

Successfully organizing the internship semester

A Handbook for Students at Nürtingen-Geislingen
University of Applied Sciences

Created by Martin Alber, January 2014

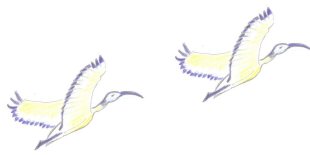


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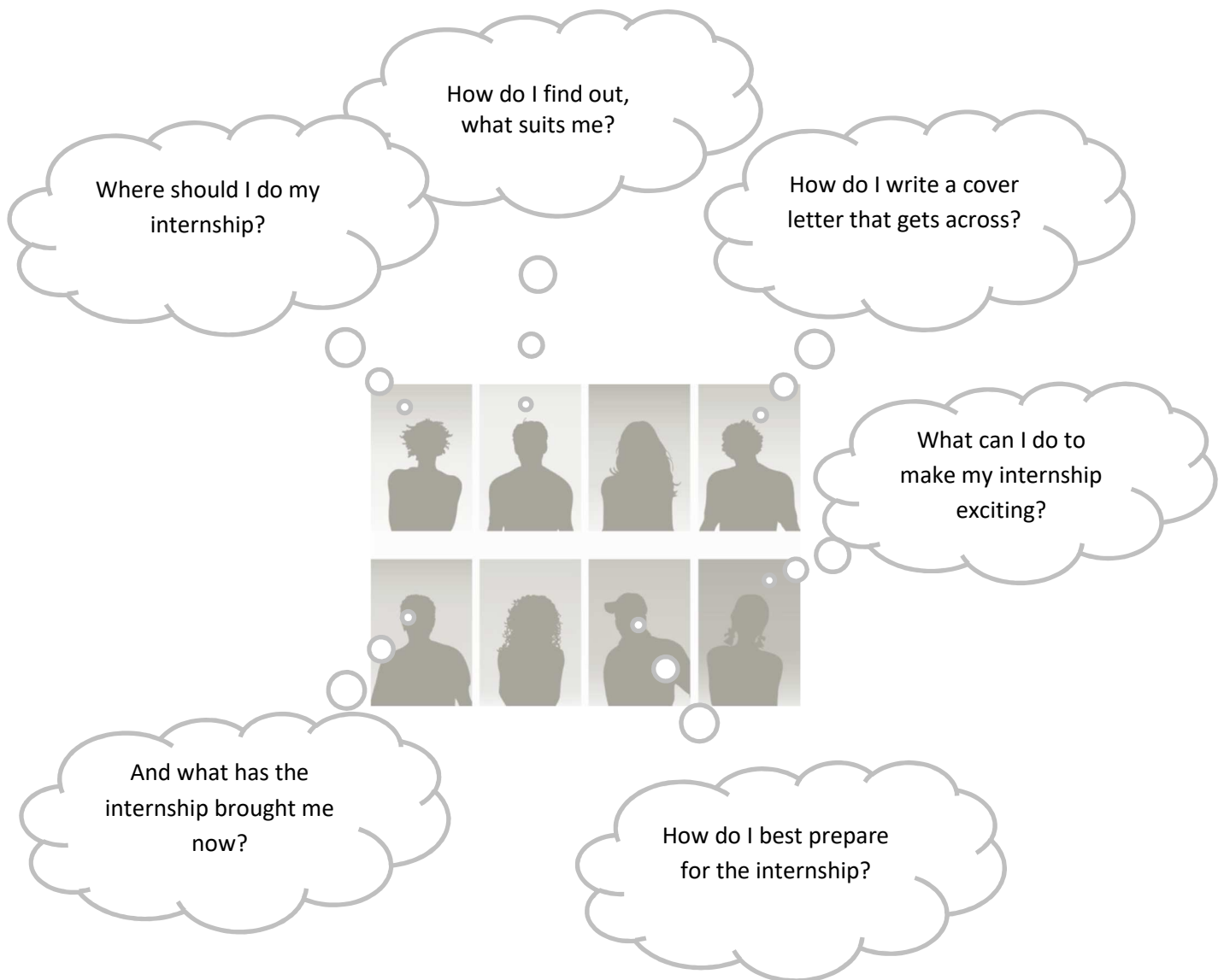
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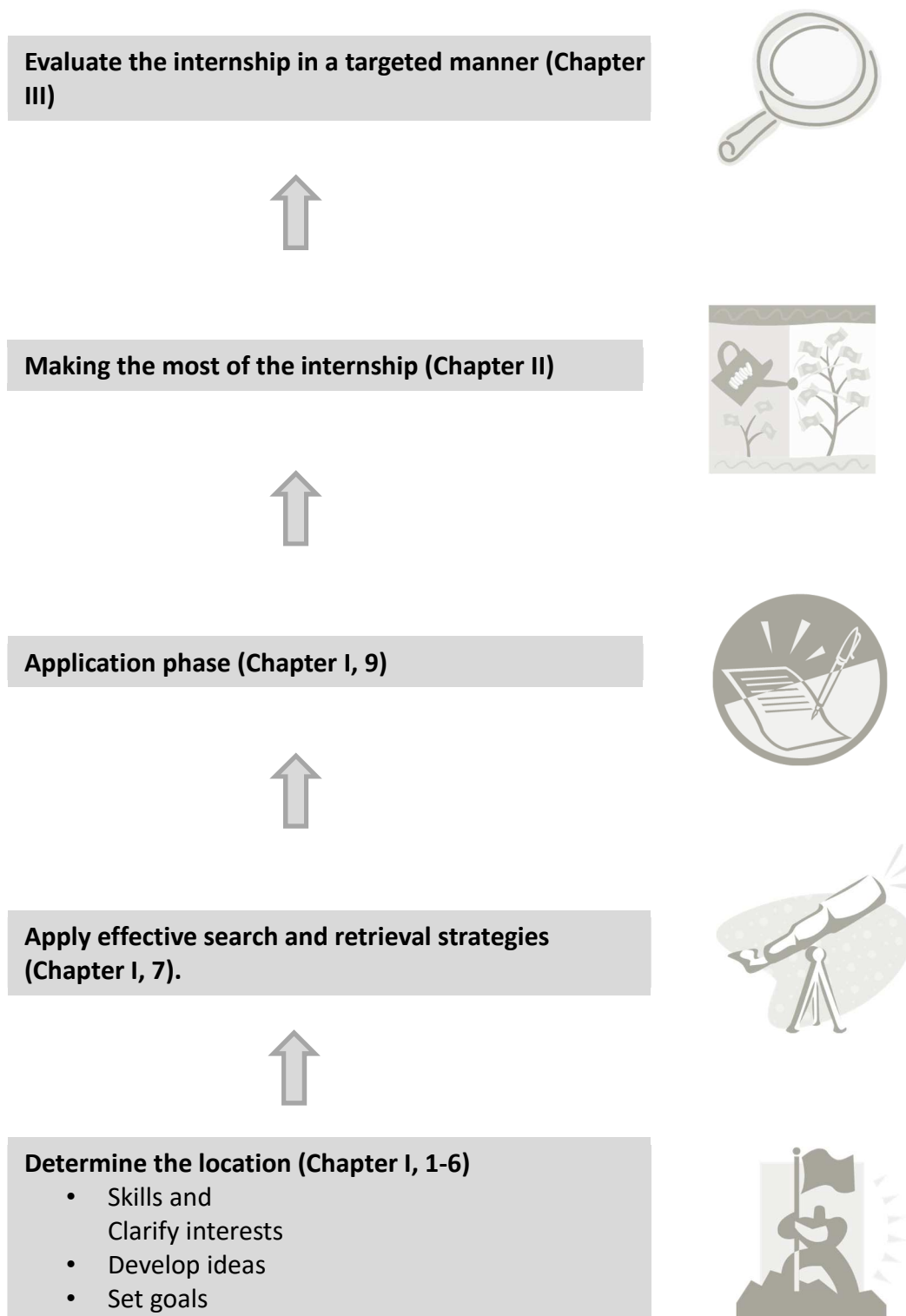
Introduction - How to use this manual

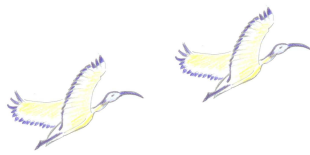


This handbook aims to support you in finding answers to these and similar questions. In doing so, it provides you with a range of materials that offer you suggestions for preparing, carrying out and following up your internship semester. In **Chapter I**, you have the opportunity to determine where you stand and to clarify for yourself what your most important skills, areas of interest, values and goals are. This will provide you with a good basis for finding the right internship position. In this chapter, you will also find information on the topic of job search and application. The subchapter "**Why job application guides - including this one - don't necessarily make your life easier**" is a real must-read. In **Chapter II**, you will find materials to help you get the most out of your internship and reflect on the learning processes you experience there. Finally, **Chapter III** provides you with templates for evaluating and following up on the internship semester and for defining the next steps for your further studies.



The **structure of this handbook** is based on the stages you will cover in relation to your internship semester. At a glance, these stages look like this:





Why does it make sense for you to prepare and follow up your internship semester in detail? Quite simply, your internship offers you a number of opportunities that are waiting to be seized. Because in an internship you can

- show what skills and strengths you have in practice
- discover what potential and talents you have within you
- Clarify your professional interests and goals
- Find answers to your questions about the focus of your studies

- Experience the fields of activity you are interested in in practice
- learn what makes companies tick
- find out what it's like in the industry you're interested in
- get to know a small, medium or large company and see if the corporate culture suits you

- Deepen theory knowledge
- Apply knowledge you have acquired in your studies in practice
- Further develop your personal and social skills
- Expand your expertise

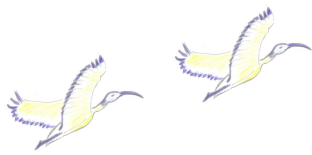
- Gain valuable work experience that is useful for starting a career
- Present yourself as a future junior employee
- make valuable contacts
- get first ideas for your bachelor thesis
- explore what career prospects and development opportunities are available to you.

In order to actually take advantage of this multitude of opportunities, it is helpful to actively address various aspects that this handbook addresses.

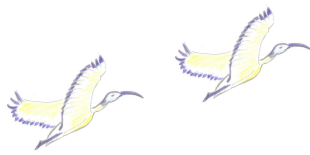
How can you work with this manual? Use the collection of materials along your questions. The point is not to work through as many materials as possible, but to select those that fit your questions. A possible way to start is to first work on the worksheet "Determining your location". Then it will quickly become clear where you still need clarification for your internship search. If you don't yet have an idea of which area of an internship suits you, it's a good idea to explore your skills and interests with one exercise each. This will give you a solid basis for developing suitable internship ideas. For reflecting on your learning processes in the internship, either the learning diary or working with the guiding questions presented is suitable. To specifically evaluate the experiences from your internship, an exercise from Chapter III is recommended.

We hope that the manual will provide you with a number of useful suggestions and information. In some cases, you may not find answers to your questions here or the information presented may not be sufficient. If this is the case, the relevant contact persons at your faculty and the IBIS advisors will be happy to provide you with advice.

We wish you all the best and much success for your internship!



I. Materials for the preparation of the internship



1 Worksheet: An overview of your location

Before you set out on your internship journey, it makes sense to conduct an assessment of where you stand. This will make it much easier for you to find an internship that suits you and your skills, interests, goals and what is important to you. To do this, fill out the chart. If you find that you can't formulate an answer at one point or another, work with the exercises in this chapter or use the counseling services offered by IBIS.

My location determination

My most important qualities are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What are my goals?
What do I want to learn?

I am particularly interested in the following topics:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Skills I like to use the most:

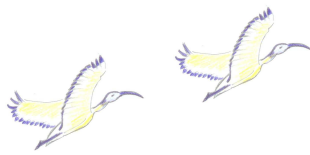
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

In which region do I want to do the internship?

What is important to me at work and in my life:

Where would I like to work?
In a corporate group or a smaller company? In which industry?

My preferred working conditions:



2 Do you know your abilities? (Location determination I)

Can you say off the top of your head what your six strongest skills are?

Yes? Congratulations! Because then you belong to a very manageable minority of perhaps five percent.

No? It doesn't matter, because - according to the estimate of career expert Richard Bolles (2012, p. 281) - even 95 percent of working people don't know their best skills.

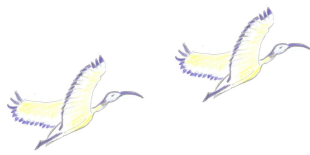
It is very useful for your internship search if you are clear about what your strongest skills are. Why?

- Your strongest skills will show you which fields of activity are a good fit for you. For example, whether you are at home in logistics, or rather in marketing or controlling. Or in another area. Your best skills tell you which area suits you and are therefore a guide for your internship search.
- It will be much easier for you to write a compelling cover letter if you know your strongest skills.
- Being able to name your best skills is very useful in job interviews. Because when you are asked where you see your strengths, you can score points with a meaningful answer.

If you have not yet clearly identified your most important skills, now - before your internship - is a good time to start looking for clues. One thing is certain: everyone has a set of strong skills. And everyone has a **unique** combination of skills. Below, we offer three methods for finding out your best skills in a relatively short time. Choose one method and be surprised at what skills emerge.



Every ability is transferable. That sounds banal. But it's quite interesting. Because it means that you can use your talents in very different ways over the course of your professional life - in different companies, industries and fields of activity. For example, if you're good at analyzing numbers, you could use that skill as a controller, as a management consultant, as a self-employed person, as a logistics manager....



2.1 The first method : success stories

This method takes some time, but will definitely make you very aware of where your strongest skills lie. This exercise was developed by Richard Bolles (2012, pp. 281-292) and has become a classic. It involves writing down six short incidents from your life.

You proceed in two steps

- a) You write down six experiences from your life that were very gratifying for you and where you did something particularly well. These are your success stories.
- b) You have these six stories evaluated by someone who is willing to support you (e.g. a friend, an IBIS consultant, etc.). If no one has time at the moment, you can also evaluate the stories yourself.

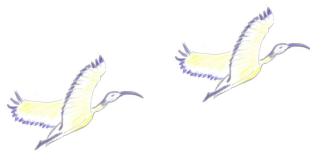
The evaluation will show you where your strongest skills lie.

Here is an example of a success story

"A few years ago, I wanted to go on a summer vacation with my wife and our four children. However, I was strapped for cash and couldn't afford a hotel with my family. So I decided to convert our station wagon into a motorhome.

First, I went to the library to borrow some books about motorhomes. After reading them, I drew up a plan of what I needed to build in order to use both the interior and the roof of the station wagon. I then purchased the necessary lumber. For six weeks, I spent weekends in my garage driveway building the enclosure for the 'second floor' of my station wagon. Then I cut out doors and windows and built a six-drawer dresser into the enclosure. I lifted it onto the roof of my car and secured it there, bolting it to the roof rack. Finally, I installed a table in the bed of the station wagon and a bench on each side of it.

The result was a complete motorhome of my own design, which I assembled just before we left. After our return, I took it apart again. This way we could afford a four-week summer vacation, even though we were short of money, because we didn't have to stay in a hotel. I probably saved \$1900 in hotel bills alone" (Bolles 2012, p. 281 f.).



To make it easy for you to write such a story, answer the guiding questions mentioned here in order. The sample story has been written along these questions:

▪ **What was the initial situation? And what was your goal in this situation?**

"A few years ago, I wanted to go on a summer vacation with my wife and our four children. "

▪ **What difficulties have been encountered?**

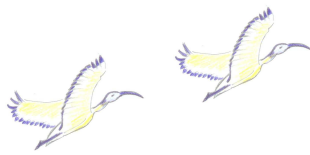
"However, I was strapped for cash and couldn't afford a hotel with my family."

▪ **What did you do step by step to reach your goal?**

"So I decided to convert our station wagon into a motor home. First, I went to the library to borrow some books about motorhomes. After that reading, I drew up a plan of what I needed to build to use both the interior and the roof of the station wagon." And so on.

▪ **What was the result?**

"That way we could afford a four-week summer vacation, even though we were short on money, because we didn't have to stay in a hotel. I probably saved \$1,900 in hotel bills alone. "



2.2 Worksheet: Writing your success stories

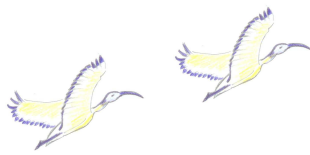
Write down six enjoyable experiences from your life

The six stories you will now write will show you what skills you have.

Find a nice place where you have enough time and peace to write your stories. Go to your favorite café, to the park, make yourself comfortable at home or.... And then remember situations when you did something with pleasure and you were very satisfied with the result. This can be an experience from your leisure time, your school or university days, or your working life. This experience can also be from a longer time ago. It does not matter where and when this story happened. And it's not a matter of fine-tuning every phrase and getting every comma right. What matters is that you put the events on paper in such a way that another person can understand what you did step by step. Write in such a way that even a child would understand how you proceeded in the respective situation.

Now write down the six stories. Write about one DIN A 4 page per story. Answer the following questions as you do so:

- What was the initial situation? And what was your goal in this situation?
- What difficulties have been encountered?
- What did you do **step by step to reach** your goal?
- What was the result?



2.3 Instructions: Evaluate your success stories

Now that you have written your six stories, it's time to unearth the treasure that lies within. Because: these stories show your strongest skills: Why? In these situations that you have described, you have used your favorite skills. And your favorite skills are also your strongest skills: What you like to do, you usually do well.

The evaluation of your six stories is done in two steps

First step: Ask someone who is happy to support you to evaluate your stories according to the instructions below. This is because another person is usually much quicker to see what skills you have used. If no one has time, you can also evaluate the stories yourself.

Second step: After reviewing your texts, your supporter gives you a list of the skills that have become visible. You go through this list and see if there are any additional skills that you really like to use. From the entire list of your skills, you now pick out the six skills that you like to use the most. **With this, you know your strongest skills.**

Note on the first evaluation step

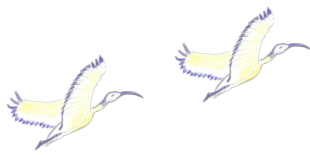
Your supporter reads the story carefully sentence by sentence and considers in each case which skills you have used. The most important thing is to **distinguish between skills and traits**.

What is a skill? A skill is something you do. For example: do research.

What is a property? A trait describes the way you do something. For example: conscientiously, thoroughly.

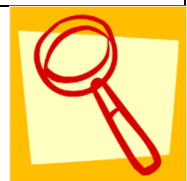
So the sentence, "I conducted the research thoroughly and conscientiously," shows the ability to "conduct research" and the trait "thoroughly and conscientiously."

Using the example story on the next page, you can see how the evaluation of a success story is done. If you want, your supporter (or you yourself) can additionally pay attention to which characteristics of yours become visible. Then you will have gained even more information about yourself through your stories, which will be useful for the application process.



Example: Evaluation of a success story (first evaluation step)

The success story	Used Skills	Features
"A few years ago, I wanted to go on a summer vacation with my wife and our four children. However, I was short of money and couldn't afford a hotel with my family.		
So I decided to convert our station wagon into a camper.	Decide, develop solutions to problems	Decisive, energetic, flexible
First, I went to the library to check out some books about RVs.	Research information	Structured approach
After reading this, I drew up a plan of what I needed to build in order to use both the interior and the roof of the station wagon.	Plan, design, find optimal solutions	Structured approach, creative
Then I bought the necessary wood.	Shopping, implement a plan	Structured approach
For six weeks, I spent weekends in my garage driveway building the enclosure for the 'second floor' of my station wagon.	Craft work	Motivated, persistent, independent, creative
Then I cut out the doors and windows and built a six-drawer dresser into the body. I lifted it onto the roof of my car and secured it there by bolting it to the roof rack.	Cutting doors and windows, installing furniture, screwing	Physically fit, skilled in handicraft, creative
Finally, I installed a table in the bed of the station wagon and a bench on each side of it.	Install furniture	Skilled craftsmanship
The result was a complete motorhome of my own design, which I assembled just before we left.	Manage time efficiently	Structured approach
After we returned, I took it apart again.	The same capabilities as for installation	
That way we could afford a four-week summer vacation, even if we were short of money, because we didn't have to stay in a hotel. I probably saved \$1,900 in hotel bills alone" (Bolles 2012, p. 281 f.).	Successfully implement solutions to problems	Cost-conscious

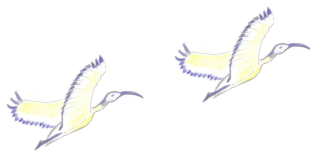


2.4 Worksheet: Evaluate success stories (first step)



Note any skills used that you can identify in the story. Name the abilities as precisely as possible. Also note characteristics if you encounter any in the text.

Skills used	Features



Worksheet: Evaluate success stories (second step)

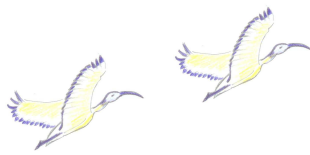
Look at the list of skills that came up when you evaluated your success stories. Think about whether there are other skills that you enjoy using very much and add them to the list. You now have a list of probably more than ten skills. Now pick out from this entire list the six skills that **you like to use the most**. Put these six skills in order as you would a hit parade. Which skill do you like to use the most? Which one is your second favorite? And so on. Record your skills on the chart.

So now you know your strongest skills. Congratulations!

My six Strongest skills

Skills I like to use the most:

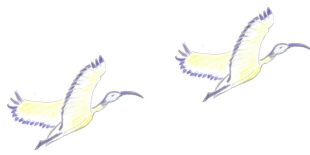
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.



2.5 The second method: capability lists

This method includes three steps

- a) Read through the lists on the following pages and check off those skills **that you enjoy using the most**. If you have skills that you don't find in the list but that you enjoy a lot, add them.
- b) Go through all the ticked skills and now choose the six skills that you enjoy the most.
- c) Make a hit parade out of these six skills. What is your first favorite skill, what is your second, what is your third, etc.?



2.6 Worksheet: Mental Abilities

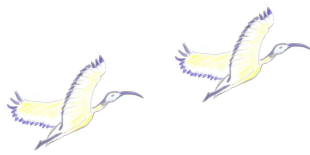
Go through the list and check off those skills **that you prefer to use**. As you do so, also recall your previous experiences in internships, jobs, volunteer work, and recreational activities and hobbies.

My mental abilities

Collect or create information	Manage information		Save information	Making information usable
	step by step	holistic		
compile, search or examine	Compare and/or replicate similarities or differences	transfer, translate (including programming), develop or improve	Keep records	in connection with people (see interpersonal skills)
Gather information by interviewing or observing people	calculate, work with numbers, accounting	visualize, draw, paint, stage, develop videos or software	save or file	in connection with objects (see physical abilities)
Gather information by examining and observing things	analyze, disassemble into parts	combine, put parts together to form a whole	Retrieve information, ideas or data	
have a distinct ability to hear, smell, taste or see	organize, classify, systematize, and/or prioritize	Solve problems or recognize structures in large amounts of data	get other people to find or retrieve information	
think up, invent, create or design new ideas	plan, develop a battle plan to achieve a goal	decide, evaluate, assess or make recommendations	have a particularly good memory, can remember details	

(from Bolles 2007, p. 50)

If you have skills that you don't find in the list but that you enjoy a lot, add them.



Worksheet: Interpersonal skills

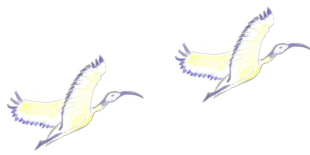
Go through the list and check off those skills **that you prefer to use**. As you do so, also recall your previous experiences in internships, jobs, volunteer work, and recreational activities and hobbies.

My interpersonal skills

Deal with individuals		Deal with groups, organizations or large crowds		
Take instructions, provide a service, or assist	diagnose, treat or cure	Connect effectively with a group or many people	play, lead others in physical relaxation or exercise	manage, supervise or direct something
express themselves well linguistically, in direct contact or on the phone	Bring people together or put two people in contact	through an expressive choice of words in speech or writing	teach, train, develop seminars or trainings	to carry out something, to do things, to produce
express oneself well in writing	Assess, evaluate, review, or select people	through a performance (theater, film or television)	lead a group discussion	lead, take the lead, be a role model
to instruct, to teach, to instruct or to train something	convince, motivate, advertise or sell them something	by being entertained, amused or inspired	convince a group, consult, motivate or sell something	initiate, start, found or establish something
advise, support, strengthen, treat	represent others, interpret the ideas or language of others	pantomime, act, sing or play an instrument	advise, advise groups in a particular field of knowledge	mediate between two parties or resolve conflicts

(from Bolles 2007, p. 49)

If you have skills that you don't find in the list but that you enjoy a lot, add them.



Worksheet: Physical abilities

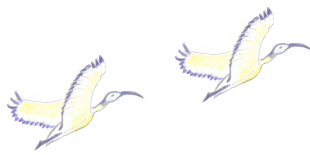
Go through the list and check off those skills **that you prefer to use**. As you do this, also recall your previous experience in internships, jobs, volunteer work, and recreational activities and hobbies.

My physical abilities

Do something with the body	Do something with materials (clay, wood, fabric, metal, stone, gemstone)	Doing something with things (including food, tools, or instruments).	Do something with equipment, machines or vehicles	Do something with buildings or rooms	Do something with plants or animals
use my hands or fingers	tinkering, sewing, weaving or hammering	wash, clean or prepare	set in motion or assemble	build or renovate	Have a green thumb and make something bloom
have great dexterity	cut, carve or chisel	edit, use or handle	use, control or drive	design or restore	have a connection to animals
Use hands and eyes coordinated	Shape, design or sculpt	Bake, prepare or cook	Operate, refill or empty		
coordinate the whole body	decorate, paint, embellish or restore	maintain, conserve or repair	Maintain, clean or repair		
Demonstrate strength, speed, power or stamina	perform fine work with the hands	perform fine work with tools or instruments	disassemble, dismantle or recycle		

(from Bolles 2007 , p. 48)

If you have skills that you don't find in the list but that you enjoy a lot, add them.



Worksheet: Ability lists - the result

Go back through all the lists on mental, interpersonal, and physical skills and now choose the six skills that you enjoy the most.

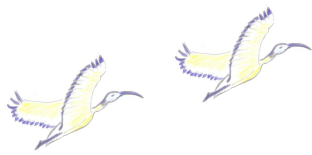
Make a hit parade out of these six skills. What is your first favorite skill, what is your second, what is your third, etc.? Enter your skills in the chart.

So now you know your strongest skills. Congratulations!

My six Strongest skills

Skills I like to use the most:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.



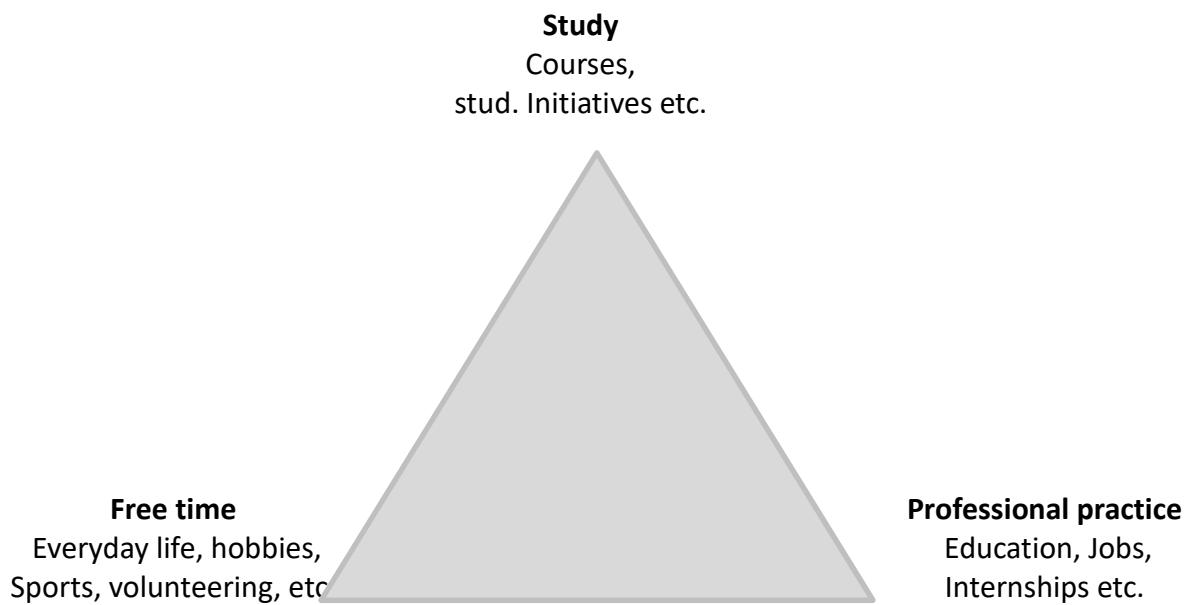
2.7 The third method: The triangle of your abilities

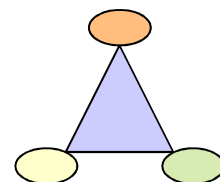
Your life consists of three areas that matter to you:

- Study
- Leisure time (everyday life, leisure activities, voluntary work, etc.)
- Work experience (professional experience in the form of part-time and vacation jobs, completed training, internships, etc.).)

By looking specifically at these three areas, you can figure out your abilities. Use the worksheet on the next page to do this.

The triangle of your life areas



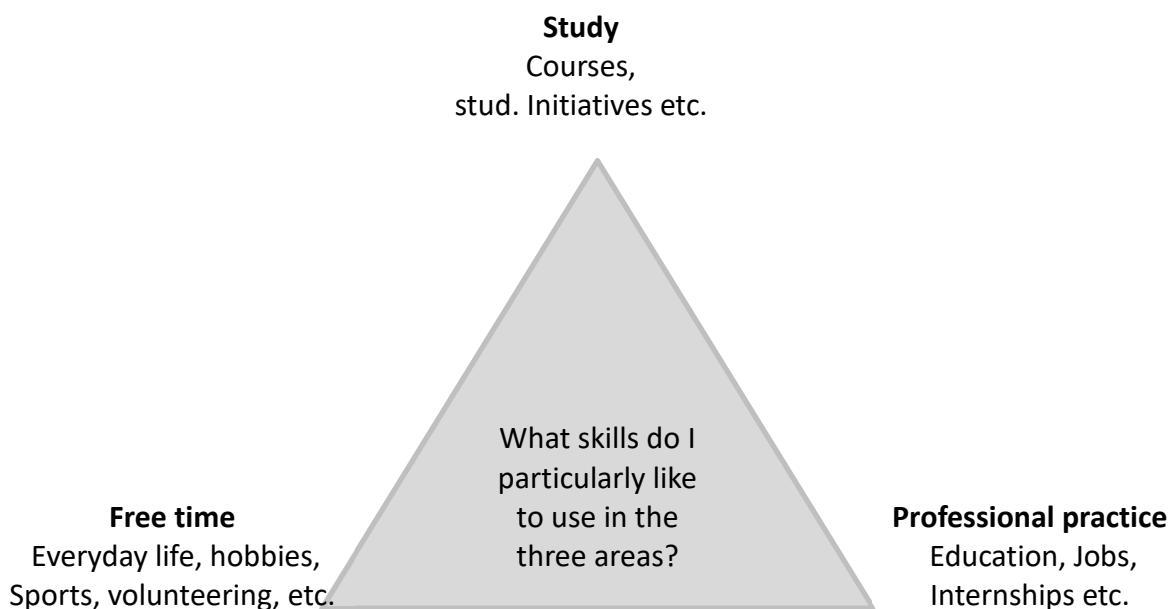


2.8 Worksheet: The triangle of your abilities

This method includes three steps

- For each area (study, leisure, work experience), think: "What skills do I particularly like to use there?" Write down all the skills that come to mind.
- Consider your answers. Now choose the six skills that you enjoy the most.
- Make a hit parade out of these six skills. What is your first favorite skill, what is your second, what is your third, etc.?

The triangle of my abilities



Result: Skills I like to use the most

1)

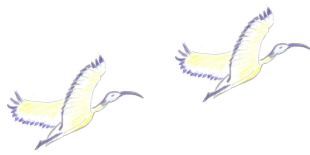
4)

2)

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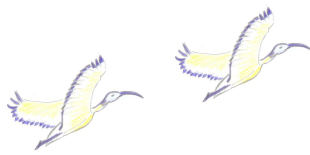


3 Do you know your areas of interest? (Location determination II)

If you are clear about your areas of interest, it will be easier for you to find a suitable internship. And if you work in an area that really interests you, you will also be convincing there.

If you don't yet know exactly what your career areas of interest are, do the exercise described on the next few pages. **This exercise involves two steps:**

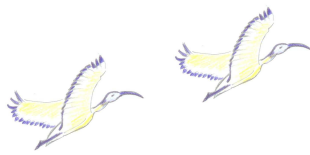
- a) Answer the questions on the next page.
- b) From these responses, select the three areas of interest that are most important to you.



3.1 Worksheet: Your areas of interest (First step)

Answer the following questions. Write down everything that comes to mind - whether the answer has to do with professional life or not.

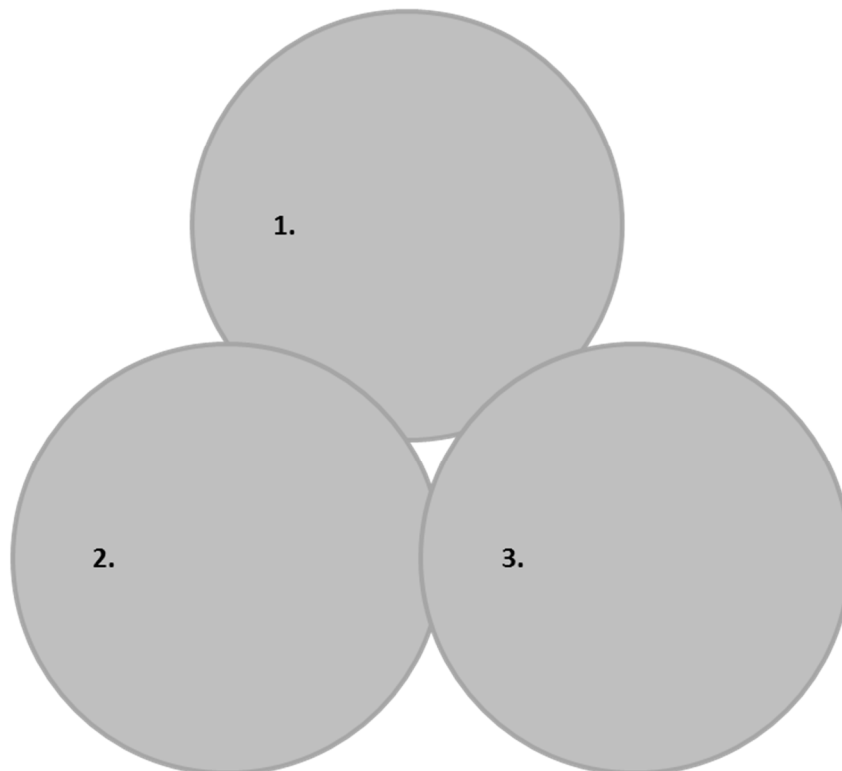
- **If you were to make a film: What would it be called? What would be its subject?**
- **If you were to write a book: What would it be about?**
- **When and for what do people ask you for advice?**
- **What do you particularly like to do in your free time?**
- **What were your favorite subjects in school?**
- **What do you particularly like to deal with in your studies?**
- **What would you like to know much more about?**
- **What profession did you want when you were a child?**
- **What topics make you wide awake?**



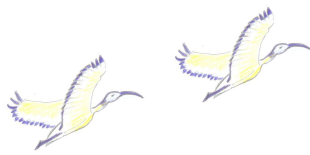
Worksheet: Your Areas of Interest (Second Step)

By answering the questions, you have written down a whole series of topics. From these topics, now choose the three you are most interested in and put them in order - like a hit parade. Here, too, the thought of professional life should not yet play a role.

Meine drei wichtigsten Interessensgebiete



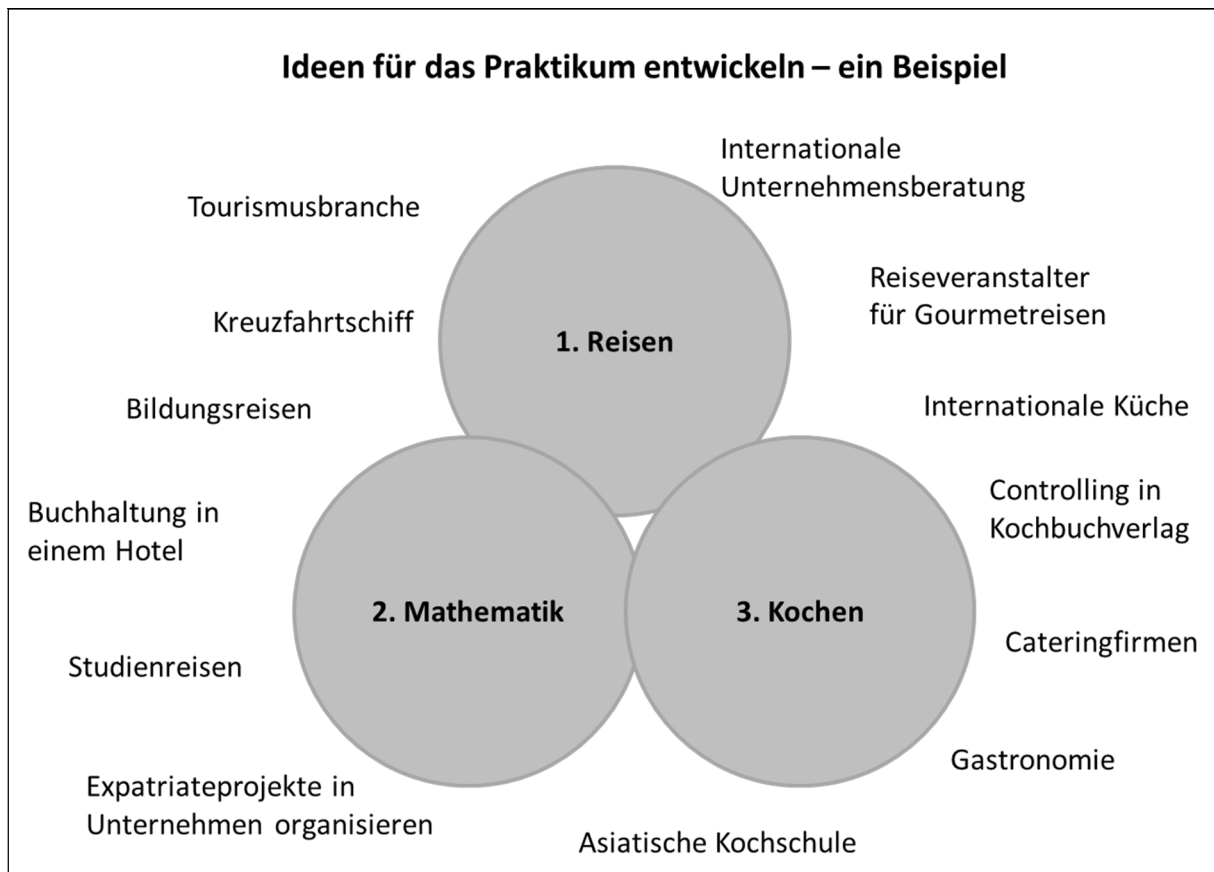
Now you have clarified your main areas of interest. Consider the result. Perhaps you now already have ideas about where you would like to do your internship. If not: Go on to the exercise: **Where do you want to do your internship? Develop ideas!**



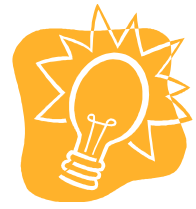
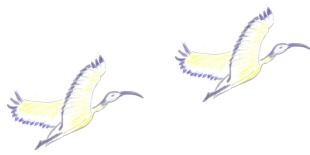
4 Where do you want to do your internship? Develop ideas!

You know which activities suit you, what you are good at and which topics interest you. But perhaps you are still missing the sparkling idea of which field of work, which industry and which type of company could be particularly exciting and suitable for you in your internship. In order to find exactly such ideas, it is helpful to involve other people. The idea here is to first collect as many ideas as possible - no matter how unusual or unrealistic they sound. It has proven useful to brainstorm ideas together with other people or - if no one has time at the moment - alone. Brainstorming means that everyone expresses every idea that comes to mind in response to a question. The key is to gather as many ideas as possible in a short time. Comments and criticism are not allowed. The evaluation of the ideas takes place only **after** the brainstorming.

Here is an example of such a brainstorming session. The question here is: Where could someone who, in addition to mathematics, is also interested in traveling and cooking, complete their internship semester?



After brainstorming, the student selects the ideas that particularly appeal to him: Tourism industry, international management consulting and expatriate projects. Since he would like to use his skills in the area of controlling, he now researches in which companies of the mentioned areas he could complete such an internship in controlling.



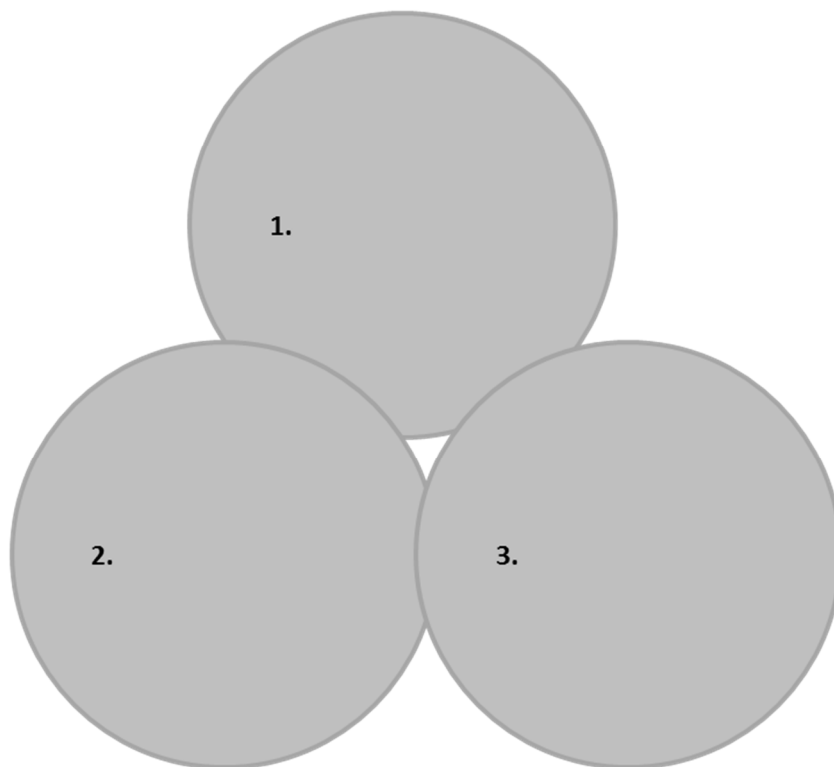
4.1 Worksheet: Developing ideas for the internship

Write your top three areas of interest in the circles. The easiest way to do this is to next ask other people you know well the following question:

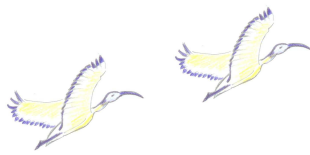
"Where could I do my internship with these areas of interest? What do you/they think of spontaneously? What ideas do you have?" Of course, an IBIS advisor can also be a contact person for this question.

It makes sense to start by **collecting all ideas, no matter how unusual or unrealistic they may seem.**

Wo ich mein Praktikum machen könnte - Ideensammlung



In this way, you will get a whole range of ideas. Next, select the ideas that appeal to you the most from this collection of ideas. and research what options are available for each for an internship (see section "Effective research and search strategies").



5 Determine the course: Set Goals (Location Determination IV)

What are your goals for the internship? What do you want to achieve there? Explore whether the targeted field of study actually suits you in practice? Get to know a new area? To deepen a topic that fascinated you during your studies in practice? Put theoretical knowledge into practice? Establish contacts with a potential employer?

Be aware of your goals for the internship. This will make it easier for you to find the right internship. Because if you know what you want and what you are looking for, then you can do targeted research. And: If you have your goals clear, you will complete the internship goal-oriented.

On the next page you will find a worksheet to help you determine your goals for the internship.



5.1 Worksheet: Defining your goals for the internship

You will find out your goals for the internship very quickly in the following way. Imagine that you have already completed your internship. Now please complete the following sentence:

If my internship went optimally, here's what I worked, experienced and learned there:

-
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Worksheet: Define your goals for the internship

You can further flesh out your goals for the internship by answering the following questions:

What do I want to find out and learn in the internship?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Which topics would I like to explore and deepen during the internship?

.....

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What questions would I like to clarify for myself in the internship?

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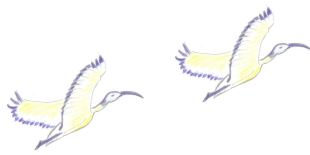
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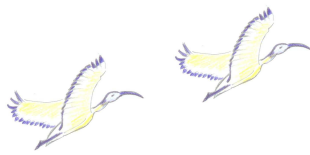
6 What is important to you? (Location determination V)

Do you know your values?

You may be wondering about this question. However, this question plays a major role when it comes to you finding the right company, industry or activities for you.

An activity that reflects what is important to you will be a good fit for you. For example: Is it important to you that you can contribute your talent for creative problem solving? Then a young company made up of many creative minds might be just right for you. You would probably feel more out of place in a bureaucratically organized company. Or is it important to you that your internship employer is close to home and that you can continue your commitment to youth work in your handball club during your internship? Then a company with regular working hours is probably more suitable for you than, for example, an internationally oriented management consultancy that also expects a high degree of time flexibility and willingness to travel from interns.

How do you find out what your values are? This is very simple. Answer the question, "What is important to me in terms of career and how I live my life? " Let the worksheet on the next page inspire you to answer this question.

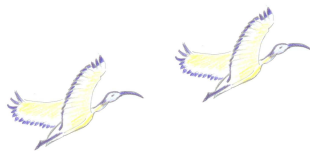


6.1 Worksheet: What is important to you?

Think: What is important to you in relation to your internship and with regard to your later professional life? Select the points that appeal to you and add to them if necessary.

A high degree of independence	As much teamwork as possible	Management tasks
Work in the international field	Good earnings	A secure workplace
Close to home	Constantly changing challenges	A job with as much routine as possible
Be an expert	A high degree of freedom to make decisions	A diversified activity
Good image of the company	Work according to clear specifications	An activity that benefits other people
Good promotion prospects	Work alone	Creativity
Compatibility of Family and career	Work with products that I strongly identify with	Work as a sporting competition
Further training opportunities		

Now select the most important points. Once you have selected the values that seem indispensable to you for your internship, you will have a kind of inner compass and can pay attention to whether these values come into play in the respective company during applications and interviews.



7 Effective research and search strategies

You have an idea in which area you want to do your internship, but you need **more information**?

You have a concrete idea in which industry you would like to complete your internship and are now looking for corresponding **job offers**?

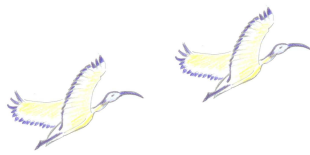
Are you wondering how to find out exactly which **companies** you would like to apply to for an internship as quickly as possible?

There is a whole range of search and research strategies you can use to find what you are looking for in a short time. To do this, also tread unusual paths. An overview of search and research paths can be found on the next page.

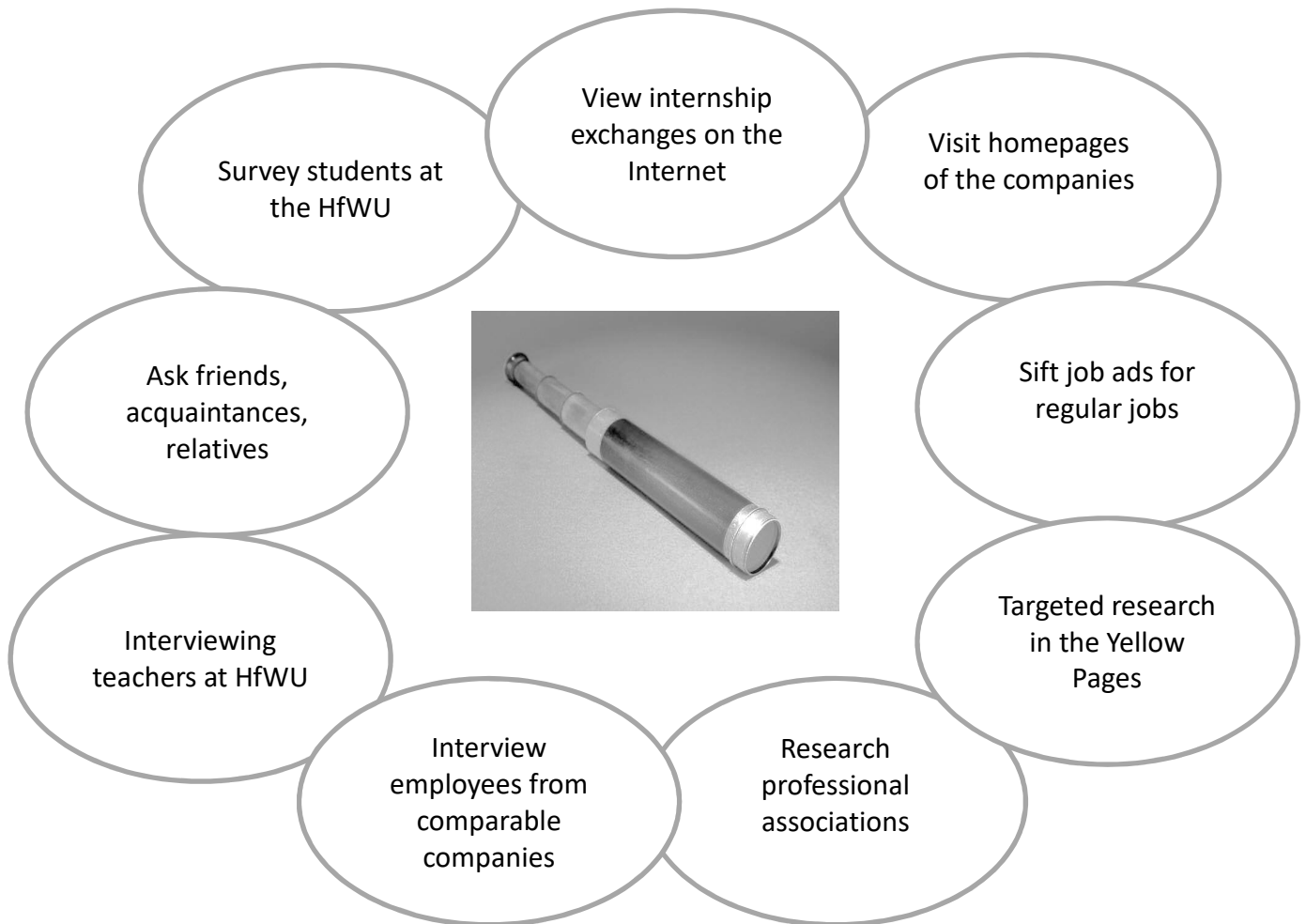


In your research, always check the quality of your sources and the quality of the information you receive. And don't rely on just one source - for example, if you're researching information about requirements for specific job areas - always use multiple sources. So, for example, interview several people about a particular field of activity that interests you.

And: ask for exceptions if someone tells you that this or that position can only be achieved in a very specific way.

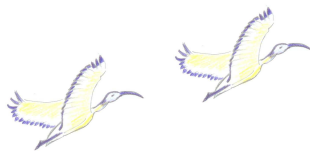


Overview of search and retrieval strategies



On this website of the HfWU you will find a **link list of internship exchanges** on the internet:

www.hfwu.de/de/1fbf/betriebswirtschaft/praktikantenamt/stellensuche-studierende/stellenboersen.html

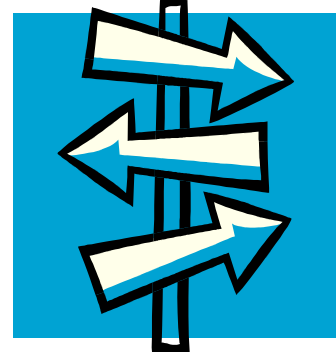


8 Should I go into marketing or rather into controlling, or...? - Making decisions

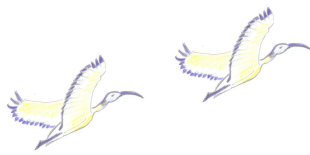
You have different ideas where you would like to do your internship? And you find each idea exciting?

Seeing multiple options and not sure which one is right for you?

You have received several acceptances for an internship and now you have to make a decision?



In other words, you are faced with the question of how to decide? If you feel you're getting nowhere, a consultation at IBIS could be a good decision. Because in such a conversation, you'll get the chance to look at the various options in peace and weigh up what speaks for or against a variant. In this way, you may be able to make the right decision for you sooner than you think.



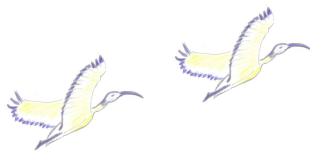
9 Internship Application

9.1 Why job application guides - including this one - don't necessarily make your life easier (a little must-read)

First the good news: nowadays you have a lot of options when designing your application documents. You can use a cover page - with or without a photo (which can be in color or black and white), a resume in chronological order backwards or forwards, you can choose colored subheadings or stay in classic black and white, you can specify your hobbies or not....

And that brings us to the second piece of news, which isn't necessarily bad news: there is no **MUST** about how an application should **UNCONDITIONALLY** be structured. There isn't really a right or wrong. It's more about what fits better or not quite as well with you, your biography, and the target company. Of course, there are the classic headings (see application examples in this chapter), but you still have a lot of creative leeway here. There is no law that says: This is the only way an application must look and be structured. On the contrary: Go to a bookstore and you will find tons of books on the subject of job applications. And each book will tell you something a little different. Some books even contradict each other. Or ask two different application consultants for an opinion on your application documents: In all likelihood, you will get two different opinions, which may also contradict each other. **So what to do???**

- Critically absorb all the information you can from books, the Internet, application guides - including this handbook - and counseling sessions, and **consider** what best suits you and your potential internship company.
- This chapter provides you with application examples for cover page, cover letter, and resume. These are intended as examples, not as samples to be copied. **Let these examples inspire you to design your own distinctive application documents.**
- **Keep in mind:** what may seem just right for one person's resume or cover letter may be rather awkward or superfluous for another. Example: Why should someone who was born in Stuttgart, whose name is Müller and who has no migration background whatsoever use the nationality section in his or her resume? But maybe it makes sense for someone who has a migration background, grew up in Germany, and has German citizenship to show this in the resume as well? Or does it not? Blanket answers don't really help here. Decide for yourself.
- What good is a resume that you don't feel comfortable with and that you only designed that way because someone told you that's the only way to do it? Will you communicate this resume authentically and convincingly in the interview? What good is a cover letter that may be brilliantly worded, but not penned by you? Chances are, it will be noticed in the interview.
- **Use feedback from other people.** Show them your application materials. Make different variants and test the reaction. And then, in **the end, decide for yourself which variant to use.**
- It makes sense to **tailor** the respective application **specifically to the respective company.** This can mean that the layout of your resume changes - depending on the target company. Needless to say, your cover letter will also not be the same every time, but will relate individually to the respective company.



- **Conclusion: In the end, you yourself decide** which application variant you use. After all, **you are** the person applying, not your application advisor. **Your** application documents will be referred to in the interview. Then, at the latest, they will see whether you have written your application yourself, whether you stand behind your application convincingly, or whether it is the handwriting of someone else.

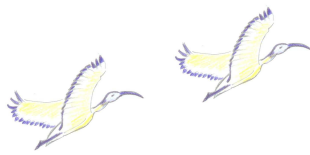
And yet, here are a few tips to take with you on your application journey:

What matters	This means or can mean
Arouse interest	You have knowledge, skills, experience that only you have in this combination. Present that.
Clear structure	Interesting topic blocks form
Appealing design	Use only one font, possibly work with two font sizes, ...
Present practical experience	Think about it: What experience have you already gained in part-time jobs, volunteer work, etc.? What of this could be interesting for the application?
Correct spelling, signature	Have a second person read the application before sending it.
Provide correct information	



Perhaps the following thought will be of use to you:

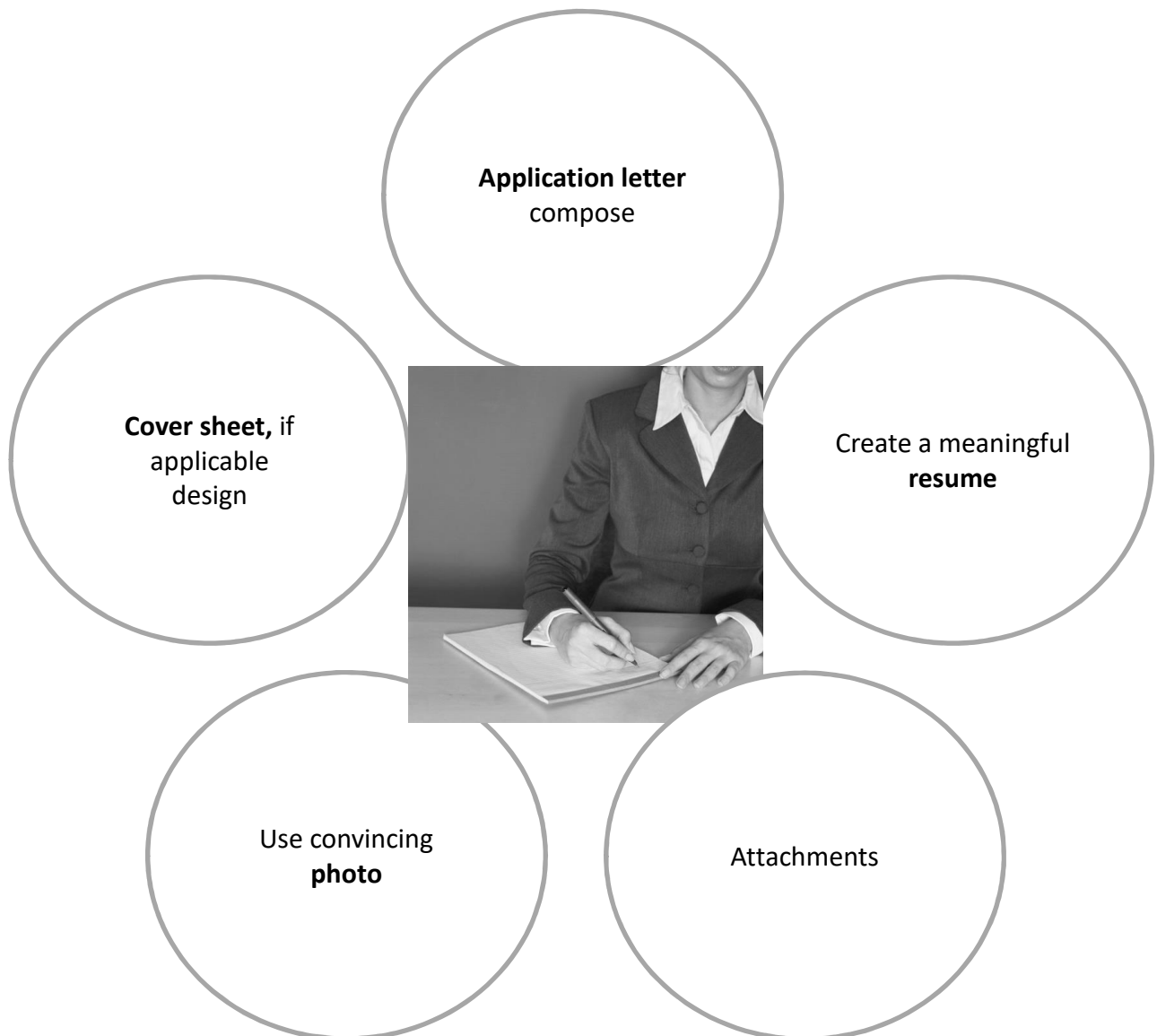
Imagine you are a recruiter. You have dozens of applications in front of you. What would you look for??? Answer this question and you will quickly find an approach to how you would like to design your application documents.



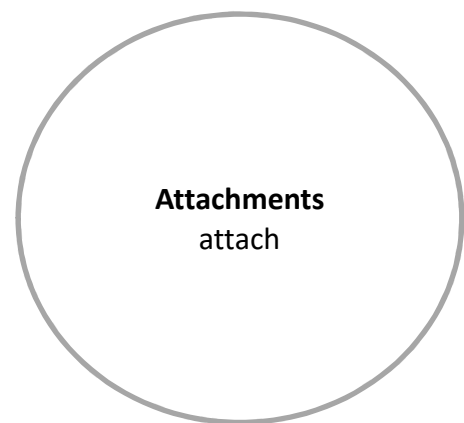
9.2 Overview of the written application

As a rule, a written application consists of the following components: Letter of application, curriculum vitae, photo and, if applicable, a cover sheet, as well as the attachments (certificates, other supporting documents):

To Do's for the written application



Once you have created your application documents, do a final check: Is the spelling correct? Is the resume signed by hand? The same applies here: Four eyes see more than two. Have a second person read your application again before you send your documents.





9.3 Cover sheet example 1

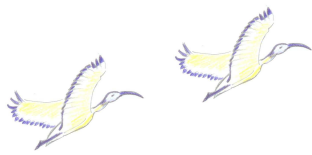
Barbara example

Sample path 20
72622 Nürtingen
① 00000/12345678
💻 muster@bsp.de



Application for an internship

at the auditing and tax consulting company Praxisnah

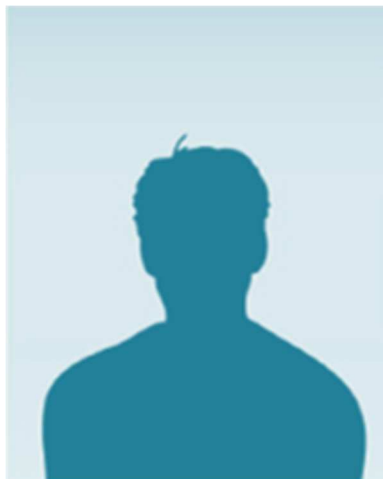


Cover sheet example 2

APPLICATION

for an internship

at the sample company Practical



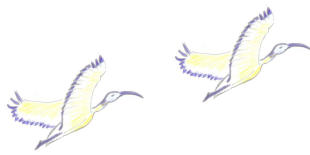
Bernd example

Sample path 20

72622 Nürtingen

📞 00000/12345678

💻 muster@bsp.de



9.4 Designing the curriculum vitae

You have the opportunity to structure and design the building blocks of the CV in a way that suits you and your competencies. In doing so, you will focus on what is particularly interesting for the company in each case. It is essential that the CV expresses your profile in an interesting way. Because the CV is THE opportunity to present your competences in an interesting way for an employer. It is up to you to decide whether you structure the CV in a traditional way or whether you choose a structure that puts your current job first. Also, the question of whether to use a cover page with a photo, or to forgo a cover page and place the photo on the resume, you can decide individually depending on what suits you.

The resume usually consists of the following building blocks

Curriculum vitae (other possible headings: e.g. **curriculum vitae**, **profile**)

Personal data

- Name
- Date of birth, place of birth
- Address, phone number, e-mail
- Marital status (in the relevant discussion you can now also find representatives who say that this point can be dispensed with)
- Possibly nationality

School education (other possible heading: e.g. **school education**).

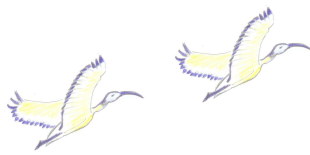
- School, place, graduation
- If applicable, school activities (e.g. class representative, participation in AG's)

Professional training (if any)

- Company, place
- Focus activities, if applicable

Study (other possible heading: e.g. **higher education**).

- Study focus
- Projects
- If applicable, participation in student initiatives (may also be listed under **volunteer activities**).



Practical experience (other possible headings - depending on experience available: e.g., **professional activities, work experience, internships, volunteer activities, involvement**).

- Professional experience with details of company, place and activity
- Internships, jobs, part-time jobs with details of company, location and activity
- Voluntary activities (e.g. FSJ, involvement in associations) with details of organization, location and activity
- Depending on your resume, it may make sense to make this block into two sections (e.g., **Professional Experience** and **Volunteer Activities**)

Further knowledge (other possible headings: e.g., **Special skills, Special knowledge, Further competencies**).

- Special knowledge (e.g. computer skills, language skills)

Possibly additional module: stays abroad

Leisure interests (other possible headings: e.g. **Hobbies, Personal interests**).

- Leisure activities, hobbies, personal interests (of course, it is up to you whether you want to provide information on this. Often you can make your profile interesting with this module).

Place, date, signature (handwritten)

On the following pages you will find resume examples. These are not intended as ready-made samples, but rather to give you **ideas for designing your own distinctive application**.



9.5 Resume example 1

Resume

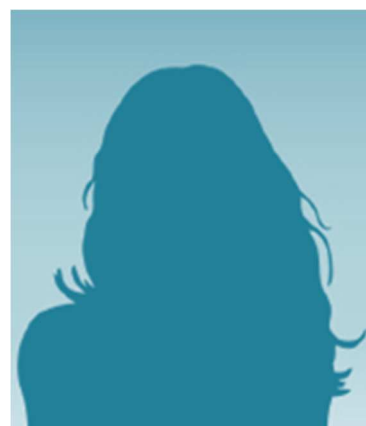
Barbara example

Sample path 20

72622 Nürtingen

📞 00000/12345678

💻 muster@bsp.de



Personal data

Date and place of birth 18.08.1989 in Geislingen

Marital status single

Study

since 10/2012 **Studies of Business Administration, Nürtingen-Geislingen**
University of Applied Sciences

- **3rd semester**

Vocational training

09/2009 – 08/2011 **Apprenticeship as tax clerk,**
Tax office Flink, Reutlingen

- **Financial accounting, payroll accounting**
- **Private income tax returns**
- **Client support**

International experience

09/2008 – 08/2009 **Au Pair, Sydney/Australia**

- **Childcare**



School education

09/1995 – 07/2008

Elementary school and high school in Geislingen

- Baccalaureate

Other knowledge

EDP

MS Office, Photoshop

Foreign languages

Italian (fluent), English (business fluent)

Commitment and free time

UniversityCollaboration

with the "MachMit" student initiative
of the HfWU Nürtingen-Geislingen

Commitment

Youth handball coach at TSV Beispielstadt

Other interests

Photography, theater

Nürtingen, 14.01.2014

Signature



Curriculum vitae example 2

Resume

Personal data

Name	Bernd example
Address	Sample route 20, 72622 Nürtingen
Phone	00000/12345678
E-mail	muster@bsp.de
Date of birth ¹⁰	.08.1994, Reutlingen
Marital status	single

Higher Education

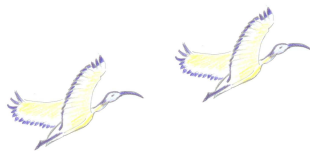
since 10/2012	Study of business administration, Nürtingen-Geislingen University of Applied Sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3rd semester• Chief Financial Officer of the student initiative "MachMit e.V. " of the HfWU Nürtingen-Geislingen
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Practical experience

since 10/2013	Research assistant, HfWU Nürtingen-Geislingen <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Library Supervisor
09/2011 – 09/2012	Collaboration in the parental business, Hotel Firstclass, Nürtingen <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reception• Service person• Guest services• Organization of corporate events

School education

09/2010 – 07/2011	Vocational college, commercial schools, Musterstadt <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advanced technical college
09/2000 – 07/2010	Elementary and secondary school in Reutlingen <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Middle maturity



Other competencies

Foreign languages	English (business fluent)
	French (conversational)
	Spanish (good basic knowledge)
EDV	MS Office (very good knowledge)
	SAP (good basic knowledge)

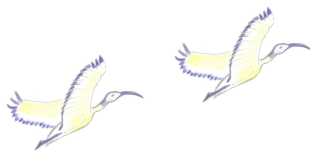
Certificates

10/2013	Rhetoric seminar , HfWU Nürtingen-Geislingen
11/2012	First aid training , DRK sample city

Commitment and free time

since 12/2013	Cooperation as mentor , mentoring program of the HfWU Nürtingen-Geislingen <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for students entering university
Sports	Basketball, swimming

Nürtingen, 14.01.2014 Signature



9.6 How do I write a cover letter that gets across?

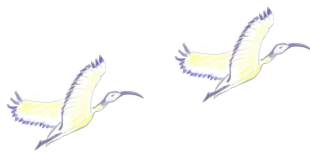
In a nutshell, your cover letter is all about the following:

- **Arouse interest**
- **Clear structure: introduction, main part, conclusion**
- **Keep it Short and Simple: Short sentences, active phrases - to suit your style!**
- **You are unique - show it!**

In the following sections, you will find a number of suggestions and information about cover letters.

*Whatever you write-
write briefly,
and they will read it,
write clearly,
and they will understand,
write pictorially,
and they will keep it in mind.*

Joseph Pulitzer



9.7 Ideal typical structure of a letter of application

Sender

(with contact details)

Company address

(with contact person if possible)

Place, date

Reference line

Salutation

Introduction

Main part / answering the following questions

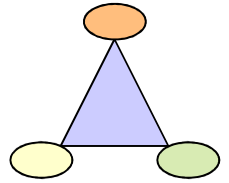
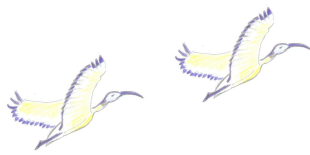
- Why am I applying to this company?
- Why am I applying for this particular area of activity?
- Why am I suitable for this internship? What skills, knowledge and experience do I bring with me?

In the body, respond to the job posting at the same time.

Conclusion and greeting

Signature

Attachments



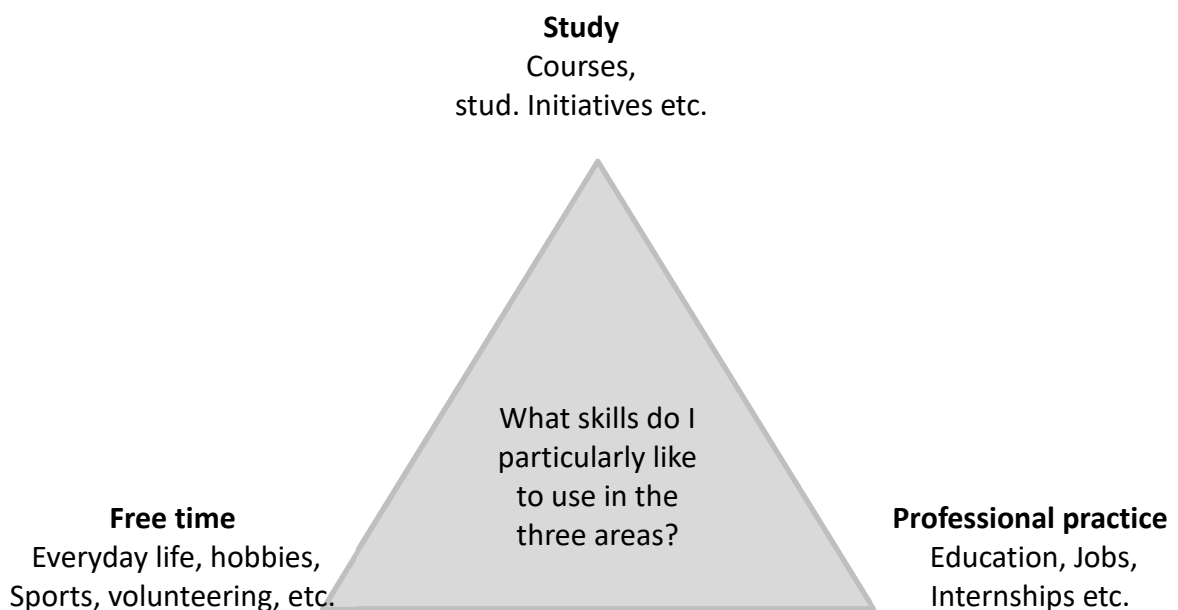
9.8 Worksheet: Developing initial ideas for your cover letter

In order to quickly find a starting point for your cover letter, it can be helpful to first sketch out some ideas on a sheet of paper. If you already know your most important skills (see Chapter 1, 2), you can draw them along the triangle below and formulate¹ initial sentences about them.

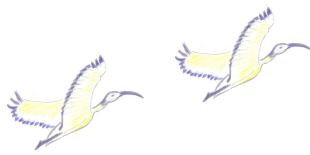
Since showcasing your skills is an important aspect of your cover letter, you can also do the following exercise:

- For each area of the triangle, think: "What skills do I particularly like to use there?" Write down all the skills that come to mind.
- Consider your answers. Now choose the six skills that you enjoy the most.
- See which of these skills are important to the internship position. Think about examples that prove you have these skills. Then formulate initial sentences for the cover letter.

The triangle of my abilities



¹ This method was suggested by Dr. Mohammed Ghorab, who, as a student at HfWU in the summer semester of 2013, conducted a joint offering with IBIS on the topic of job applications.



9.9 The building blocks of the application letter in detail

The cover letter usually consists of the following components

Your sender

- Contact details

Company address

- Address to contact person if possible

Place, date

Reference line (highlight)

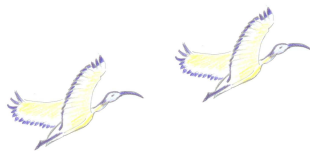
- Example:
 - **Application for an internship in the field of controlling**
Your job ad at www.... dated 11/26/2012

Salutation

- Address the contact person by name (e.g. "Dear Ms. Meyer"), only if no contact person is known: "Dear Sir or Madam".

Entry

- Choose an interesting opening and avoid platitudes.
- **Possible introductory sentences include:**
 - "thank you very much for the telephone conversation on As discussed, I am sending you my application documents."
 - "Your company is known for... . That is why I am applying for a job with you. "
 - "They are looking for an intern to work in the marketing... "



Main part

- Here you present why your interests, skills and experience make you the right person for the internship. You make it clear what speaks for you.
- **In doing so, they answer the following questions:**
 - **Why am I applying to this company?**
 - **Why am I applying for this particular area of activity?**
 - **Why am I suitable for this internship? What skills, knowledge and experience do I already have that are important for the internship?**
- You do not need to answer these questions in this order. The main thing is that your text is clearly structured and understandable. The rule **KISS: Keep It Short and Simple** applies here. **Use simple sentences. Organize the letter clearly into paragraphs.**
- Show what skills and qualities you bring to the table with brief examples.
- **When you apply to a job advertisement, address the aspects formulated there. Your letter is a response to the job advertisement.**
- **Example sentences for the main body:**
 - "As a student of business administration, I am particularly interested in... . I would like to gain practical experience in this field. "
 - "They produce... . In my undergraduate studies, I looked at just that. "
 - "You're describing a task that I'm particularly interested in because..."
 - "I can meet your requirements in the area of... as I am a student assistant/tutor... . "

Close

- **Example sentences**
 - "I would be very pleased to receive your invitation for a personal interview."
 - "I would be very pleased to receive your invitation for a personal interview."
 - "I would be happy to introduce myself to you personally and look forward to hearing from you."

Greeting

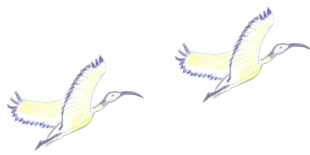
- "Kind regards" or "Sincerely yours", **Signature**

Attachments

- It is sufficient to use the term "attachments"; the individual attachments (such as testimonials, certificates) do not all need to be listed individually.

On the following pages you will find two examples of cover letters. These are not intended as ready-made samples, but to **give you ideas for designing your own distinctive cover letter.**





9.10 Application letter example 1

Barbara example
Sample path 20
72622 Nürtingen
☎ 00000/12345678
💻 muster@bsp.de

Business and tax auditing company Practical
Mrs. Elke Meyer
Sample street 41
70000 example city
2014

Nürtingen, January 14,

Application for an internship in the field of tax consulting Our phone call on 13.01.2014

Dear Ms Meyer,

Thank you very much for the friendly phone call. As agreed, you will receive my application documents here.

I became aware of your company during an Internet search. The services presented on your homepage in the field of tax consulting immediately aroused my interest.

As a student of business administration in my third semester at the Nürtingen-Geislingen University of Applied Sciences, I would like to expand the knowledge I have acquired in my previous studies in practice. Since I am a trained tax clerk, I have also already acquired basic knowledge in the field of business administration and taxation.

I am interested in the tasks you describe because I would like to implement and deepen the skills I have acquired in my training and studies in your company. I have already gained experience in the following areas: Financial accounting, private income tax returns, preparation of income-transit statements, payroll accounting and client support.

Due to my training in a tax office, I am used to working flexibly and responsibly. This training has taught me how to deal with customers. I also demonstrate my ability to work in a team through my involvement with the student initiative MachMit e.V. During a stay abroad in Australia, I deepened my knowledge of English.

I would be very pleased to receive your invitation to a personal meeting.

With kind regards

Barbara example

Attachments



Application letter example 2

Bernd Beispiel Musterweg 20, ✉ 72622 Nürtingen 00000/12345678 ☎ 📧 muster@bsp.de

Bernd Example Musterweg 20 • 72622 Nürtingen

Example company Practical

Mrs. Müller

Example path 12

70000 Example city

Nürtingen, 14.01.2014

Application for an internship in the field of marketing Your job posting in www.muster.de

Dear Ms. Müller,

They are looking for an intern for the marketing department. As a student of business administration, I am applying for this position with great interest.

I find the tasks you describe very exciting. I am particularly interested in helping to organize trade fair and customer events. In detail, I bring the following knowledge for an internship with you:

- **Specialist knowledge from my basic business management studies**
- **Experience in the field of customer and corporate events**
- **Customer oriented way of working**
- **Good foreign language skills**

I would also like to deepen the knowledge I acquired during my studies in the field of coordinating and implementing international market launch strategies that you mentioned. My enthusiasm for internationally oriented tasks developed early on through my work in my parents' hotel business and was further strengthened during my studies.

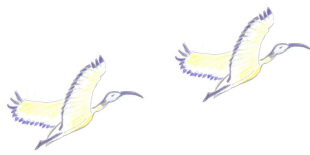
Due to my work in the hotel industry, I am used to working flexibly, customer-oriented and with a lot of commitment. As the financial director of a student initiative at the HfWU, I am willing to take responsibility and possess a goal-oriented way of working.

I would be happy to introduce myself to you personally and look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Bernd example

Attachments



9.11 The interview

The interview is about your potential internship employer getting to know you. He wants to find out whether you fit into his company. Conversely, the interview is also an opportunity for you to clarify whether you would like to complete your internship at this company.

Job interviews can be stressful. In order to go into such an interview as calmly as possible, good preparation is helpful. To do this, deal with the following topics:





9.12 Frequently asked questions in job interviews

Of course, there are very many questions you may be asked in an interview. Here is a selection of typical questions:

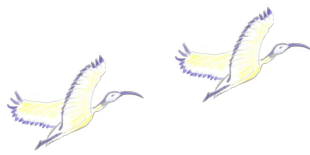
- **Tell me something about yourself.**
- **What do you know about our company?**
- **Why are you applying for this position?**
- **How would you describe yourself?**
- **What are your greatest strengths?**
- **What are your biggest weaknesses?**
- **What kind of work do you like best?**
- **What interests do you pursue in your free time?**
- **What would you like to have achieved in five years?**

From: Bolles 2012, p. 155f.



When preparing for the interview, think specifically about the questions you are afraid of. Prepare answers for exactly these questions.

This will make you more relaxed going into the conversation.



The five most important questions in the job interview

According to Richard Bolles, a career consultant from the U.S., there are five basic questions in particular that recruiters want to clarify in an interview:

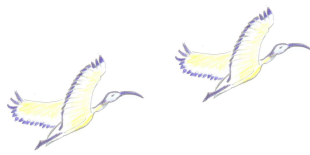
- "1. **'Why are you here?'** Meaning, 'Why do you want to work here and not at another company?'
2. **'What can you do for us?'** This means: 'If I hire you, would you be more likely to contribute to my problems or more likely to help solve them? Where do your skills lie, and how much do you know about our company's area of expertise?'
3. **'What kind of person are you?'** This means: 'Do you fit in with us? Are you an affable person who is easy to work with, and do you have the same values as we do?'
4. **'What makes you different from the 19 or 900 others who have also applied for this job?'** That is, 'Do you have a better work ethic, come in earlier, stay longer, work more thoroughly and quickly, try harder, or... what else do you have to offer?'
5. **'Can I afford you?'** That means, 'How much would you cost us and are we willing or able to raise that amount?' We have a limited budget and obviously can't pay you the same as your direct supervisor.'"

From: Bolles 2012, p.

156.



Practice the interview in a role play with friends, mentors, fellow students or IBIS advisors. This will give you more confidence and allow you to test out possible answers to critical questions.



9.13 Prepare AHA stories

In the interview, it is important that you can present essential experience and knowledge that you bring to the table in a short period of time.

To prepare for the interview, you can prepare individual experiences from your biography as success stories (**AHA stories**) as follows (cf. Lawson 2001, pp. 324-326).

A = Initial situation: Briefly describe the initial situation. What was the task you wanted to accomplish? What was the problem you had to solve?

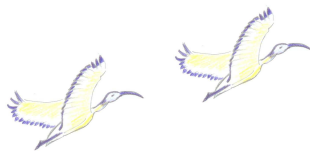
H = Action: What exactly did you do to solve the task or problem?

A= Impact: What was the effect of your action? What was the result?

Write down your AHA story on the paper. Practice telling the story. You should be able to tell it in about two minutes. Place your AHA stories in the interview as needed.



Often an AHA story is appropriate as part of the answer to the popular question from recruiters, "Tell me about yourself."



10 Preparing for the start of the internship

A good start is a good basis for a successful internship. There are a few things you can do to ensure that your start to the internship is successful. Answer the following questions:

Prepare the entry into the internship

What are my goals
for the internship?

What clothes do I
choose?

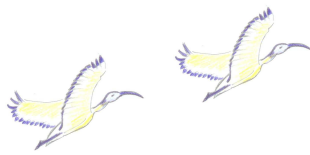
What questions
to the internship
I have and with
whom do I clarify
these?

How do I introduce
myself to my
colleagues?

What do I do if I
cannot keep an
appointment?

What do I do if I
make a mistake?





10.1 This helps with the start of the internship

Here are a few tips to help you get your internship off to a good start:

- ✓ **Clarify your tasks.** You may have done that in advance. If not, you should do it now.
- ✓ **Learn the names of your colleagues.** It is pleasant for your colleagues if you address them by name.
- ✓ **Establish good contact with the team.** Especially at the beginning, go to the canteen together with your colleagues, if this is customary. This creates a good contact with your team.
- ✓ **Ask questions.** Ask questions if something is unclear to you.
- ✓ **Coordinate your approach.** If you are working on your own project, coordinate the most important steps with the responsible contact person.

What you best avoid

- Offer to be on a first-name basis right away. Because: "As a rule, people are on first-name terms until their colleagues offer to be on first-name terms" (Zeit Campus Ratgeber 2014, p. 64).
- (Co-) blasphemy about colleagues.
- Being unpunctual. If you are ever unable to keep an appointment, inform those who will be affected in good time.



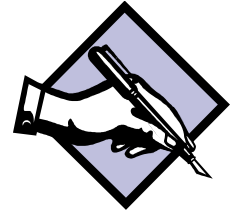
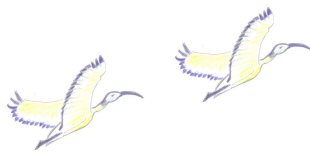
You can find more tips for starting an internship and dealing with difficult situations here:

<http://www.karriere.de/studium/knigge-fuers-praktikum-7468/>

<http://karrierebibel.de/praktikanten-knigge-10-ultimate-tips-furs-praktikum/>



II. Materials for the time of the internship



11 Learning diary

During your internship, you will be exposed to many impressions. In order for you to be able to classify and evaluate your experiences, it is recommended that you keep a learning diary.

What the learning diary is good for

- You evaluate your experiences and can use them specifically for your further studies.
- You discover what skills you have in practice and what talents lie dormant in you.
- You recognize how your learning process is going in the internship.

Take a notebook, notebook or file in PC to keep the learning diary. After every two weeks of internship, write the answers to the following questions in your learning diary:

After internship week 1 and 2:

- What questions do I have? How and with whom can I clarify these questions?

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After internship week 3 and 4

- What kind of work do I particularly enjoy?

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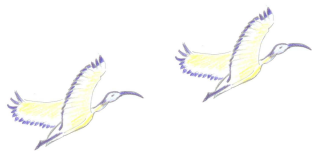
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After internship week 5 and 6

- What has surprised me the most so far?

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After internship week 6 and 7

- What did I do particularly well?

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After internship week 7 and 8

- What causes me difficulties? How can I solve them?
Who or what can help me with this?

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After internship week 9 and 10

- What did I get good feedback for?

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After internship week 11 and 12

- What do I plan to do in the next two weeks?

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After internship week 13 and 14

- How was the cooperation with your colleagues?

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After internship week 15 and 16

- What links do I see to my studies?

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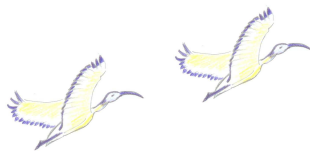
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After internship week 17 and 18

- **My conclusion: What new things have I learned?**

a. about me

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b. about cooperation with colleagues

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c. about the work with customers

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d. about the field of activity

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e. about the company

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- **What topics would I like to know more about?**

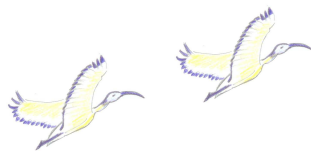
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12 Guiding questions for the time in the internship

As an alternative to the learning diary, you can answer the following questions halfway through your internship. This will give you a guideline for plumbing the course in your internship.

Guiding questions for the time in the internship

Which activities make me particularly much fun?

Am I achieving the goals I set for myself? How do I proceed to achieve the goals?

What questions do I have and how can I clarify them?

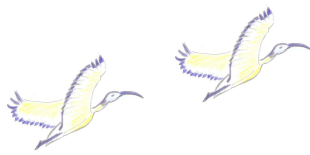


What am I learning here in relation to my studies?

What are the difficulties and how can I solve them?

What am I learning here in terms of teamwork and dealing with customers?

What personal skills do I discover in myself during the internship?



12.1 Worksheet: Guiding questions for the time in the internship

Halfway through your internship, take some time to answer the following questions.

Which activities do I particularly enjoy?

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Am I achieving the goals I set for myself? How do I proceed to achieve the goals?

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What am I learning here in relation to my studies?

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What personal skills do I discover in myself during the internship?

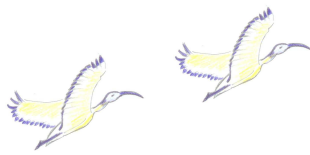
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What am I learning here in terms of teamwork and dealing with customers?

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What are the difficulties and how can I solve them?

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What questions do I have and how can I clarify them?

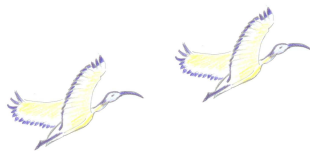
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13 "But I imagined that quite differently! "What to do when things don't go as planned?"

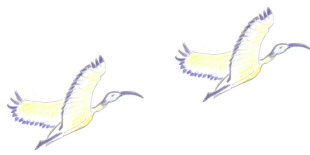
Even if this is not the rule: Sometimes things turn out differently than planned. Perhaps it turns out that your internship does not meet your expectations. If this happens, quickly seek a discussion with your internship supervisor. And offer your own ideas on how you can contribute your skills to the internship.

If you have the feeling that you will not be able to solve problems or conflicts that arise during the internship on site, take advantage of counseling at HfWU (e.g. at the Internship Office or IBIS) in good time. In this way, you can develop a strategy for action that suits you together with the advisor.



You can also find some tips for dealing with difficult situations during your internship here:

<http://www.karriere.de/studium/knigge-fuers-praktikum-7468/>



14 A good conclusion: feedback and job reference

Final feedback from your internship supervisor can give you valuable information about your competencies and development opportunities. If a final interview is not scheduled, ask for it - if you are interested in such feedback.

And: Your internship company must issue you with a **qualified job reference** according to HfWU specifications (cf. Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Umwelt 2013, p. 4). As a rule, they will send you this promptly. If necessary, ask for a job reference. In order to be able to assess the quality of your reference, here is some information about it.

A qualified job reference is structured as follows:

Introduction with name, date of birth, internship period

Brief description of the company

Description of the scope of duties

Performance Evaluation

Assessment of social behavior

Closing formulation with thanks and wishes for the future

The job reference must be written on business paper. If you notice any errors, you can ask for a correction. In Germany, the following also applies: "According to case law, the reference must be worded in a benevolent manner so as not to 'impede the employee's career advancement'" (<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arbeitszeugnis#Form>). If you are not sure to what extent this applies to your reference, seek advice from the HfWU.

Over the course of time, a testimonial language of its own has become established. More about this on the next page.



14.1 Overview of formulations in job references

According to an overview by the Staufenberg Institute, common phrases in job references mean the following² :

Performance Assessment Section	
Formulation in the certificate	Meaning
He/she has always performed the tasks assigned to him/her to our complete satisfaction.	very good
He/she has always performed the tasks assigned to him/her to our full satisfaction.	good
He/she has completed the tasks assigned to him/her to our full satisfaction.	medium
He/she has completed the tasks assigned to him/her to our satisfaction.	satisfactory
Section Assessment of social behavior	
Formulation in the certificate	Meaning
In dealing with superiors and co-workers, he/she was always courteous, friendly and correct.	a pleasant employee in every respect
He/she was always friendly and correct in dealing with superiors and co-workers.	a friendly and correct employee
He/she was correct in his/her dealings with supervisors and co-workers.	correct but not popular
The behavior was without reproach.	a clear devaluation

From: <http://www.staufenbiel.de/ratgeber-service/arbeitsrecht/arbeitszeugnis/zeugnisformulierungen-im-klartext.html>, own presentation

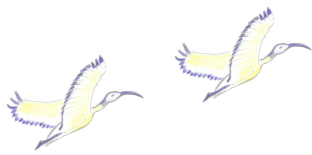


You have to write your job reference yourself? No problem. There are enough instructions in bookstores and on the Internet. You can also find information here, for example:

www.arbeitszeugnisgenerator.de

www.staufenbiel.de/ratgeber-service/arbeitsrecht/arbeitszeugnis/muster-arbeitszeugnis.html

² The Staufenberg Institute generally refers to references for employees. However, you can also apply this overview to your internship reference.



III. Materials for the follow-up of the internship



15 Worksheet: Your conclusion

Your internship is over. This is an opportunity for you to look back and sum up your experience. Answer the following guiding questions. In this way, you will arrive at a well-founded overall assessment that will give you pointers for the further design of your studies.

The internship - my conclusion

What questions I
have now

What talents I have
discovered in myself

What me
most
liked

What I did not like

What surprised me

How my career
plans have changed
as a result of the
internship

For this I have
get good feedback

What I
have learned





Worksheet: Your conclusion

My overall conclusion in one sentence. The internship was...

... 😊, because...

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... 😐, because...

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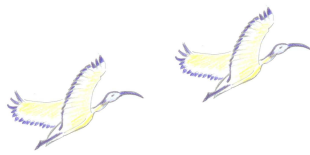
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... ☹️, because...

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16 Worksheet: Your internship success stories

If you want to specifically evaluate your internship in terms of your skills, you can use a method you already learned about in the first chapter: You write short success stories, evaluate them, and find out which skills set you apart. This knowledge about your most important skills will be very useful for the next steps in your studies and when you start your career.

This method includes two steps

- a) You write down three experiences from your internship that were very enjoyable for you and where you did something particularly well.
- b) You have these three stories evaluated by someone who is sympathetic to you (e.g., a friend, an IBIS counselor, etc.). If no one has time at the moment, you can also evaluate the story yourself.

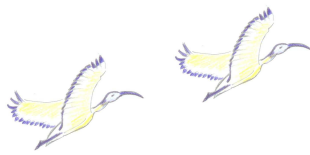
The evaluation will show you what skills you excel at.

Write down three good experiences from your internship

Find a nice place where you have enough time and peace to write your stories. And then remember three situations in the internship where you did something with pleasure and you were very satisfied with the result. The three stories you will now write will show you what skills you excel at.

Write about one DIN A 4 page per story. Answer the following questions:

- What was the initial situation? And what was your goal in this situation?
- What difficulties have been encountered?
- What did you do **step by step to reach** your goal?
- What was the result?



16.1 Instructions: Evaluate your success stories

Now that you have written your three stories, the next step is to find out what skills you have hidden in them. The easiest way to do this is to ask someone to evaluate your stories using the instructions below. This is because another person can usually tell much more quickly what skills you have used. If no one has time, you can also evaluate the stories yourself.

The evaluation of your three stories is done in two steps

First step: Your supporter evaluates your story and gives you a list of the skills that have become visible. Use the worksheet from Chapter I, 2.4 for this.

Second step: You go through this list of skills and see if there are any additional skills that you like to use very much. From the entire list of your skills, you now pick out the six skills that you like to use the most. **With this you know your strongest abilities.**

Note on the first evaluation step

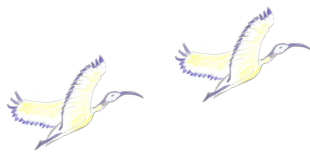
Your supporter reads through the story sentence by sentence and considers in each case which skills you have used. The most important thing is to **distinguish between skills and traits**.

What is a skill? A skill is something you do. For example: do research.

What is a property? A trait describes the way you do something. For example: conscientiously, thoroughly.

So the sentence, "I conducted the research thoroughly and conscientiously," shows the ability to "conduct research" and the trait "thoroughly and conscientiously."

See Chapter I, 2.4 for an example of evaluating a success story and the corresponding worksheet.



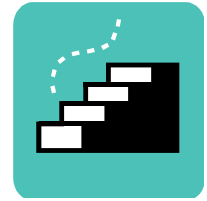
16.2 Worksheet: Your success stories in the internship - the result

Take the list of skills that came up when you evaluated your success stories. Now pick out the six skills from this list that **you like to use the most**. Put these six skills in order as you would a hit parade. Which skill do you like to use the most? Which one is your second favorite? And so on. Record your skills on the chart.

This means that you have now also used your internship to learn more about yourself and your skills. This is very useful for choosing your future focus of study and for your subsequent career entry.

**Skills I learned in the internship
I have used the most**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.



17 Worksheet: Your next steps

You will use the knowledge you gained in the internship to shape your future studies. To do this, answer the following questions:

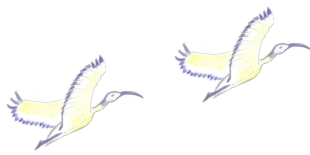
My next steps

What skills and knowledge that I used in the internship would I like to develop further?
How will I proceed specifically?

What questions do I now want to pursue in relation to specialist topics?
How will I proceed specifically?



What questions do I want to clarify with regard to further study planning and focus?
How will I proceed in concrete terms?



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