

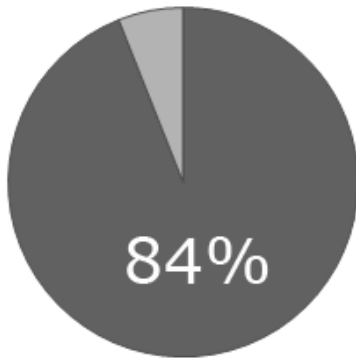
# Obtaining Career-Related Experience

Having Career-Related Experience (CRE) especially in the form of an internship is a very important part of your Hamilton education. CRE will enable you to:

- Gain exposure to an industry and help you decide what career field to pursue
- Develop job-specific skills that you can put on your resume
- Apply your academic knowledge learned in the classroom to a work setting
- Go through the application process and learn how to market yourself to an employer
- Increase your awareness of employment and/or graduate school options
- Develop professional networking contacts
- Be more competitive for a job or graduate school



## Some statistics to keep in mind...



Nationwide, **84%** of all college seniors have completed at least one internship by graduation and **53%** have participated in two or more internship programs before they graduated.

*Vault Inc. Internship Survey*

**94%** of employers surveyed indicated that they would hire the graduate with related job experience over the one without...

*National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE) Job Outlook Survey*

Many employers offer their summer interns full-time jobs -- in a recent survey employers reported that approximately **one-third** of all their new college hires come from their own internship program.

*National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE) Job Outlook Survey*

New full-time hires with internship experience are usually paid more than new hires without career-related experience.

*NACE Experiential Education Survey*

# Obtaining an Internship



Obtaining an internship can require a significant amount of your time. But, given how important an internship experience is, consider it an investment in your future! To help you with this process, we have outlined below some next steps.

Where applicable, we have identified resources underneath each task to assist you. Many of these resources may be found on our web site at @ <http://www.hamilton.edu/college/career/experience/>. In addition, Career Center counselors are able to help you with each step of this process.

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## Initial Steps

- Identify a career field you would like to explore.**
  - *What Can I Do with a Major in...* @ <http://www.spotlightoncareers.org/majors/>
  - *FOCUS* @ [my.hamilton.edu/college/career/assess.html](http://my.hamilton.edu/college/career/assess.html) generates a profile of your interests, skills, values, personality, and educational preferences. It then enables you to explore careers that match your profile.
- Write a draft of your resume.**
  - Our *Resume Guide* @ [www.hamilton.edu/college/career/Guides/Resume.pdf](http://www.hamilton.edu/college/career/Guides/Resume.pdf) is intended to help you construct the first draft of your resume.
  - *Resume Builder on HamNET* @ <https://hamilton-csm.symlicity.com/students/index.php?ss=1&rbmode=list&s=resume> is a comprehensive, web-based application for you to create, present, and manage your resume.
  - Have your draft reviewed by a Peer Counselor at the Career Center.
- Complete the *Assessing Your Level of Competitiveness for an Internship* form in this packet.**  
The results will help you identify the type of internship you are likely to be competitive for.
- Consider geographic and transportation issues.**
  - Where will you live? With family or friends? Will you need an apartment?
  - How will you get to and from work?
  - Will you have access to a car or public transportation?
- Consider your financial situation.**
  - Do you need to have a paid internship or would you be willing to volunteer (keep in mind that the majority of internships are non-paid)?
  - Have you considered alternative funding? (i.e., taking a part-time paid job or applying for *Summer Internship Funding* @ [www.hamilton.edu/college/career/experience/sif/](http://www.hamilton.edu/college/career/experience/sif/))



## Develop a prospect list of 12-15 organizations and/or opportunities

Cortland Standard  
Colgate Maroon-News  
Finger Lakes Times  
Independent Mirror  
Marcellus Observer  
Mid-York Weekly  
Orange Source  
Seneca Review  
Skaneateles Press  
Syracuse New Times  
The Citizen  
The Daily Orange  
The Post-Standard  
The Valley News  
The Waterville Times  
Urban CNY

- Start by asking family, friends of family, acquaintances, Hamilton faculty and/or alumni** if they know of organizations and/or opportunities that meet your criteria. Approximately 60% of Hamilton students find their initial Career-Related Experience through personal contacts.
- Use on-line resources** (i.e., **CareerSearch**, Google, Chamber of Commerce) to identify organizations in your field and geographic location of interest. Refer to ***How to Use CareerSearch*** in this packet.
- Visit the websites** of those organizations and/or contact them (call or email) to inquire about Career Related Experience/internships. Please refer to ***Using a Prospect List*** diagram in this packet.
- Determine whether there are on-line internship listings** that will be of help to you. Check resources @ [my.hamilton.edu/college/career/experience/listings.html](http://my.hamilton.edu/college/career/experience/listings.html)

## Apply

- Research each organization** on your list; visit organization's web site, talk and/or meet with staff working at the organization.
- Based on your research, **write a cover letter** that is tailored to each specific internship employer/opportunity. See samples of ***cover letters*** in this packet.
- Make an appointment** to have a Peer Counselor or Career Counselor review your application materials.
- Send required application materials *well in advance* of deadlines.**



## Follow-up



- When possible, **contact each organization** to make sure your materials have been received and to request an in-person or phone interview.
- Prepare for your internship interview by viewing the interviewing page on the Career Center web site: <https://my.hamilton.edu/careercenter/guides/interview/home>

# Obtaining an Internship:

## Assessing Your Level of Competitiveness for an Internship

Assess your past experience using charts below to get an idea of the type of internship for which you might be competitive.

**(1) Give yourself one point for each statement that is true for you:**


- I have a decent **understanding** of my career field of interest
- I have taken **academic courses** specifically related to my career interests
- I will be a **junior** at the time I apply for an internship
- I have a cumulative **GPA** of 88 (3.3) or higher
- I been involved in **co-curricular activities** related to my career interests
- I have **previous work experience** in my field of interest
- I have family or personal **contacts** at internship sites of interest to me

**(2) Total your points and locate your “level” in the key below:**

**KEY**  
*The following point configurations are estimates to give you a rough idea of your competitiveness.*

6 – 7 points = competitive for **national** internship  
 4 – 5 points = competitive for **regional** internship  
 0 – 3 points = competitive for **local** internship

**(3) Consider sample internships based on your level of competitiveness**

|   |                 |  |  |  |
|---|-----------------|--|--|--|
|  | <b>NATIONAL</b> | <b>United Nations</b>                                | <b>Goldman Sachs</b>                       | <b>CNN</b>                                 |
|   | <b>REGIONAL</b> | <b>International Rescue Committee<br/>Boston, MA</b> | <b>Key Bank<br/>Syracuse, NY</b>           | <b>WFSB-TV<br/>Hartford, CT</b>            |
|   | <b>LOCAL</b>    | <b>Mohawk Valley<br/>Refugee Center</b>              | <b>Access Credit Union<br/>Clinton, NY</b> | <b>Middletown Press<br/>Middletown, CT</b> |

**CareerSearch** is an on-line, searchable database of over 4 million organizations along with contact names, addresses, phone numbers, and background information. This database can be searched by industry (i.e., environmental consulting), location (i.e., Hartford, CT), and/or keyword (i.e., hydrogeology). CareerSearch can be an invaluable tool in helping you identify organizations with potential internship or full-time job opportunities; however, it does not provide you with a list of jobs.

Because of its size and comprehensiveness, it can be slightly confusing for beginners. The more you know about the type of organization(s) you are looking to intern/work at, the more this resource will be useful to you. Ideally, as you begin your search, you will have in mind a career field/industry (or two) as well as a geographic location.

If you have questions about using CareerSearch, please meet with a career counselor to make sure that you are getting the information you seek.

### GETTING STARTED & SELECTING CRITERIA

1. Go to > Hamilton College Career Center home page > Site Map > [CareerSearch](#)
2. Click > [Log in now](#), under **RETURNING USERS**
3. Then click [Search](#).
4. You will see a list of **Industry** areas. You can select a broad [industry](#)/career field or narrow your choice by clicking on an industry area to see a list of *subcategories*. When you have narrowed your search, select that area by clicking in the circle on the left.
5. Click **Locations** at the top of the page to add location criteria to your search. The process for narrowing down and selecting a location is the same as what you did in the [industry](#) area. You can also search **by ZIP Code Radius** or **by Metro area**.
6. In addition, you may choose to include a keyword in your search criteria. If so, click on **KeyWords** and enter one or more keywords in the *Description* field to further narrow your search. The system will search the description of each organization for the word(s) entered.
7. Click **Search Summary** at the top of the page to see the number of companies that match your criteria (industry, location and/or keywords). To see the full list of companies, click **Review Results**. By clicking on the name of the individual companies, you see more detailed information for each organization. You also have the option of downloading or saving your results by using the **View/Print Reports** &/or **Save Results** options at the top of the page.
8. Click **New Search** in the upper right corner of the screen to start over.

### SAMPLE SEARCH

**Industry** > Consultants  
**Subcategory** > Environment, Geology, and Land Use  
**Location** > Connecticut > Hartford  
**KeyWords** > Hydrogeology  
**Results** > Abacus Environmental  
Cambridge Analytics  
Consulting Environmental Engineers  
Etc.

### FOLLOW-UP

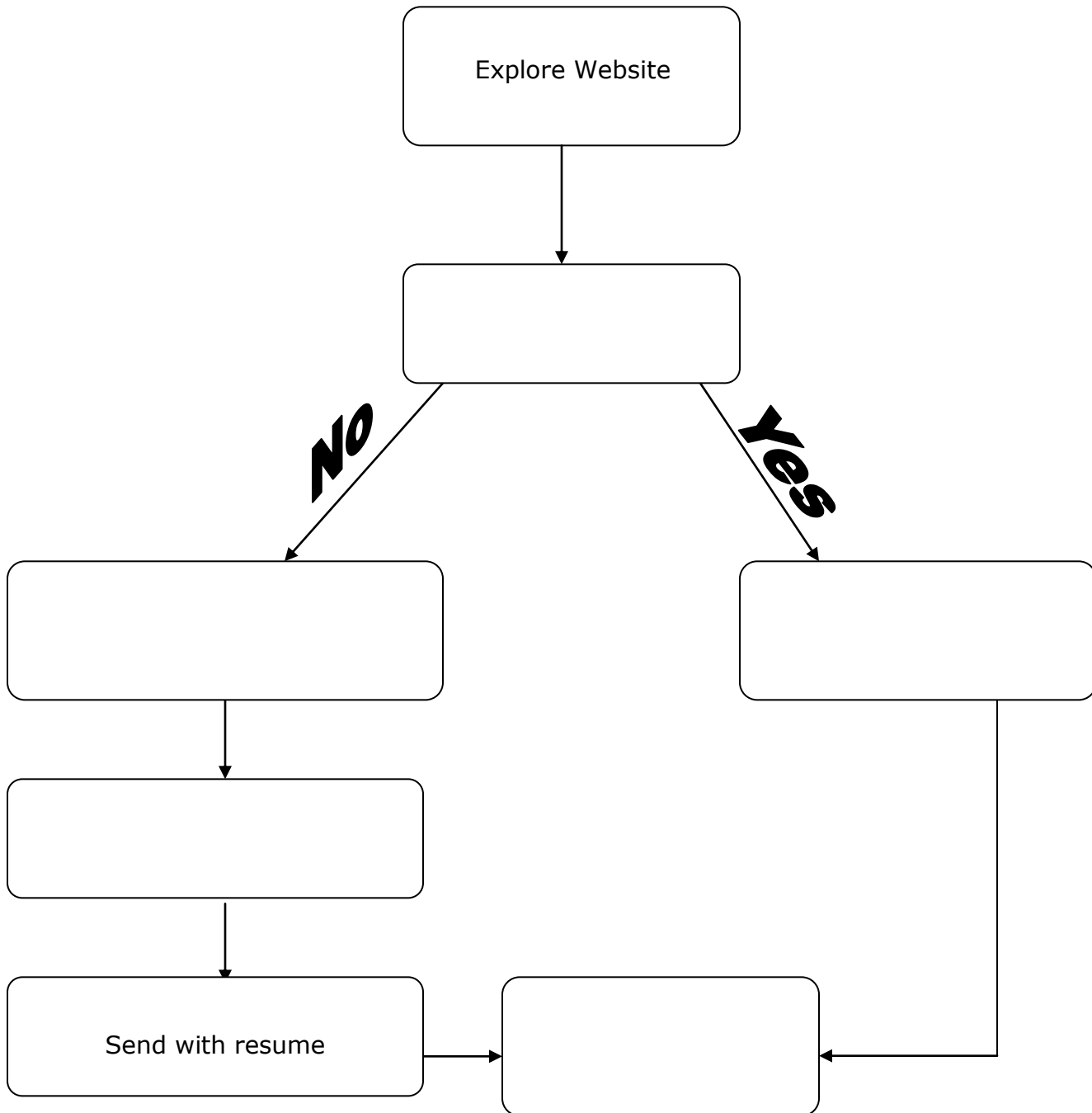
Once you have generated a prospect list, determine whether the organizations have internship or full-time opportunities by:

- visiting their web site,
- sending an exploratory letter or e-mail, and/or
- calling the department of human resources at the respective organization

# Obtaining an Internship: Using your Prospect List

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The flow-chart below diagrams various options for following up with organizations on your prospect list. For each organization on your list, see if they have a website. Then:



# Obtaining CRE:

Sample exploratory email, inquiring about a potential internship

To: mpeterson@marbleheadmuseum.org  
From: jkirkland@hamilton.edu.  
Subject: Internship at Marblehead Museum  
Cc:  
Bc:  
Attached: M:\J\_Kirkland\_resume.doc

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Dear Ms. Peterson:

I am a college student whose home town is Manchester-by-the-Sea, approximately 15 minutes from the Marblehead Museum & Historical Society. At Hamilton College I am studying art history and am very interested in exploring the possibility of a volunteer internship at your museum this summer.

My interest in art museums began in high school with frequent trips to the Boston MFA and has been confirmed through the recent Art History courses I have taken. This summer I would like to learn more about how an art museum functions, as well as contribute the research, writing and organizational skills I have developed through my academics and volunteer work at Hamilton's Emerson Art Gallery. To provide you with further information about my academic and extra-curricular activities at Hamilton, I have attached a copy of my resume.

I plan to return home to the North Shore for spring break, March 12 - 23, and am very interested in speaking with you about a possible summer opportunity. In the hope of arranging a convenient time to meet with you, I will call you within the next two weeks. In the meantime, I can be reached at 315.859.0000 or by email jkirkland@hamilton.edu. I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Julie Kirkland

# Obtaining CRE:

## Sample internship application letter

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Hamilton College, Box 123  
198 College Hill Road  
Clinton, NY 13323

February 2, 2011

Mr. David Hudson  
Director-Environmental Services  
Zephyr Environmental Industries  
342 Industry Way  
Baltimore, MD 24590

Dear Mr. Hudson:

As a sophomore chemistry major at Hamilton College, I have become particularly interested in atmospheric chemistry as it pertains to the environmental field. I was especially intrigued by a presentation made by Ms. Sally Gold, an engineer from Zephyr who spoke to my class last semester about some of the advances your company has made recently in reducing industrial pollutants. As a result, I would like to work at Zephyr Environmental Industries this summer.

As you will note from my enclosed resume, I have a number of qualifications for a possible internship:

- three courses in chemistry with a cumulative GPA of 3.56;
- summer research experience analyzing air quality;
- an excellent work ethic with a strong desire to protect our environment;
- significant involvement in campus clubs and organizations, including Hamilton; Environmental Action Committee and Biology Matters.

I will call you next week to confirm that you have received these materials and to talk further about an internship or other summer opportunities with Zephyr Environmental Industries. Once again, I am very enthusiastic about these possibilities and look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Sharon Mayer

Enclosure: resume