on ships or airplanes**
- **Teachers or educational instructors**
- **Temporary or staffing agency employees**



Don't lose heart! Some people get lucky and secure a position within a very short period of time - for others it can take longer!

Writing an Effective Resume

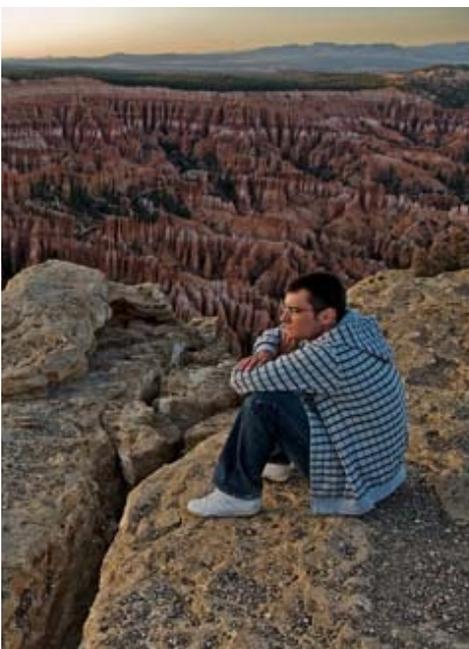
A resume details a candidate's professional experience, qualifications, relevant skills, and educational background.

The format and content of an American- style resume differs considerably from C.V. formats used in many other countries.

The U.S. resume is typically shorter and includes general academic information, rather than the specific details often included in a CV.

Although formatting and structure can differ from one resume to another, following these basic guidelines will make sure your resume meets employers' expectations and catches their attention:

- Make it as short as possible while still being clear.
- Choose your words carefully and be specific. What did you do? What skills did you develop? What problems did you solve?
- When listing your education and experience, start with the most recent and work backwards.
- Carefully consider the formatting. Be sure to organise the information logically, and use a visually pleasing font and size.
- Do not include graphics, photographs, or icons unless specifically requested.



Useful Websites

www.internshipprograms.com	www.careerbuilder.com
www.internzoo.com	www.coolworks.com
www.internweb.com	www.craigslist.org
www.internqueen.com	www.hotjobs.com
www.internalert.com	www.idealists.org
www.vault.com	www.internjobs.com
www.aboutjobs.com	www.monster.com

MAKING CONTACT

*After you've sent your resume and cover letter, make contact again a week later.

*Explain that you're still interested in speaking with them about possible internships or training positions. It's ok to

politely make contact with them several times.

*Stay positive and keep trying. Some employers will never return your email or phone call. Others will send you a standard letter saying "no thanks." But, the more companies you contact, the better your chances will be.

*Follow up! If you are not successful immediately, don't give up. Hiring managers want to know that you're motivated and eager to be part of their team. While it's never a good idea to be aggressive or pushy, it's reasonable to make contact more than once.

*Keep track of emails you've sent and calls you've made. You never know when a hiring manager will get back to you, so make sure you know who they are and when they last contacted you

QUICK TIP

Go Directly to Companies that Interest You!

Visiting the websites of companies that interest you may uncover opportunities that are not listed elsewhere. Some companies that host international Interns never post openings on job boards!

Internship Opportunities

When it comes to finding your ideal position, a little determination goes a long way.

There are several places to look for internship opportunities with U.S. companies. Make a plan that includes exploring all the options available and stay open-minded. Every internship opportunity has something to offer. Begin your search as early as possible to ensure that you have enough time to find, be offered, and accept your internship.

Below is a list of options and resources available to internship seekers. This is not a complete list, and as you conduct your search, you may uncover additional ways to find your opportunity.

Career Help Centres

Pay a visit to your university Career Centre. They may well have their own contacts in the USA or may be able to advise on how previous students have done it!

Search Online Listings

There are many online job boards and employment search engines (see previous page). Some of these specialise in internship opportunities, and some list general employment opportunities.

When using these, you will need to use keywords like "intern", "internship", or "trainee" to find the types of opportunities you are looking for.

Use Your Network

If you have personal or professional contacts, don't be afraid to use them to get leads or recommendations. Networking is an excellent (and important) way to learn more about companies that specialise in your field, to secure an informational interview, or to develop relationships with people who can help you find what you're looking for.

Online Social Networking

Once you have identified companies that interest you, you might want to start following them on Social Networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. **Also, it's a good idea to remember that companies will look at your Social Network pages when considering your application, so be careful with your settings and remember to keep it professional!**



Don't lose heart! Some people get lucky and secure a position within a very short period of time - for others it can take longer!

Interviewing for a Position

At some point during this process, you will find a company that wants to talk to you in person. Whether this takes the form of a telephone conversation, a webcam interview, or an in-person meeting, being prepared is the most important thing you can do in order to succeed.

Interview Tips:

Before the interview, research the company's products, services, and activities, and review their website to get a good understanding of their business.

For an in-person or webcam interview, dress appropriately. Many companies will expect you to wear a suit, although some businesses are less formal. **If in doubt, wear a suit.**

Be on time — plan to arrive/be ready at least 20 minutes early to make sure you are not late.

Post-Interview Follow Up

Say thank you! Sending a thank you letter via email is an important step in the interviewing process, and an excellent way to reinforce your interest in the position.

If you don't hear from the employer within the timeframe you expected, politely make contact with them again to check on the status and to remind them of your interest in their company.



Accepting a Position

You've been offered a position? Well Done!

Once you've accepted a position, you will need to create a DS - 7002 Training/Internship Placement Plan as part of your programme application.

To read more information about this process, please go to www.istplus.com and follow the links for your specific programme page.

Sample Cover Letter

You can use this as a base for your cover letter/
email.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am interested in pursuing the Hotel Management internship with your company. Working as an intern at ***(Company Name)*** offers the opportunity to enhance my skills and gain valuable experience. I believe that my education, work experience, and career goals are a good fit for this position, and I have included my resume for your review.

With regards to my eligibility to undertake a period of time with your company, I will be able to secure sponsorship from a State Department Designated Sponsor on a J1 Visa Program. This program is designed to allow students and young professionals to come to the USA for a fixed period of time in order to gain international experience.

During my time at the University of ****University name****, where I earned an HND in Hospitality Management, I spent a semester abroad in Rome studying international business and Italian. This international experience has served me well in my current position as a Banquet Manager at the Leopold Hotel where I interact regularly with international clients.

As a Wedding and Special Events Coordinator at Ten Tables Bistro, I worked under pressure while coordinating events with as many as 350 guests. Prior to that, I delivered consistently excellent customer service as a Front Desk Associate at the Hilton Sheffield Hotel. I believe these skills will help me succeed in the Hotel Management internship. I

I hope to speak with you in person about my qualifications for this position.

Sincerely,

Your Name Here**

Contact Details

Sample US Style Resume

You can use this as a base for your resume

Sample US style Resume

A.N. Other

15 Nowhere Street, Sometown, UK

email:djacobson@gmail.com

+44 (0) 7770 123 321

Education

The University of Huddersfield, HND Hospitality Management May 2012

The International School of Tourism Sciences, Rome, Italy Semester Abroad Spring 2010

Work Experience

The Leopold Hotel, Sheffield Banquet Manager 2009- Present

Plan, organize, and direct the execution of all food and beverage events. Act as the primary event contact.

Coordinate kitchen operations and service staff, ensuring efficient execution.

Manage banquet room preparation and turnover.

Conduct pre-event meetings with service staff.

Ten Tables Bistro, Tinsley , Wedding and Special Events Coordinator 2008- 2010

Coordinated and conducted menu presentations and tasting sessions with prospective clients. Worked with General Manager to accurately price events. Served as the liaison between clients and Ten Tables Bistro chef and management team.

Oversaw event preparation and logistics to ensure successful event execution.

Hilton Sheffield Hotel, Sheffield - Front Office Associate 2007- 2009

Greeted and registered hotel guests. Made and modified reservations as needed, while providing a high level of customer service.

Settled guest accounts and managed the check-out process.

Other Skills

Language: Fluent in Spanish, conversational Italian

Computers: Windows, MS Access, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Lotus Notes