

Making the Most of Your Cybersecurity Internship: Your Launchpad to Success



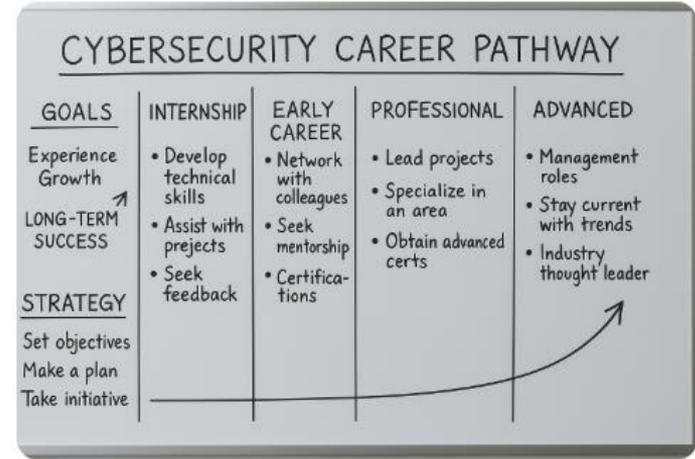
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Pre-Internship Preparation: Know before you go

- **Research** the company: mission, current threats, recent incidents
- **Review job description** – understand the tools, tech stack, and expectations
- Be **inquisitive** & a good **listener**



Mindset:

You're not "just an intern" – you're a potential future hire

Reflection Questions:

On the job, what are three questions you want answered up front? What will you do to help yourself find the answers?

Set SMART personal development goals

Specific	Clearly define your objectives (what do you want to achieve?)
Measurable	Quantifiable progress
Achievable	Realistic within the scope of your internship
Relevant	Aligned with cybersecurity career
Time-Bound	Completed within internship period (milestones)



Reflection Question:

How can you make your current goals more “SMART”?

First Week Success Strategies (and beyond)



- Introduce yourself to everyone— build early rapport
- Show curiosity: ask about projects, problems, and tools
- Keep a “tech & process journal”: what you're learning, questions, ideas
- Understand the security culture: how is risk managed? What are the priorities?

Reflection Question:

What aspects of the cybersecurity culture intrigue you most?

Maximizing Daily Habits



Reflection Question:
How can you add value
while learning from
routine tasks?

Time

Time Management:
Balance busywork
with **value-added**
tasks

Volunteer

Volunteer for
side projects or
shadowing
opportunities

Request

Request
regular
check-ins
with your
supervisor
or mentor

Document

Document
processes,
procedures,
skill used, and
new skills
learned

Engage

Engage in
team
meetings

Research

Use free time
for **research**:
new
vulnerabilities,
threat intel, or
new ideas

Building Professional Networks



Ask smart questions: *“What are the biggest security threats you’re facing?”*



Talk to professionals outside your team—**build a cross-functional network**



Use LinkedIn: connect with coworkers, post takeaways (carefully worded, no NDA material)



Join company **Slack/Teams channels** relevant to cybersecurity discussions



Reflection Question:

How can you maintain professional relationships **beyond** the internship?

Reflect & Showcase

- Track your progress: projects, problems solved, tools used (e.g., Splunk, Wireshark, Kali Linux, Nessus)
- Create a final presentation or “internship summary” for your supervisor
- Update your résumé and LinkedIn with accomplishments—use quantifiable results if possible

Reflection Question:

How will you showcase your internship achievements?



Next Steps and Resources

- Find certification opportunities
- Continued learning paths
- Professional development resources
- Industry networking events
- Follow-up with your network

Reflection Question:

How will you leverage this experience for your next career move?



ProPEL Internship Program



1. Earn Academic Credit Toward Graduation



2. Full-Time Student Status



3. Structured Reflection and Skill Development



4. Stronger Career Outcomes



5. VCEA Mentorship and Support

**BE VERSATILE.
INVEST CONSTANTLY IN YOUR SKILLS.
EMBRACE UNCERTAINTY.
GAIN MAXIMUM EXPOSURE.
BUILD AND USE YOUR NETWORK.
BE PERSISTENT. PUTP! DTNFAA!!!
TOUGHEN UP! (IT'S NOT PERSONAL).
KNOW WHAT YOU'RE WORTH.
ACQUIRE A SIDE-HUSTLE.
DON'T GET TYPECAST.**



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

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Thank you!



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