



# NEX T Training Session

Northwestern Career Advancement  
Northwestern Alumni Association

Northwestern

# Definition and Expectations

- What is an Externship?
  - Provides you the opportunity to interact/observe a professional in a career you are interested in pursuing.
- How long is an Externship?
  - Typically a **half day** in length, though can be negotiated between you and your alumni host.
- What can I expect from an Externship?
  - To gain experience and knowledge through observing and speaking with the host employer in their **virtual** work environment.



# Learning Outcomes for NEXT

By participating in NEXT you will be able to...

1. List the typical duties associated with the job of the alumni host you shadow
2. Describe the skills/qualities needed to be successful in the job you observed
3. Articulate the advantages and disadvantages of pursuing a career in the industry you learned about through shadowing in light of your personal skills, interests, and goals

# Logistics

## **By now you should:**

- Be matched with an alumni host

## **By Monday, January 11:**

- Made contact with your alumni host

## **By the week of January 25:**

- Scheduled your virtual externship date(s)

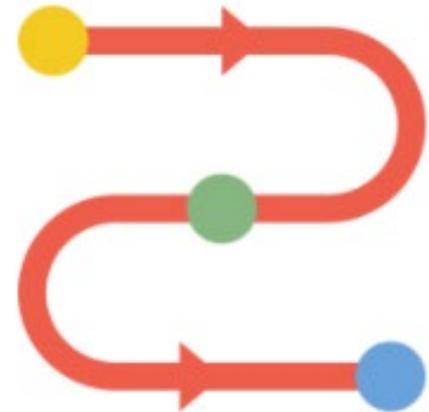
## **By the week of March 29:**

- Completed your virtual externship

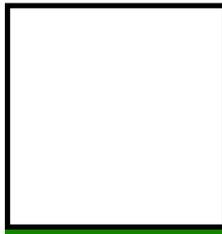


# Checking Off Milestones

- Throughout the NEXT experience students will need to check off milestones to show their progress toward completing the experience
  - Contacted Externship Host
  - Scheduled Externship Day
  - Completed Externship Day
- Survey to follow later on



# Accessing Milestones



Profile strength: 100%  
My Profile / Account

Externship Student

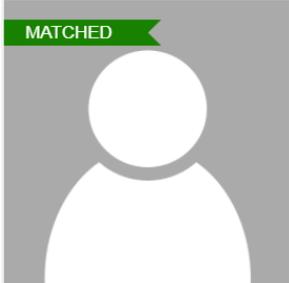
- Home
- Past Connections
- Calendar
- Documents

Interested in joining the Northwestern Network Mentorship Program? You can do so today!

[Sign up for the Mentorship Program](#)

## Current Connections

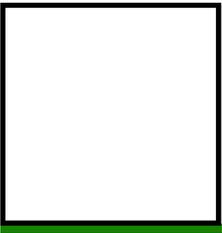
**MATCHED**



**[Red box around name]**  
Externship Host

[Send message](#)

Click on alumni host name



[Redacted]

Externship Host

[Redacted]

Profile strength: 100%  
My Profile / Account

[Redacted]  
Externship Student

- Home
- Past Connections
- Calendar
- Documents

You are currently matched in a mentoring relationship with [Redacted]

Messages Interactions Scheduler Documents **Milestones** Goals

Message to [Redacted]

Click on Milestones

Check off milestones as you complete them

Messages Interactions Scheduler Documents **Milestones** Goals

### Shared Milestones

Click on a circle to check off a completed milestone.

- Contacted Externship Host**  
All students should contact their host to begin planning for their externship day (required).
- Scheduled Externship Day**  
All students should note that their externship day has been scheduled (required).
- Completed Externship Day**  
All students should indicate that their externship has been completed (required).

# Sample introductory email

- Recommended to reach out to the alumni host's email if listed, otherwise in platform messaging
  - Follow up after a few days if you haven't heard back
- Thank alumni for choosing you
- Class year, major, school
- 1-3 sentences about why you are interested in their company/career
- Ask about logistics:
  - Ask what dates the alumni would like to host you (remember it's according to *their* schedule)

# Before Externship

- Questions to ask alumni host prior to day:
  - What is the appropriate attire if attending virtual meetings?
  - Agenda or schedule for the day
  - Logistics to keep in mind such as confirming which virtual platform will be used
- Things to look up on your own
  - Review host's profile and company on LinkedIn
  - Company mission and goals



# Things to think about ahead of time

- Having a notepad and pen nearby to take notes
- Resume for review (optional)
- Make sure your phone and other devices are on silent so that notifications are not disrupting the session
- Plans for your break time to decompress from the virtual environment



# Dress Code

- Even though you are not interviewing, you are still creating an impression on your host and their organization even in the virtual environment
- If the attire is business professional and you do not own a suit, inquire as to the possibility of wearing a variation or what is needed depending on the agenda of the externship day



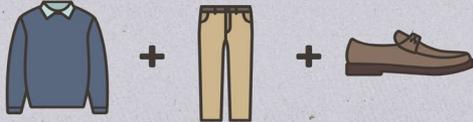
# Business Casual vs. Business Professional

*What to Wear When*  
Business Casual vs. Business Professional

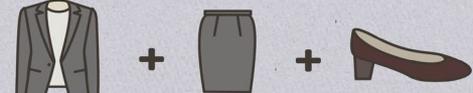
**Business Casual**



+ + +



**Business Professional**



+ + +



**Northwestern | CAREER ADVANCEMENT**

**= NCA Career Fair**  
NCA's employer-hosted events

**= Employer Interviews**

\*More information on [NCA's website](#)

# How to Prepare for Your Externship

- Learn about the industry and the company prior to your scheduled day:
  - Industry:
    - What do people do in this industry?
    - What are its functional areas?
    - What kind of skill sets are expected?
    - What are the current trends for this industry?
  - Company:
    - What is their mission/purpose for existence?
    - What are their philosophies and core values?
    - What is their reputation with clientele/customers?
    - Has the company been in the news lately?

# Resources for Research

- **The Company Website:** (look under “PR Releases, about us, media”, etc. for recent news about the organization)
- LinkedIn
- Glassdoor
- [Vault](#)



# Create a Plan

- Set goals and expectations with your alumni host
- What questions do you want to have answered by the time you finish the day?
- Ideas on how to use your time:
  - Request a virtual tour if alum is on site
  - Sit in on a meeting
  - Watch your Host “in action”
  - Meet with other individuals
  - Ask your host to review your resume

# Sample Externship Day

The following is a sample agenda:

**Time:**

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM

11:30 AM – 11:45 AM

**Name/Location:**

Welcome and virtual walking tour of organization

Get to know each other and chat about career goals & NU

BREAK

Join host's team meeting to learn about current projects

Resume review, industry trends, and hiring

Additional questions and wrap up

# Potential Questions to Ask

Sample Goals	Sample Questions
<b>To explore career fit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How did you decide on this career?</li><li>• How does this career fit your interests, values, and skills?</li><li>• What are your main duties?</li><li>• What skills are most important for success?</li><li>• What kind of person does well in this industry/company?</li></ul>
<b>To prepare for a career in a specific industry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How did your time at NU (inside and outside the classroom) prepare you for this field?</li><li>• What are some challenges to working in this industry?</li><li>• What experiences should I engage in to be better prepared for this industry?</li><li>• How is this field/industry changing?</li></ul>
<b>To learn about a specific company</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It seems that every organization has its own personality. How would you characterize yours?</li><li>• What do you like most/least about working for this company?</li></ul>
<b>To learn internship/job strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are methods and resources for getting internships/jobs in this industry/company?</li><li>• What resources would you recommend I use to find an internship/job in this industry?</li><li>• Who else would you recommend I talk with about employment in this industry/company?</li></ul>

# Networking- What is it?

- Established professional or personal connections with others
  - To develop a mutual support system
  - To tap into a hidden employment market
  - To interact with people who are members of your target field
  - To explore career options
  - To market yourself to potential employers



# Do's and Don'ts of Networking

## **Do:**

- Listen and take notes (have something to take notes on; laptop, notebook, etc.)
- Guide the flow of conversation by using your goals and prepared questions
- Ask for referrals to other people in the field

## **Don't:**

- Ask for a job or internship
- Engage in negative conversations, gossip, or share unrelated information
- Act uninterested. Be aware of nonverbal behavior.
- Be afraid to ask questions

# Develop Your Story

## Professional Story-

Offers information that allows someone to connect with you over a shared interest or experience. Be prepared to talk about yourself by developing a 30 second story



## How to do it:

- Create a brief introduction to who you are
  - Offer a few key facts designed to generate a conversation allowing someone to get to know you.
- Highlight strengths
  - Examples of what you enjoy or have become good at (from student activities, class, past or current internships)
- What have you learned from self-evaluation

# During the Externship

- Be enthusiastic, polite, inquisitive, and energetic
- Take notes:
  - Write down questions you have as a result of your interactions
  - Think of what you want to add to your resume about this experience
  - Brainstorm ways to stay connected to your host based on the conversations you are having and things you can connect on after the externship
- Please avoid using your phone during the externship as you will be on video and want to stay engaged during the experience

# After Your Externship

- Be sure to check off that **all milestones** have been completed in the platform
- Be sure to **complete required survey**
- Be sure to get **contact information from others**: “Do you mind if I have your email in case I think of any more questions?”
- Follow up with a thank you email **within 48 hours!**
- Stay in touch with alumni host through LinkedIn, email, or phone
- Write down what you learned about the industry, job and/or company and how it fits (or doesn't) with your interests, values and skills
- Add your experience to your Resume:

## EXPERIENCE

NBC News, New York, NY March, 2021

*Extern*

- Shadowed Senior Producer to increase knowledge of national news show production
- Learned job functions and responsibilities of staff integral to production

# After your Externship

- Maintain your relationship with your new networking contact(s)
- Set up new contact meetings for additional informational interviews (using [LinkedIn](#) & [Our Northwestern](#))
- Connect with NCA for help with:
  - Further career exploration and self assessment
  - Resume/cover letter reviews
  - Internship and full-time job resources and search strategies
- Connect with NAA:
  - Join the Northwestern Network Mentorship Program
  - Register for Dinner with Twelve
  - Webinars and other events

# Alumni Quotes

When asked **What did you enjoy most about the externship program?** alumni replied:

“The chance to help out a fellow Wildcat. I also really appreciate that she spent a good deal of time researching so that she could ask great questions.”

“It was fantastic to interact with a student interested in my field and provide her as many ‘legs up’ as I could.”

“The opportunity to underscore the value of the NU alumni network to existing students.”

# Optional Social Media

- Use our #WhatsNEXTNU21 when mentioning your externship on social media
  - We would love to see the amazing connections that are being made between you and your alumni hosts
- Find NCA at @NUCareerAdvance and NAA at @NorthwesternAlumni on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and tag us!



# Other Important Information

- **It Can't Be Repeated Enough:**
  - You are representing Northwestern University during your externship
  - Remember to be appreciative of your host
  - If you have any questions, concerns, or issues that arise at any point, please contact us:  
[next.student@northwestern.edu](mailto:next.student@northwestern.edu)
  - After the externship, there is no future obligation of any kind, by either the alumni host or the student.

**Have fun!**