Career Services FAQ for Admitted Students

Q: I’m a career switcher. Can you tell me how likely it will be for me to land an internship in my new area of interest?

A: First off, you’re in good company! Each year, upwards of two-thirds of the incoming class comes to Chicago Booth because they want to switch into a new career field, and we see the vast majority of these students succeed at making that transition. Much of the early fall Career Services programming focuses on career exploration, where you’ll be able to hear from second-years and alums about their experiences working in particular industries and functions. We also work extensively on preparing you for how you’ll talk about your background and interests. These are important as they relate your future career goals, because being able to clearly and compellingly articulate your story is essential to a successful recruiting process. How drastic a change you want to make can also play into success rates – for example, are you looking to switch only your function, or are you planning on making an industry, function and geographical switch. Though it’s still possible to make a successful switch by making multiple changes, think about how big a change you are looking to make, and if your internship can be a step on the way to that end goal.

While we can’t predict how your internship search will play out – there are so many variables involved – we can confidently say that, year after year, we see many success stories of students who have made career switches by being very well-prepared for the internship recruitment process, which is what our programming aims to ensure.

Q: Can someone in Career Services review my resume this summer?

A: We cannot offer you a pre-fall resume review because we continue to work with our current students and prepare for a busy fall during the summer. Don’t worry though; there will be plenty of time in the fall to have your resume reviewed not just by a career coach, but also by our Career Advisors and other second-years. This summer, feel free to check out the Career Services section of the Chicago Booth Intranet for more information on our recommended resume structure. Around the middle of June, you’ll be able to access even more information about putting your Chicago Booth resume together through the Admitted Students website. Remember, this version is a first draft, and
you will have the opportunity to attend programs and have it reviewed many times over once you arrive. If you are using your current resume to apply for summer opportunities, that is okay – they will understand that this resume is pre-Booth!

Q: I’m interested in working abroad either for my internship or my full-time job. What sort of international job opportunities do you know about?

A: Booth Career Services truly has a global reach – in addition to all the US outreach we do, we also have a team member in London who covers employer relationships for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, a team member in Hong Kong who covers Asia, and a team member in our Chicago office who works with employers in Latin America and Canada. You can check the Employment Report to get a sense of where outside of the US our students have worked, and you’ll receive more information when you come to campus about conducting an international search.

Q: I’ve been hearing about pre-MBA internships. What’s your take on them?

A: While pre-MBA internships can provide valuable and relevant experience to the students who choose to do them each year, we encourage you to think through whether a summer work experience like this would be useful for your career goals. Many of the Career Management programs that you’ll attend in the fall are designed to help equip you for the MBA recruiting process, and without this preparation, you may not be fully able to navigate the nuances of the pre-MBA internship experience.

Additionally, we encourage you to think about how a pre-MBA internship could impact your career goals. For example, a pre-MBA internship may lead to an offer to return for the summer between your first and second year of school. While this can be exciting and may be the right choice for you, it also may be limiting if you wish to explore other opportunities. Many times, these early offers may force you to make an MBA summer internship decision before you would be able to participate in the first year internship recruiting process.

It may also cause challenges when recruiting for full-time roles. If you don’t receive a full-time offer from your MBA internship, or if you decide to change your career direction after your MBA internship is complete, recruiting for other full-time roles may be more difficult given your limited
involvement in networking and building relationships with firms that would otherwise have happened during your internship recruiting process.

Q: Outside of a pre-MBA internship, what are some other ways I could spend my summer preparing?

A: Other valuable ways to utilize your pre-Booth summer include taking time to reflect on your career goals, reaching out to your personal network to begin the career exploration process, and reading up on any potential areas of interest. Towards the middle of June, the Career Services summer preparation page on the Booth Admitted Students website will be made available to you. There, you’ll be able to find a ton of information – about your career exploration, research resources that will be available to you, and crafting your Booth resume. We’ll also give you information on taking CareerLeader, an online assessment of your career interests, motivators and skills that you’ll use during Career Services programming in the fall.

If you wish to explore more, you also have access to the Career Services section of the Chicago Booth Intranet. You can take a look around there to familiarize yourself with the various sections, and keep in mind that much of this content will be covered in greater depth during our fall programming. A good place to start over the summer is to look at the Career Advisor Best Practices, which are function specific guides to recruiting prepared by our second-year Career Advisors. We also recommend students have an updated LinkedIn profile, so if you don’t have one, or if yours hasn’t been updated in a while, taking the time this summer to update your sections, including education and prior work experience, could be helpful.

You can also begin to familiarize with some of the research tools available, including the Industry and Function research pages of the Career section of the Intranet. These will give you books and blogs where you can read to learn more. These will also mention information about databases. You’ll get information in early June about accessing the career guides Vault and WetFeet, which you can use to further your career exploration process this summer. You will receive instructions on how to access and use other databases when you matriculate to Booth in the fall – don’t worry, we’ll provide plenty of guidance on how to use these then!
We also encourage you to rest and relax this summer – the fall will be a whirlwind of classes, programs and recruiting activities, and making sure you’re both mentally and physically prepared for this is important!

Q: I’ve taken the time to consider it, and I think I’m interested in doing a pre-MBA internship. Will Career Services find one for me?

A: We recommend looking at the Admitted Students Website, where the pre-MBA programs, conferences and events we learn about have been and will continue to be posted throughout the spring and summer. If you are interested in something that hasn’t been posted, we encourage you to utilize the resources you have access to in order to find employment opportunities for yourself. Depending on the function and industry in which you’re interested, you may need to leverage your network to find opportunities. For this, we recommend using LinkedIn and thinking about who is in your own personal and professional network. You also have access to the Employment Report, where you can run searches on things like industry, function, company or geographical location to see where former Booth students have interned and secured full-time employment.

Once you arrive at Booth in the fall, you’ll get a lot of information about networking – from leveraging our databases to find contacts, to crafting compelling informational interview requests and having productive networking conversations, and even how to make the most of LinkedIn. In the meantime, if you choose to network this summer, make sure to do your research as best you can, and come prepared with some good questions and conversation topics.