

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

PRESENTED BY SOAAHD ADVISING

FALL 2023 / ISSUE 003 - SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

SUMMER
INTERN
ISSUE

A DESIGN
STUDENT'S GUIDE
TO FINDING
SUPPORT WHILE
ATTENDING UW



ASSEMBLING THE TEAM

Applying to internships can be tough and tedious, so building a solid support system will mean a world of difference. Often design students seek out support from friends, family, and mentors to help along the way. Whether it's guidance through interview prep or just having a place to vent when things get tough, having people to lean on makes things so much easier.

We want you to succeed, so we gathered insights from past UW Design students, industry professionals, and other interns to help you make the most of your summer. In this issue of *It Takes A Village*, you'll find some background on what to expect while applying to internships, as well as tips and tricks you can use to feel truly supported.



YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO ASK FOR HELP

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Over 50% of students wished they had received more help getting connected with family, friends, and opportunities, yet only 16% reported receiving this type of support. Sending someone's contact info or keeping you in mind is a super easy way for supporters to contribute and a great one to ask for.

4 students received this support



13 wanted it

"I wish I had more support from professors to get connected to professionals in the fields and introduce us to people who might be able to offer internships."

INTERVIEW PREP

This was a popular way for supporters to help out and it was received well by students. 61% of students got help with research before their interviews and 57% said they would have liked to receive this type of help.

14 students received this support



13 wanted it

"I wanted interview support, especially from people who have experience with the same company I was interviewing for."

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

More students reported receiving emotional support than those who wished they had received it. If you prefer tangible methods of support, don't be afraid to make those needs known to your team!

17 students received this support

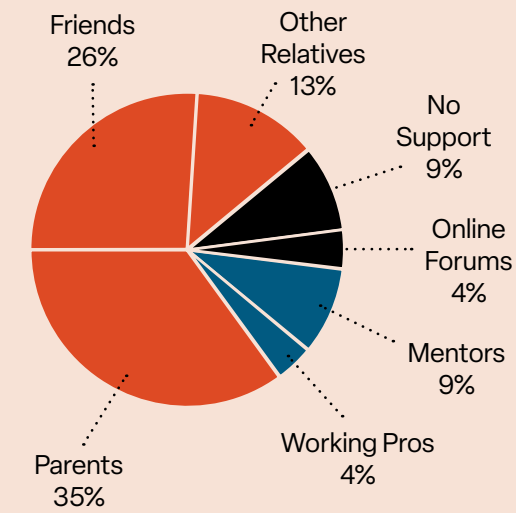


14 wanted it

"I wanted someone to champion me and assure me as I worked through the really pretty tough emotional work of sending out application after application."

WHO CAN YOU ASK?

We asked 2023 internship applicants who their biggest supporter was during the process. According to our survey, students received the most support from family, friends, mentors, industry professionals and online forums:



"My parents were very excited for me when I told them my plan to find an internship, and asked me weekly how it was going. My dad who works in the industry also tried hooking me up with some of his Seattle connections."

"My supporter was my brother. He was able to vouch for me at the company he worked at and help with getting my foot in the door for possible internship opportunities."

"One of my friends made a wonderful spreadsheet for us to share and we encouraged each other along the way. Other friends also helped to read over cover letters, emails, and application questions as they came along."

"I was able to go to portfolio feedback sessions through IDSA, so I mainly wanted support in different ways like talking about work life balance."

NEXT STUDENTS TURNED TO MENTORS AND OTHER WORKING PROFESSIONALS

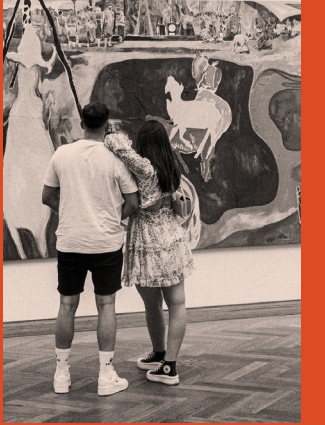
Students seeking support from mentors, professors, and other working professionals often received help with applications, resumes, and interview prep.



FRIENDS AND FAMILY MADE UP THE MAJORITY OF SUPPORTERS

According to our survey, family helped most with things like emotional support, interview prep, and resumes.

Their friends were often other design students, so they got help with portfolios and websites and sharing job listings.



9% OF STUDENTS REPORTED NO SUPPORT AT ALL

These designers wish they had received more emotional support. They wanted to feel reassured and affirmed throughout the process.



Others reached out for support through forums, tutorials, and other online resources.



WHO MIGHT YOU ASK FOR SUPPORT?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



THE SECRET TO YOUR SOLID SUPPORT SYSTEM

Asking for help is hard!! We want to make it easier on you by providing resources, explanations, and guidelines for your team of supporters.

Visit ittakesavillage.com to explore our digital resources

**SO YOU'VE SECURED THE TEAM
NOW WHERE DO THEY FIT IN?**

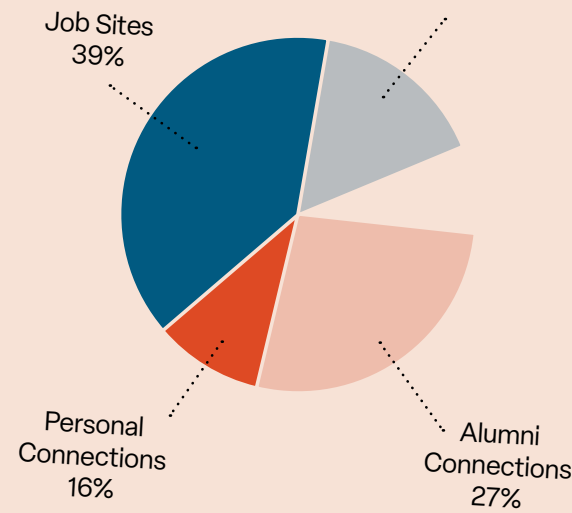
FINDING SUPPORT EACH STEP OF THE WAY

The journey from the start of your search, to that coveted offer is a long one. Here's what you might expect along the way, so that you can give your supporters the full picture.

START

1. THE SEARCH

The way you apply matters. Applying only through one source could limit your options, and our research has shown that some sources are definitely better than others. Networking will ultimately give you a huge advantage in your search. Go to job fairs, talk to alumni, network with guests that professors bring in to class, etc. Talk to people! Professionals aren't as scary as you think!



Less than 50% of students reported getting their job through a job site.

Your chances are better through other opportunities. Networking is your best friend!

2. PREP

As a designer it's important that what you present is well designed. In this stage, you'll be tailoring your resume and portfolio to fit the listings you've found. Ask your friends, family, & mentors to critique your website. Have people look over your resume to ensure there are no typos. It's easy to make mistakes when you are designing in a vacuum, so make sure you get some fresh eyes on your work. Make sure you have all the materials listed here, and ask anyone who will listen to double check your work!

- Designed Resume
- Portfolio Website
- Portfolio PDF
- Cover Letter Template
- Up to Date LinkedIn

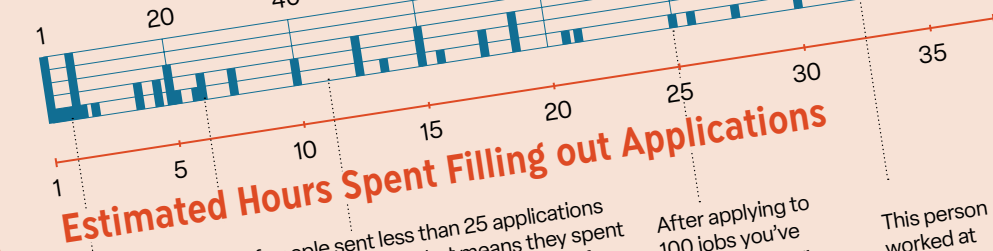
3. TIME TO APPLY

Applications will take up a large portion of your time, but it's something you'll have to face on your own. The average application takes 15-20 minutes to fill out. (20-30 minutes if you're tailoring your application to each position)

Of the design students who secured internships, they on average filled out 45 applications.

At this stage, supporters might agree to check in with you consistently to hold you accountable to your goals, or maybe just be there for you to ask how you're doing.

Number of applications Submitted



Estimated Hours Spent Filling out Applications

This person worked at REI

50% of people sent less than 25 applications to land their internship. That means they spent less than 6 hours filling out their resume info on job sites!

AVG: 45 applications taking 11+ hours

After applying to 100 jobs you've likely spent over 25 hours applying

This person worked at Sony!

WAIT

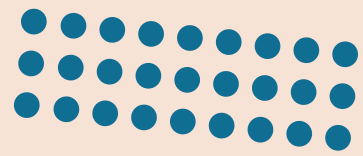
NO OFFER? IT'LL BE OKAY!
CHECK OUT SOME ALT PLANS ON PG 7

6. THE CHAT

This is a great place to lean on your support system! Set up your computer for a mock interview, have your supporter ask you typical interview questions and quiz you on your preparation. Forbes says that 82% of employers use virtual interviews, so this is a great opportunity for even your long-distance supporters to help out!

36/68 Interns reported having only two rounds of interviews. The first round was often something casual with a recruiter. The second interview is likely to be something more technical/portfolio focused. Make sure to know your portfolio back to front and be ready to design!

1 Round (40%)



2 Rounds (52%)



3+ Rounds (6%)



Tech companies and larger corporations tended to host the most rounds of interviews. These four interviewed at *Intuit, Sony, JP Morgan, and Alaska Airlines.*



7. POP THE CHAMPAGNE, YOU GOT AN OFFER!

Congratulations on making it this far! An offer is definitely the goal, but make sure to consider whether or not the offer is the right fit for you. Consider pay, location, and other internship options if you have them available to you. It's okay to take a second to decide and it's definitely okay to turn down the offer. Talk about it with those who care about you!

*PSST IT'S OKAY IF YOU DON'T MAKE IT THIS FAR!

5. STUDY UP

Interview prep helps you ace the interview and also gives you a better idea of how you might fit into the company! Check their website for more info, or see if anyone has interviewed there before and is willing to share their experience. You can also check your alumni network and possibly reach out to someone who already works there! Here's a few things you should probably know before your interview:

- Company Values + Mission
- Their Previous Projects
- Your Interviewer and Their Specific Background
- Common Interview Questions for the Company + Type of Work

4. BEWARE OF GHOSTS

It has been a recent trend in the job market as companies get more applications than they can handle. After 1.5 months with no response you can typically assume you've been ghosted.

Even if there's an opportunity you're hoping to land, continue applying to keep your options open. We found that the process took anywhere from 1-9 months; Everyone's journey is so different!



MAYBE GIVE SOMETHING ELSE A SHOT?

**NO INTERNSHIP
≠
NO JOB AFTER
GRADUATION**

LEAN ON YOUR FRIENDS

Summer is an excellent time to spend with friends. They can be your travel buddies, help with rest and relaxation, and sometimes even help out with your creative process! No reason to rush yourself into the professional workforce earlier than you have to. Sometimes spending the summer working a casual minimum-wage job and decompressing in your free time is the best choice for you. Take advantage of this time between quarters and try to make the best of the nice weather.

TRY OUT SOME CREATIVE PROJECTS

1. Learn a new medium, screen print some shirts, find some local creative workshops, the world is your oyster.
2. Create a new brand or business you want to start together.
3. Collaborate outside of your major. Push stylistic expectations and try a cross-disciplinary project.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

It is okay to give it a shot and then decide to do something else. Even if you've applied to 100+ internships you don't have to have an internship to have a good/productive summer.

75%

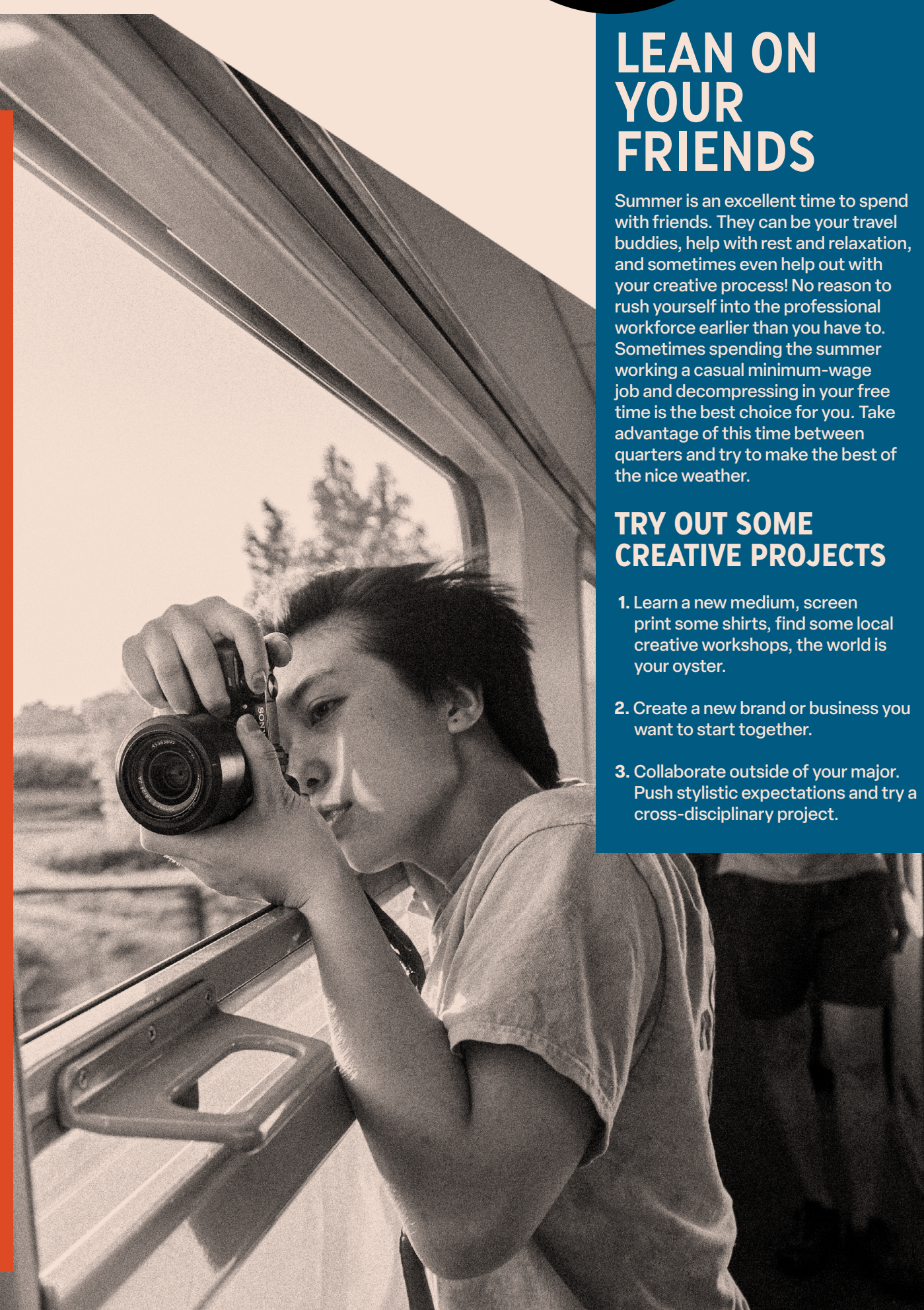
of those who pursued alternative ways to spend their summer tried applying to some internships first.

Everything will be okay if you choose to pivot away from pursuing a design internship. Plans change, life happens, applications are a lot of mental labor that you may not have the energy to put in the full effort you would like to. There are many factors that go into why someone chooses to what to do with their summer.

Sometimes choosing an internship can be a privileged decision as some opportunities are expensive to pursue. You might want to maintain the current job you are working and not risk the stability you already have for an internship that is more of a wildcard.

The pressure to get an internship can be a lot, but it's really not for everyone. There are so many ways you can make the most of your summer without working as an intern. Explore how other design students spent their summer!

WE PROMISE THAT INTERNSHIPS AREN'T THE END-ALL BE-ALL.



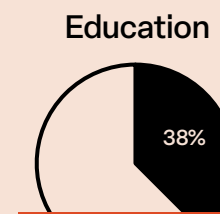
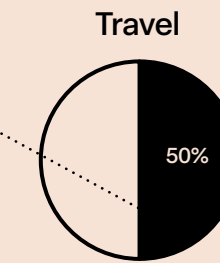
WHAT ACTUALLY ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

According to our survey, every student who pursued an alternate experience pursued two or more of the options on the charts below. Not all options are created equal! Consider choosing options from these different categories for a more well-rounded summer.

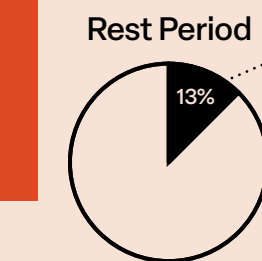
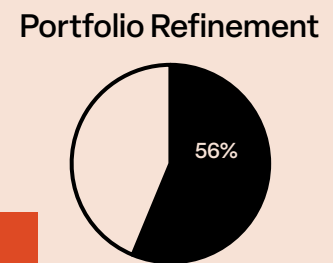
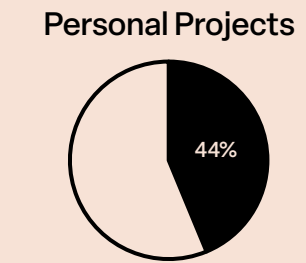
■ = Percentage of people who pursued the specific alternate

50% of students chose to travel at some point during their summer. You can learn a lot about design by seeing it in the real world.

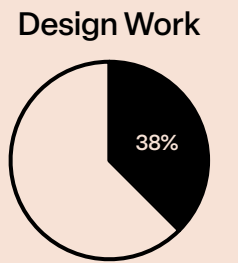
PROBABLY COSTS A LOT OF MONEY



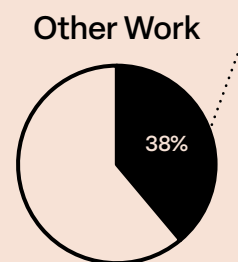
MAYBE COSTS SOME MONEY



YOU BETTER BE MAKING MONEY



13% of people treated their summer as a rest period and 38% were employed in a non-design related job. It can be nice taking some time away from design to come back to the school year rejuvenated!



WHAT MIGHT BE YOUR BACKUP PLAN? HAVE YOU ASKED YOURSELF IF YOU EVEN WANT AN INTERNSHIP?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

56% of students spent time improving their portfolio. Have your supporters look over your work during this valuable spare time.

Did you know? Students can build portfolio websites for free on a page called cargo.site.

NEED SOME INSPIRATION?

We chatted with a Creative Director at Apple and noted 6 things they recommend to prepare for a career in design. Check things off the list this summer!

MAKE STUFF

Don't wait for an internship and don't wait for someone to give you a project to do. Start making now, get the mileage in. Get started on your 10,000 hours.

Make a zine. Take some photos. Write some words. Design some layouts. Print it all out. It doesn't have to be perfect. Don't stop at just one. Make a few of them. After a while you'll see what kind of design work you like to make.

WORK ON YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY

Read some books and do some of the exercises.

Put the two together. Practice putting photography with type. (If you like drawing more than photograph then draw more).

STUDY, STUDY, STUDY

Study anything graphic design: Image making, films, photography. In order to make good work you have to train your eye. You gotta figure out what you are into.

ASK: WHO AM I LOOKING AT?

Jot down 3-5 design influences. Things you are looking at that show designs you like currently and are into. Who / what are you inspire you? And you would like to make work that is similar to them? It can be anything. Artists, designers, studios, portfolios, posters, etc.

What photographer do I like? Make a list of 3-5 photographers. Who are you looking at? What photographers inspires you? What type of photography interests you? Portraits? Tabletop? Photo journalism?

WORK ON YOUR TYPOGRAPHY

If you want to be a successful designer you need to practice how to work with typography.

TAKE YOUR TIME

Don't rush. Get to know yourself and what you like to make.

**NO INTERNSHIP
≠
UNPRODUCTIVE
SUMMER**

TAKE IT FROM ME!

While family and friends may be great resources to help take on the workload, your best source for advice is probably designers themselves. Connecting with peers, upperclassmen, and alumni is a great way to avoid common mistakes made during this process. Luckily for you, we've already asked them for their advice!



WHAT STUDENTS WISH THEY KNEW:

48%

of students wished they had prioritized networking and connections over job boards.

14%

said they wished they had been more intentional with the way they applied.

12%

wished they had tried more cold calls and emails.

10%

mentioned they wished they had started earlier.

8%

said they wished they had applied to more internships.

8%

of students said they wouldn't change anything.

"Start early, apply often, and don't set expectations too high."

"In the future I would spend more time networking and talking with professionals to find jobs, rather than spending hours on LinkedIn and other job boards."

"I have heard from other companies to try cold calling/ emailing. Many companies still don't know the value of design so there are great opportunities when reaching out first."

"I would only apply to places I think I would truly be happy working at. There were a few places I applied/interviewed only to realize that I wouldn't actually enjoy the work."

"I now know that I have to apply to as many jobs as possible."

ADVICE FROM THE PROS

WHAT DESIGNERS WANT YOU TO KNOW:

1. "Get out of studio, spend some time with your friends who aren't becoming designers. Not only will you have more fun, but they're your future clients."
MyerHarrell / Weber Thompson Architects
2. "Find connections that don't feel forced. The ones based on genuine friendship and respect are the easiest to make, and yet most powerful tools for moving forward in your career."
Brett MacFadden / MacFadden & Thorpe
3. "Be flexible. Most people don't end up doing what they thought they would."
Geoff Briggs / I and I Design
4. "It's a long-distance run not a sprint."
Jan Wilker / karlssonwilker
5. "Seattleites: Remember you live in a passive-aggressive city. Ignore them, and listen to your heart!"
Paul Byron Crane / Whole Systems Design

