

STUDENT OVERVIEW

MBA INTERNSHIPS AT PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY

The Value of Hiring MBA Interns

Employers are informed that there are real benefits to hiring you for their internship programs; these benefits include:

- MBA Internships offer a short-term and cost-effective way for companies to identify and train motivated students to fill immediate needs, as well as create a pipeline of talent for their future workforce.
- Our MBA interns will immediately make productive contributions to special projects, research or primary business functions.
- Companies are able to assess each student's "fit" with their organization and receive a preview of the student's ability.
- Employers can seamlessly convert our MBA interns to full-time employees who can be immediately productive, thus their cost-per-hire is significantly decreased.
- Companies enhance recruitment and retention outcomes; hence, making direct impacts and improvements to their "bottom line."
- New ideas and fresh insights are brought to the company.

MBA Internship Components: What You Should Be Expecting from an Employer

As an MBA intern, you should be seeking meaningful, productive and challenging work with the opportunity to interact with and work alongside industry experts. This approach ultimately benefits you from both an educational and employment standpoint.

Unlike some undergraduate-level student internships, the roles and responsibilities for the MBA internship should be similar to those you would expect to fulfill as a full-time employee. MBA interns should receive a comprehensive experience which includes: opportunities to be mentored by a professional in your respective field or discipline, an extensive view into the company's business units and how executives of the company are growing the business, and a deep involvement in key strategic decisions and projects. With this, you should expect to work on a single project or on a series of projects that will contribute to the business. The latter offers variety and introduces you to more of the workings of the business. Single projects, however, have the potential to produce more satisfying results for both you and the company. If an internship site provides you with one core project, you should look to have that project incorporate interaction with as many departments and staff members as possible.

Listed below are some sample project descriptions that might be used as a reference while discussing with an employer your expectations of MBA-level assignments and projects to be completed during your internship:

- Assess, create and forecast new market opportunities for the organization's research projects and business development; evaluate market landscape to predict consumer behavior and trends and provide recommendations on program development and product differentiation strategies.
- Budget, forecast and develop reporting and financial modeling for key initiatives within specific business units.
- Develop a marketing strategy targeted at increasing the company's market share of the organization's niche products/services; market study and ensuing recommendations will include research on global customer needs and required product/service attributes, cost targets and market segmentation.

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Similar to undergraduate-level internships, MBA internships are intended to be a professional learning experience, with each position offering you the opportunity to apply skills and concepts you are learning in your curriculum, while developing the skills necessary to be a successful professional in the field.

In your internship, you should be aiming to develop and/or sharpen key professional skills necessary to be considered a competent full-time professional in your particular field or industry; at the same time, your employer will have 12 weeks to “interview” you as a potential full-time MBA hire.

Academic Credit Eligibility Requirements

As a part of your MBA curriculum, you are given the opportunity to earn academic credit for your internship(s). As part of this, you are registered for a related course, are required to complete graded assignments in relationship to your work with the internship site and are advised by faculty during your work term.

You are expected to work between 12-20 hours per week during the 12-week semester. Full-time internship students are required to work 35 hours or more per week.

In speaking with potential internship sites, it is important that you review the role that the employer will play as it relates to the internship course as well. Listed below are the employer-related activities for Philadelphia University’s internship program for students earning academic credit, highlighting the level of involvement requested of the internship site as part of your experience:

- At the beginning of the internship semester, you are expected to develop “Learning Objectives,” or goals, for the internship period, and must complete the assignment in collaboration with your internship supervisor.
- At the middle of the semester, if schedules permit, your Faculty Internship Advisor may be in contact to arrange a brief site visit with your internship supervisor.
- And finally, at the end of the term, an evaluation is sent to the supervisor to evaluate your performance with the company during the internship; the evaluation then becomes part of your grade for the internship course.

Internship Search Timeline

You have the opportunity complete internships throughout your year in the MBA program. It is expected that you begin interning during the summer prior to entering your MBA program, especially since many of the structured, 10-12-week internship programs occur during the summer. These internships are extremely beneficial to you and your professional development because you can commit more of your time to interning; you also typically have the opportunity to learn more, gain more exposure and networking opportunities, and can contribute to an organization to a greater degree. To assist you in your internship search plans, **you should, ideally, begin searching for an internship during the fall of your senior year as an undergraduate.** This is when most of the larger companies, with well-developed and structured MBA internship programs are recruiting their summer intern pool.

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Additional Points to Consider When Researching Internships

Employers, faculty, and students consistently provide us with valuable information related to what makes an MBA internship experience great for them. As you refine your internship search, consider looking towards companies that incorporate many of these best internship practices into their internship programs (as outlined by the National Association of College and Employers):

- Provide MBA interns with real world projects and challenging work assignments.
- Hold orientation and training sessions for MBA interns to acclimate them to the company's culture, history, strategic plans and overall business.
- Encourage team involvement and collaboration with individuals at all levels within the organization.
- Select an industry professional or executive to directly supervise MBA interns.
- Provide interns with an employee handbook.
- Bring in speakers from your company's executive ranks.
- Conduct focus groups/surveys to measure and evaluate your internship program for MBA students.
- Provide MBA interns' the opportunity to showcase their projects, contributions and recommendations through formal presentations or expos.
- Evaluate your intern and provide them with constructive professional feedback.
- Invite Career Center staff and faculty to visit interns on-site.
- Conduct exit interviews.
- Provide housing, relocation, or financial compensation where applicable.

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