



INTERNALLY CREATIVE

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FEATURES

5 Ways to Embrace an Internship with Little Guidance.....	3
Positive Attitude, Thoughts Often Yield Positive Results.....	4
Writing for the Company: Balancing the Company's Writing Style and AP Rules	5
Taking a Bad Interview and Turning it into a Good Experience.....	6
Stressing the Little Things.....	7
The Value of Nonprofit Internships	8
How to Effectively Talk to Your Boss If You Are Unhappy.....	9
The 5 Most Difficult Interview Questions and How to Answer Them	10
Working in an Unpaid Internship	11
How to Get the Most Out of Your Summer Internship	12
Landing a Big City Job/Internship	13



5 WAYS TO EMBRACE AN INTERNSHIP WITH LITTLE GUIDANCE

BY SCOTT BELILLE

Sniff Do you smell that? Why, that's the smell of freedom! Yes, at many mass communications internships your employers expect you to work independently. They're busy and may have only enough time to tell you what the main message is that you must deliver, so how to represent that message becomes your decision.

A communications internship where the employer tells you to make the calls can be rewarding if you embrace it. Here are five ways to make the most out of an internship with little guidance.

1. Follow the competitors. Watch or read content that similar organizations are pumping out. Just because a subject already received media attention doesn't mean it is exhausted. Your competitor's piece may have missed an alternative viewpoint or posed more questions than answers. That's your chance to outperform them.

2. Ask your sources for story ideas. If you're clicking with your source during an interview, there is nothing wrong with asking for future story ideas at the end. You could receive tips you may otherwise never come across, and the individual could be a source for that next story or direct you to the right person.

3. Don't skip the topics that scare you. When you're in control, it's tempting to discover a big idea only to tell yourself, "That topic is too hard for an intern" or "I don't have the time to interview that

many sources." Remember, it's not about if you will benefit from the story, it's about if your audience will. A good way to handle this is to mention the story idea to your supervisor. If he or she sees no value in it, then you're off the hook. But if he or she loves the idea and assigns it to you, then you're ready to learn something new and maybe break a big story to your audience.

4. Set your own deadlines. Some organizations are so deadline-driven that you can feel the stress radiating from the cubicles, while others are so relaxed that it is hard to keep writing at a steady pace. If your deadline is flexible or nonexistent, then establish one so your project doesn't overstay its welcome. Whether the reward for finishing is going home early or breathing a healthy sigh of relief that the story is finally put to rest, you will feel better if you give yourself a cut-off date for typing and tinkering.

5. Warn your supervisor if you anticipate having many questions. When the office geology enthusiast assigns you to write a riveting piece about dolomite rocks, deep down he or she expects you to have questions aplenty. Don't fret. Say: "This topic is unfamiliar to me. Would you have time available today when I could ask you questions that pop up as I research this topic?" He or she should be happier to help you if one-on-one time is set aside to discuss it, and you won't be returning every three minutes saying, "Sorry, one more question..."



POSITIVE ATTITUDE, THOUGHTS OFTEN YIELD POSITIVE RESULTS

BY JUSTIN DEJAGER

The famous poet, Willie Nelson, once said, “When you replace negative thoughts with positive ones, you start having positive results.”

While preparing for a new job, many, if not all of us, have experienced feelings of anxiousness, panic, fear or other negative emotions. These feelings are common and natural to succumb to; however, researchers have found that if we focus our energy on positives rather than negatives, we will be more likely to have success.

Negative emotions narrow your mind and focus your thoughts, which in turn limits your options, according to James Clear, author of “The Power of Positive Thinking.” So when you go into a job interview thinking you’re going to fail or worrying about making a mistake or fearing you are not good enough, you are actually limiting your thinking capacity. Your mind will fixate on those negative thoughts rather than focus on the task at hand. In contrast to the narrow focus of negative emotions, positive emotions actually expand your possibilities and open your mind to more options. It is always beneficial to keep an open mind in an interview.

When you come across as negative and unenthusiastic, people notice. People also notice when you’re positive and enthusiastic. Put yourself in an employer’s shoes; if two candidates have the same qualifications, which person is the employer going to be more likely to connect with and

ultimately hire? Negative Nancy or Positive Peggy?

One very important way to stay positive is to remember your achievements, according to Harry Freedman, author of “Tips to Help You Stay Positive While Job Hunting.” Make a list, put that list in your resume, and review that list before you go to your next interview. It will put you in a mood of success.

Keep in mind, however, that sometimes people just get lucky. You never know when opportunities are going to present themselves. Keeping a positive mindset is going to help you see those opportunities and use them to your advantage. Making a good impression with one person can lead to you getting an opportunity to make a good impression on your next employer.

Positive thinking will not yield positive results without one key ingredient – positive actions. If you stop short of combining your positive thinking with positive actions, you will not see positive results, says Amy Morin, author of “Positive Thinking Isn’t a Substitute for Positive Action.” It is like saying you are going to think positively about your next exam and not worry about studying for it. That just does not work.

When you take positive actions while looking for your next job, you will be able to go confidently and positively into your next interview and knock their socks off, with a smile.



WRITING FOR THE COMPANY: BALANCING THE COMPANYS WRITING STYLE AND AP RULES

BY ANTONIO DAVIS

You have researched, learned AP style, networked and interviewed sources to earn your internship position that will primarily require you to write for the company.

Now what? It's time to put your writing skills to the test as you further develop as a writer. Here's a scenario:

It's your first week on the job. Your supervisor sends you an email containing the company's writing style guide, which appears to be the length of a textbook...Yeesh. Quickly, you scroll through the writing style guide to find it's only 40 pages.

You ease off the panic button, and whisper to yourself, "That was a close one." But wait, you realize you have to learn an entirely new writing style, so your panic meter begins to rise once again.

In honor of Wisconsin's most adored quarterback, "R-E-L-A-X." It's OK; you will be fine. Keep in mind the company selected you for the position, which means the members of the company believe in you and your writing skills.

Adjusting to the company's writing style guide is going to take time and practice, as it took to learn the basic rules of AP. In fact, you may likely find yourself using the company's writing style guide along with the AP Stylebook.

As an intern for the Experimental Aircraft Association and the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Alumni Relations Office, I used each organization's respective guides and the AP Stylebook to successfully complete my news and feature stories. It's a common practice in the world of journalism.

The AP Stylebook is used "to provide a uniform presentation of the printed word, to make a story written anywhere understandable everywhere," according to Tom Curley, former president and CEO of the AP.

As the company provides you time and practice to learn its style rules, you will find yourself becoming more comfortable switching from the company's style guide to AP to write and edit stories.

Keep in mind your internship is an opportunity for you to gain valuable experience, which will benefit you personally and professionally. The more time you spend developing your writing skills, the better equipped you will be to build a career in mass communication.

So don't let the company's style guide keep you from being great. It's time to take the skills you've developed in the classroom and execute them in the real world.



TAKING A BAD INTERVIEW AND TURNING IT INTO A GOOD EXPERIENCE

BY KATIE KNOX

You get dressed up in your good suit or dress, put on the best smile you can muster, and walk into the interview room like it's not a big deal. Despite sweaty palms, you feel pretty confident. Before you know it, the interview is over, and right before you leave the office, the potential employer offers some advice to you: Next time, try to do some research.

Yikes. Just when you thought you had done everything necessary to get the job, the employer lets you know the interview didn't go as well as you had thought.

Now what?

Follow these tips to help you take a bad interview and turn it into a good experience:

1. Just breathe.

It's OK if you didn't do well. What you may take as a bad experience may have been a great interview for the potential employer. Don't overthink the bad parts... think about the parts where you excelled.

2. Follow up.

Following up is key to maintaining a relationship with the potential employer. While sending an email is efficient in time, it's more sincere to send a handwritten letter. The letter should contain a thank you, as well as a small note about your excitement for that position.

I sent a handwritten letter, and it helped me receive a second interview.

3. Think about the future.

After you relax a little, reflect on the things you did. What were the mistakes that made the employer question your qualifications? If they said to research more, then in the future, do more research. Work to improve yourself.

4. Keep fighting.

Fight for that position! If it is truly your dream job, your admiration and determination can stand out to the company.

5. Let it go.

I don't mean to quote Frozen on this one, but it's true. If it wasn't meant to be, then it's not meant to be. There are other jobs out there that are better. Focus on the positives, such as better jobs in better locations or bettering yourself. You can do it!



STRESSING THE LITTLE THINGS

BY STEPHEN KNOLL

When preparing for a job interview it's easy to get caught up in trying to nail down your interviewing skills. Shoring up your resume and practicing your answers ahead of time are great strategies and will certainly help you, but there are smaller things that need to be taken care of as well.

Interpersonal communication is a bigger factor than many interviewees initially realize. It is important to remember that just about everything you do in an interview is being reviewed and judged by the person you are with. "Non-verbal cues definitely play into my impression of a candidate's overall communication skills," says Karl Hughes, director of technology at Packback, which specializes in e-textbook rentals. Handshakes, eye contact, verbal responses, facial expressions, body language, manners, etiquette — all of these little things are pieces of yourself that you need to be aware of when interviewing.

Body language is probably the most important part since no one wants to hire a person who is visibly disinterested. That means no slouching or other lazy positions. However, having a perfect, upright posture isn't always necessary either; it depends on the situation and type of interview. The best advice is to take a relaxed, but attentive posture. You can lean against a desk, or rest your forearms against a table and face your interviewer. Leaning forward makes you appear more eager and interested, while resting your arms on a table provides your body some support. Depending on the interviewing environment, you need to strike a balance between appearing relaxed and attentive while not seeming too rigid or too loose.

The same rules apply toward your facial expressions. Nothing makes a situation more awkward than an inappropriate laugh or smile. It's important to keep yourself in check and be aware of how you respond non-verbally. If an interviewer

provides you with a situation or tough question and you look distressed or look down, your negative response reflects poorly on you. It's never wise to look down or away from an interviewer because eye contact is so important. Even if you don't know how to answer right away, it's important to appear confident, and maintaining eye contact is an easy way to do that.

Beyond facial expressions, it's also good to note how expressive you are with hands. Many people 'talk with their hands' and there's nothing wrong with that so long as it's not over-the-top. While over-exaggerated or flailing motions are unlikely to help in an interview, mild or subtle hand motions won't hurt. Just make sure to research who you're interviewing or if applying abroad, where you're interviewing, since different cultures have different standards on hand gestures.

Besides how you control yourself in interviews, it is equally important how you interact with others during the process. Whether it is a receptionist or the CEO, basic manners will go a long way. Sometimes these small interactions in the waiting room can be used as mini tests by employers to see how you treat others and how you interact with them. No one is a fan of rude people and employers are less likely to hire someone others view as being rude or abrasive.

"Any new hire has to come into our team and be able to communicate with the rest of our engineers as well as our non-technical people, so I pay attention to the person's ability to look me in the eye, be honest when they don't know the answer to a question, and seem like they're listening," Hughes says. These small interactions may seem insignificant in whether or not you will be hired, but it's important to remember that everything you do is always being judged by others, especially when applying for a job.



THE VALUE OF NONPROFIT INTERNSHIPS

BY REBEKAH EHLERT

Finding an internship. Easy. Just click a button to submit your resume onto Titan Jobs. In a week you get called by a nonprofit organization that wants you to intern. You're so excited to have a real internship that you immediately accept their offer. And then later you realize you just accepted an unpaid internship. How are you going to pay your bills?

While money is great, unpaid internships can offer great experiences. Nonprofit organizations are less structured, simply because they can't afford lots of employees. This could look scary for someone without innovation. But this is what separates "the men from the boys."

To the successful intern, this means you can leave your own mark on the nonprofit group. You have the freedom to create a new program, do work the way you want to do it and stand out from the crowd compared to previous interns. The other employees basically treat you as an equal, which gives you full-time career freedoms.

The second best thing about nonprofit internships is the networking opportunities. You are constantly raising support and meeting with sponsors and volunteers to make your event happen. This is where you can make your impression. Who knows what connections can land you a full-time career?

And finally, the best thing about nonprofits is that many are known internationally. Special Olympics and World Relief are just a few of the major nonprofits with internships in the Oshkosh area. Because you have experience with an international organization, you can easily share and form connections with employers. International companies carry a well-known name and common ground.

So, rock that freedom, embrace the connections and showcase your experience with an internationally trusted nonprofit organization.



HOW TO EFFECTIVELY TALK TO YOUR BOSS IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY

BY NICOLE KITZEROV

Internships are a great way to get hands-on experience in a position you might be interested in upon graduating. They also help you decide what you do and don't like to do before you commit to a full-time job. But what should you do when you're in an internship that you don't like?

Before you decide to call it quits, take a deep breath and ask yourself what you don't like about the role. Does it fit your personality/values? Do you dislike the people you work with? Did it start off being the position you wanted, but you later found out it's not what you enjoy doing?

After you discover what makes you unhappy, talk to your boss. This can be a very difficult thing to do. It can also be very effective. Before you talk to your boss, make sure you are calm. It's a good idea to talk to your boss a day or two after you were worked up. This gives you time to calm down before you talk to him or her. Chances are, your boss will see why you're upset and do what he or she can to make the situation better.

Not surprisingly, it's a bad idea to complain to other co-workers prior to talking to your boss. You don't know whom your co-workers will tell. You don't want to create a hostile work environment or ruin a potential good reference. Take the matter into your own hands and handle it professionally.

Being unhappy in an internship can be a great learning experience since problem solving is a skill that you will use in every job. Learning how to handle a situation early on will benefit you greatly in the long run.



THE 5 MOST DIFFICULT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND HOW TO ANSWER THEM

BY GRACE WARDIN

If you are interviewing with different businessmen or women, chances are that they'll ask you different questions, based on the business or personalities of the staff members.

Some employers — especially those who focus on hiring creative and unique employees — may ask you uncommon, or unusual, questions, such as "Describe the color yellow to someone who is blind." For those types of organizations you need to be prepared for anything.

But there are some questions that many, if not most, employers ask. Here's how to answer those:

1. "Tell me about yourself."

Ah, yes. This question is often asked right off the bat and must be expected by all interviewees. Have a rehearsed (but not overly simulated) response. Keep your answer to a minute or two at most. Cover four topics: early years, education, work history, and recent career experience. Focus on the last point the most. Oh, and keep it clean! Don't include what you do on the weekends if your main hobby is binge drinking.

2. "Tell me about a time when a solution didn't work."

Employers want to know if you've learned from your mistakes. Answering a question that has a negative aspect to it is difficult, so have a few examples in mind of a time when your work could have somehow been improved. Explain what you did to fix the situation (if anything), and why. Explain what you would do differently in the future. Also, be sure to have the opposite of this question in mind too, such as situations where you delivered superb work to a previous employer and why you are proud of it.

3. "Why did you leave your previous employer, or why are you leaving your present job?"

Employers understand that the economy has caused some employers to downsize, so don't be ashamed if this was the case with your last job. If you were fired for performance issues, it's best to merely say you "parted ways" and re-focus the discussion on how your skill set matches the position you are applying for. If you currently have a job, focus on why you're seeking greater opportunity, challenges and responsibility.

4. "What can you tell me about this company?"

Do your homework and research the background and mission/vision statements of the company you're interviewing for. This question usually catches people off guard since many don't think to look up the overall goals of the company. People typically just know the job description inside and out, which is excellent, but that is not the only knowledge they must have going into the interview. Know the names of the president and CEO, along with achievements and milestones of the company. Employers want to know that you're interested in more than just the job.

5. "Why should I hire you?"

Finish strong! This question is almost always asked in interviews, and many are unprepared to answer it, causing their answer to be vague and predictable. Before the interview, closely review the job description and qualifications to identify the skills and knowledge that are critical to the position. Illustrate why you are the most qualified candidate for this job by identifying experiences from your past that demonstrate those skills and knowledge.



WORKING IN AN UNPAID INTERNSHIP

BY BRAYDEN WENDT

On paper, an unpaid internship may seem undesirable. Everyone wants to get paid for his or her work, and that is perfectly understandable. I felt the same way. Last year, I worked in an unpaid marketing and communications internship with the Green Bay Blizzard, an arena football team. It was a hectic, fast-paced job and I loved every minute of it — regardless that I wasn't getting paid. It truly made me want to continue in a career in the sports industry.

There are benefits to working in an unpaid internship. Your work isn't all for nothing. What you do in your position is important to the success of the company and they do reward you for it. For example, you can make commissions for every program, football or any promotional item you sell

during the games. But just as importantly, unpaid internships generally will allow you to receive college credit for your work. My internship allowed me to gain college credits, and crossed off my internship requirement for my major, Integrated Web Management, which put me one step closer to graduation.

An unpaid position is unlikely to be at the top of someone's list when it comes to applying for positions. There is nothing wrong with that, but there is also no shame in working for free. The important thing to remember is you are getting real-world, hands-on experience in a position that can enhance the knowledge and skills you have already gained through your education. This can only help you build your resume and help you as you apply for full-time positions.



HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR SUMMER INTERNSHIP

BY LAUREE FRECHETTE

You've just landed your first summer internship and now it's time to make an impression on your employer while still having a fun summer break. This is a great time to discover what your dream job is really like. So before the summer begins, get organized and establish what you want to gain from your experience.

When it comes to the job itself, it is important to create a checklist of the things you'd like to learn from your internship — whether it is gaining more experience on programs like Photoshop or InDesign or networking and creating life-long contacts. As the internship progresses throughout the summer, you will be able to chart your own progress and check things off along the way.

From the interview to the first day on the job, it is crucial that you communicate clearly and effectively with your supervisor the things you'd like to learn from your internship. No one is a mind reader, and if there is a specific area you've listed on your checklist from above, don't be afraid to let your employer know the areas where you'd like to improve on. Volunteer for projects as much as you can; it will set you apart from the other interns by showing your eagerness for excellence and to deliver results.

Getting the most out of your summer internship can also be fun, especially if you're in a new area for the first time. Don't be afraid to be a tourist, pick up a book on your new city and explore. These new experiences in a new place are just as important as making a good impression on the job.

Bonding with the other interns will not only make your summer more enjoyable, but you'll be networking with future colleagues. If you have the chance to join the office softball team or go to an office outing, don't pass it up. These opportunities allow you to get to know your colleagues on a more personal level that just might help boost morale in the office.

One of the most important things you can do before you leave your summer position is to take the time to thank everyone in the office for their help and guidance. After you leave to go back to school, keep in touch periodically with the contacts you made at your internship. Make the most out of your time there and keep in mind that this internship can be like a 12-week long interview that could turn into many more job opportunities in the future.



LANDING A BIG CITY JOB/INTERNSHIP

BY ISAAC HAIGHT

Whether you want to work in advertising, public relations or for a news outlet, journalism offers a wide variety of opportunities. However, many prospective professionals will find that the pinnacle of their career will lead them to a big city.

Big cities are typically home to the nation's best agencies, largest corporations and world-renowned news outlets. But how do you land a job or internship in a larger city if you're from a smaller city like Oshkosh?

Fortunately, UW Oshkosh has had numerous alumni and current students who have made it in a big city. Hilary Stoeberl, who graduated from UW Oshkosh in May 2014, is working in downtown Chicago for a public relations agency named Zeno Group. She credits her networking ability for landing the job.

"Networking is the key to getting yourself into a big city," Stoeberl said. "There are a number of ways it can benefit you. In some cases it might not lead directly to a job, but that person might be able to give you a referral or know of an opening you don't."

Being involved in various clubs or events is a good way to get your foot in the door for a networking opportunity. Stoeberl was the 2013-2014 PRSSA chapter president at UW Oshkosh and she credits the organization with being able to make professional contacts.

"Traveling to Chicago for regional conferences (helped) me build some of my relationships here," Stoeberl said. "I also attended other national events and learned a lot from my peers within PRSSA."

Networking may be essential to landing a job in a big

city, but according to Ashley Whaples, who graduated in December 2014 and who works for FleishmanHillard in New York City, not selling yourself short is vital for a chance at a job.

"I didn't have any contacts in New York when I applied for the job," Whaples said. "I really had to sell myself to FleishmanHillard. Some of the best advice I got in school was to be OK with bragging about yourself in interviews. It can be kinda hard if you're not used to it, but I think it was a difference maker for me."

Whaples added that most job openings in big cities also have many more applicants, so standing out from the crowd is important.

"There can be hundreds of applicants for a job or internship, especially in a place like this, Chicago or Los Angeles," Whaples said. "Getting an interview can be the toughest aspect of applying, but once you do get it, you have to be on top of your game. If you're not willing to brag about yourself, not too many other people are going to either. The employer wants to see that you're confident in your abilities."

One thing that both Stoeberl and Whaples mentioned was being able to show a potential employer work samples. Bringing a portfolio to an in-person interview or providing a link to an online portfolio is a way to showcase an individual's skills.

"I was surprised at an interview when the interviewer told me a lot of applicants don't bring a portfolio or work samples to interviews," Stoeberl said. "I think they were impressed that I brought it, even though I looked at it as an essential thing to do anyways. I think it helped me set myself apart."