

Intro                      Hi, I'm Jacob Walsh, and I'm Orion LaMontagne. Thank you for tuning in to The Manage-A-Bull MBA podcast. Where we have deep dive conversations with students, faculty, staff, and alumni, to give you a comprehensive picture of the life inside of a top tier MBA program. In this episode, we speak with Carrie Gardner, Director of internships and experiential work. In our conversation Carrie explains to us all the work that goes on behind the scenes at the UB School of Management Career Resource Center, help students prepare for internships. Be sure to check out our show notes, where we will post links to the UB MBA web page and contact information for Carrie Gardner and ourselves. If you enjoyed this podcast, follow us on Twitter @UBMBAandMS to stay up to date on what's happening at the UB School of Management, where extraordinary is our ordinary. Thank you and enjoy.

Jake                      So we're back here today for the next episode of The Manage-A-Bull MBA podcast. I'm Jake Walsh with my co-host Orion Lamontagne. Today we're here with Carrie Gardner, who works in our Career Resource Center at the school management. And Carrie, can you give us on your positions title, and then just a quick overview kind of about what you do and what's entailed with that?

Carrie                    Sure, of course, I'm happy to be here. I'm the director of internships and experiential learning. And that sounds like a really big role, which it is it has a lot of dynamics, but really, I consider myself a team player, I've never been a person to adhere very strongly to an org chart, I feel like the best way to get worked on is to treat everybody as equals and to just, you know, understand that everybody's in it. together. I have a really great team. I have an assistant director, her name is Annie Hayes, I work with Caitlin rush, who runs the undergraduate program as well. And the three of us really are focus is on experiential learning. In the context for what I do is mainly internships. And I work with employers to develop internship opportunities, I work with students who need experiential learning, maybe some of them having never had even a part time job before I help students at the undergrad level all the way through our MBA and our MS students, both domestic and international. And on the employer side, it's more about developing the opportunities and making sure that they're quality opportunities for students.

Jake                      Okay, well, um, and then one of the things that correct me if I'm wrong, I believe sets the school management apart is our career, we have our own specific Career Resource Center. So the rest of the school kind of has a general one. But here, it's just the business school.

Carrie                    Yes, thank you. That's an important concept, so the Career Resource Center serves just School of Management students. If you look at most business schools across the US that is in trend, and in keeping with the practices of most business schools, it's important, because we do participate in rankings, but more so we really do want our students to be successful. And there's lots and lots of research out there about the impact of experiential learning on career choices,

making good decisions, understanding different industries, understanding how your education fits, like a kind of like a puzzle piece into the overall picture that you're trying to create for your life. So we feel that having a Career Resource Center dedicated specifically to our students, is a much better strategy for the student success, but also to kind of make sure that we have a lot of alumni involvement is as we move forward.

Jake                      So how does some of that process happen? Because I know myself, you know, when I was looking for internships last year, we have our biz link, which is the portal that we can all use. But um, there's tons of employee or employer internship opportunities available their own school's portal, so not just going to, you know, indeed, or some of these other sites, but there's so many posted internally, how are those connections develops?

Carrie                    Do you mean how do the jobs find their way onto Biz Link?

Jake                      Yes, our internal portal.

Carrie                    Our jobs, our internship, well, so interesting. statistic is, right now we're looking at about 48% of our students tell us that they find internships through networking, they don't find them in biz link, indeed, handshake, whatever, you know, online tool, it's a huge percentage. And that's why I'm sure sometimes ad adnauseam, we're talking about networking, but it is really true, that students can create their own path, and they can create their own opportunities by getting out there and, and networking. And so a big part of what we do is making connections, the postings that are in Biz Link can come in there in a variety of different ways. I mean, we do have our key employers that we work with all the time, and those employers understand that that is a mechanism that they shouldn't be absent from. And so that's the way we communicate with our students. And that's important always to post in there. But the other part of what is inside of biz link is a calendar. And that's how students can find out about events that we're holding employers that are coming to campus. I mean, the postings that are in biz link, those are employers that usually are alumni, they could be no employers to, we have a lot of startups in the western New York area, that that's a whole Avenue, you both know, that's a whole avenue that is rich with opportunity. And so we have startups in there as well. But a lot of the postings in biz link are from people that have worked with us before, they understand what we do. And they're only interested in School of Management students, we do also go to company websites, and make sure that we understand what they're promoting, because they don't always reach out to us, they don't have the time or they don't have the HR staff, they could, they could have an HR intern that would help them with that with it. But and so it's not uncommon that we'll go to a company website and kind of pilfer, you know, whatever they have on there and put it into this link. And the reason for that is companies use their websites to promote their own opportunities. Most websites have a careers area. And I'm not sure in all the responsibilities that

students have, that they're that they're really navigating every single company website that they would need to, to understand what the opportunities are. So part of the way I see biz link is it's our attempt at putting everything in one place. But I mean, if think about how opportunities grow and how companies change, there's no way we can ever capture every opportunity and post it in the old days, because I'm old, but in the old days, there used to be a thing that we talked about called the hidden job market. And the way that we talk about it now is networking. So it really companies sometimes don't even have the time to create a posting, they don't have time to schedule on an on campus interview, for example. And so they're just hoping that by word of mouth that they can fill some of these positions and internships to fall into that category. Did I answer the question?

Orion

Yeah,

Carrie

I feel like I went off in all different directions there. But there's just so many ways that we try to connect students with opportunities, Biz Link is one of them, what I always tell students is if you're not looking at this, like you're missing a big chunk, what you ought to be doing to land an internship, we work very, very hard to create on campus recruiting schedules as well. And our employer relations manager, Amy Johnson works very hard to make sure that there's postings really terrific postings in the system. And that we oftentimes have information sessions connected to those postings, and then the ultimate goal would be to bring the employer to campus to conduct interviews on campus as well.

Jake

Absolutely.

Carrie

Does that help?

Jake

Yeah, you know, I think that's a good point of distinction. Because, you know, I, personally, I found Biz link very useful. When I did end up getting a position it wasn't one that was through biz link. But I, at the same time, even though that didn't happen, it was nice that I did have the access that Biz Link created. And I was able to get a bunch of applications out for some postings, and I even had an eye camps interview, you know, which was pretty cool that I have for the first round of interviews one of the local businesses, they came in here to meet the students. But I do find that interesting, I want to, I think it'd be interesting if you elaborate a little more, because when we had our advantage session, last week, Ross MacPherson was talking about the 80/20 rule, and how 80% of the job postings aren't actually listed on the traditional sites. And that if you're only focusing on the traditional sites, you only seen 20% of the available jobs. Actually, after his presentation, I went and a bunch of the company I've been looking at, I was able to find some career focused Twitter pages that they had that are like just for putting out jobs. And that was something that now that it's been brought to light. I mean, it makes sense now, but I hadn't really thought of it too much previously. So I'm interested, you know, a lot of the students who

do find those jobs, maybe not through traditional network, how does how do you see that happen the most? Is it just running into the right people? Or meeting the right alumni? Or is it coming into this office? And there's a connection where it's like, oh, you know, we do know this person that this place? Who might you're looking for your skill set?

Carrie Yeah, well, I mean, one thing, I will say, before we leave kind of the concept of searching Biz Link, we fill most of the positions that are posted on Biz link, we have a pretty good rate of return.

Orion So it's a pretty good tool for the students and for the employers.

Carrie It is, it's a very good tool because of what you brought up a few minutes ago, it's exclusive to School of Management. It's not a kind of a public site. And I think that sometimes that's where students need to remember that it's not like handshake that is open to the entire university campus, you don't have the same amount of competition. For a lot of those postings, our accounting program, in particular, it really is, is synced up very nicely with all of the activity that's in biz link. That's how accounting students really find most of their internship opportunities. And so again, Biz Link is a really great tool. It's an important tool. But I always tell students, if you're interested in a company, you need follow their Twitter, you need to follow them on LinkedIn, you need to find out what alumni are inside of that company using LinkedIn. Because as you just said, companies are moving very fast. This is a really fast global economy right now. And if you're a company that isn't keeping up, you're probably not getting the best candidates. I think Twitter, Twitter can be a playground. But I also think that Twitter can be very helpful in understanding where companies are and what brand message they're trying to put out. And I've had students tell me that they've connected with companies using social media platforms, mainly LinkedIn, but I have had a few tell me that they've initially they've been able to educate themselves a little bit better by following somebody's twitter feed or the company's twitter feed and being able to talk about that, in the interview,

Orion Do you find that there's, I guess, like a, like a trending preference that you see among companies that you interact with that they really wish students knew. You know, this is really how we prefer to advertise positions, something that's more pervasive?

Carrie It's an awesome question. I think what companies really don't like is when students have no idea what's going on, I think, I think that any attempts that a student can make, there are so many platforms now to take advantage of and to keep in touch with I think the real heart of the matter is for students is there's so much that students have to do all the time. And there's so much information coming at you. And I and I think that that can be overwhelming, especially during those really heavy workload weeks where there's presentations do or there's midterms, or there's big papers, or you have a team project going on to think about, oh, I better check the Twitter feed of X Y and Z, I think that that can

be really challenging. So yeah, I mean, I, as far as trending, the feedback that we get from employers is we put so much emphasis on our social media. And we expect that students that are interested in our company are following us on whatever platform, and I think you can tell by which is more active. I think the websites have become sort of a repository for companies except for their career sites, the career piece usually is, you know, kept updated, also depends on the resources of the company. I mean, the thing that I struggle with myself is when a company reaches out to me and says, they want to start up an internship program, for example, or they have internship opportunities. And maybe they're a mid-size or smaller company, which loads of really terrific opportunities in those companies. And I, myself go online, and I start doing research, I go to their website, I look for them on Twitter, you know, I do all the research that we tell students to do. And I find myself if the website isn't what I think it should look like, I form an impression immediately of their company. And it may not have really anything to do with the fact other than the company's growing so fast, or they don't have the resources to build up their online presence the way they should. And, you know, that's part of the feedback that we would give to companies, you have to understand that if you want to be in this game, you have to play by the student's rules. And the student's rules are you need a good online presence. And that means taking a look at all the different platforms and figuring out which ones are going to work for you. The requests for social media and marketing interns, has been increasing every single summer, we get more and more of those requests from employers. And kind of funny part of that is the employers I think, don't realize how fast students can work. And so they think that a social media intern, that that's all you would need to do is just kind of post things on their sites. And so part my job then is to help the employer understand what it really means to have an online presence, what their social media should look like, the market research that a student could be doing, like all the other things that the student perspective can add to the online presence and enhance it in some way some companies bite, and others just can't, for whatever reason. I mean, if we're talking about startups, I think it's better for startups to rely on something like Twitter, because it's faster, and you know, it's more exciting, and they can be active and to build out a massive website with every single, you know, project that they have just, they don't have the resources, nor do I think it really makes sense for them, because they're focuses on development. And, and so the web presence really isn't going to be there. Does that get near? What you were asking?

Orion

I think it's super interesting. And I was thinking about what you were talking about? Biz Link as well, where you know, half students are finding it on social media. I think that's super useful for myself and for other students.

Carrie

Or traditional networking online social media, and like traditional networking, sorry,

Orion and to try to feel out based on what the company is using what they see most active in that might be, you know, your best, your best prospect, your best lead.

Carrie Well, it's it certainly enhances the interview. Yeah, right. Because the company will definitely ask, what do you know about us? What, what's going on with our company? Why are you interested? Why are you sitting here with me? And so that's definitely, you know, one of the ways to better understand that. But I also think that the more traditional networking is, is just as important. So but oftentimes, it starts with doing research to find out, is there an alumnus that works in that company? And can I how do I reach out to them?

Jake Do you think I mean, beyond, you know, being active on some of these different platforms? Are there any certain characteristics or features or just steps that the students who get the killer internships that maybe they took, you know, proactively to get there beyond just being on you know, several different sources of LinkedIn, whatever it may be, like, the students who really go in those extra mile and get the good internships, I guess, are there any certain characteristics you see among those people? Or how early do they start? You know, if you if you want to go work for like a large company, or for your summer internship, who usually gets those? And how

Carrie The students that listen to us and do everything we tell them too, no im just kidding

Everyone Laughs

Carrie It would it, I think that you could look at, you know, life sometimes presents us with an opportunity and opens up a door that we really ought to step through, and it's up to us to step through it and take the risk. So part of it, I think, is being aware of enough and engaged enough that you can recognize when those doors are opening, and to not squander those opportunities, I definitely think there's part of it, that makes it sound like luck. But I don't really think entirely that luck is real, I think that is the way we're perceiving our surroundings. And if we're engaged enough, and active enough in our own lives and doing the things that we ought to be doing, we can recognize when a door opens, and you haven't been you have a decision? Should I take this this? Should I move on to the next phase? Or is, am I afraid? Or is this too good to be true? Or do I just I don't think this is what I want. I mean, one of the best parts of my job is when a student comes in and says, you know, I had no idea what to expect. I didn't think I was going to like that at all. I didn't even like the person that was doing the presentation, I thought they were you know, not great. And then I went off to them and started talking to them. And then I just started learning more about the company. And, you know, I talked, I found someone that worked there and the more I decided that I was going to explore that avenue, the more I realized that would be a really great opportunity for me, I'm going to try this. So I think some of it is, you know, thinking about, are you risk adverse? Do you like to play it safe? And that's okay, there's nothing wrong with that. But what does that

mean for you? How are you going to define your preferences, as they relate to the opportunities that, you know, might present themselves, but opportunities are not going to present themselves while you're sitting in your apartment, playing a video game. And I know, we're not no one in this room is doing that, of course, but that you know what I mean, you have to be in it to get the opportunity. So I think the students at land, the killer internships are students that are really crossing off everything off the list, they have a plan. So everything is quality about what they're doing, they definitely have the idea that the resume is a living document, you don't write one resume and it's going to be good for every single opportunity you may find that you're changing on. That's your marketing kit, you know, that's your toolkit, you may find that you're changing it up, depending on you know who or what you're trying to impress or get into the cover letter, you know, we do a lot, we talked to students a lot about how important it is to have good writing skills. It sounds super old fashioned. Some companies though, if you submit a cover letter, if it's not good, you're not going any further. So if you I guess it if you bother to do these things that the company says send us a statement, why you're interested in this internship program and some of the larger brands, more well-known internship programs, you have to write a personal statement, it isn't just throw a resume at it. If that has mistakes in it, or it's disingenuous or it's just disconnected from what the company is really doing. You're not you're no longer a candidate. So I think part of the killer landing the killer internship, we should we should write up a book or do a Ted talk on landing the killer internship. I think part of it is reading, taking the time to slow down enough to actually read what the application requirements are, what messages what clues Can you find in the internship description itself, that really feed the cover letter and the content of the resume and making those two things align their head, there has to be an alignment. I also think leveraging alumni and or trying to get some kind of a contact is really helpful. I don't think that you can just like use a contact as a free ticket to an internship because that's disrespectful. But I do you think that it can be helpful just in terms of gaining insight about what are the values of the company? What skill sets do they rate sort of differently than others? And how can I like, present those a little more effectively in my materials. I also think that a lot of these larger companies or the internship really, that's a good fit, you know, obviously phone, maybe phone screening, maybe a Skype or zoom, whatever, some kind of online interview, the in person interview those things, you cannot wing, any of that those things have to be practiced over and over and over again, until you can do it in your sleep, literally. And the students that land the really good internships, practice, practice, practice. And they really are good at that delivery of, you know, the Tell me about yourself statement or some people call it the elevator pitch or that I like to call it personal commercial, because that's what it actually is. And commercials are fast. And they get to the heart of the product. And so I think being able to put all the pieces together is important, but not feeling like you have to do it all by yourself. I think students

in particular getting more and more independent. But I don't and which is fine. I'm not knocking it. But I also wonder sometimes if it's really the proper term would actually be isolated. Because I think that in the I'm pointing at my hand pretending it's a phone right now. But I think I think in the way that we communicate with each other, is we text each other a lot. And, you know, we do a lot of that. And so yes, that helps make things faster. It's really great for making plans and sharing funny things and images. And it's, it's great, there's nothing really wrong with it. What's wrong is if you're so entrenched in communication by an electronic means that you can't do it in person, or you're really not good at it, then that's where I think some students can fall down, they're not making it all the way through the process, because they haven't practice the actual face to face verbal stuff that eventually needs to happen.

Jake Yeah, I guess just to be clear on that. Students can get all of that here, the CRC?

Carrie Absolutely.

Jake You know, with all the practice interviewing the resume editing and help with cover letters. You know, I think we were clearly told all that, you know, during our orientation, but I sometimes wonder how many students took it to heart or realized it is no, I, I came up, I still come up here all the time. You know, I sit with Pam and we tear apart my resume to you know, every time I make a little bit better, I've done practice interviews. But sometimes I speak with students who haven't done any of that. And I'm just be like, what are you waiting for, you know, we have all these awesome resources upstairs, like, use them, you know? So, I mean, do you get a good turn through or turnout here, though, you get a quite a lot students who do take advantage of that.

Carrie We do. Our individual appointments, always booked it is busy in in the one on one appointments, I think. And I think that that makes a lot of sense. Because you feel better about being having a private, you know, we have offices, we're not in cubicles, we respect the privacy of students, and you know, career development decisions and internship, even just the internship search can be kind of private at first, because a lot of this, let's face it, it's connected to self-confidence. It's connected to being you know, having that belief that you can fit in to a particular organization. And you can convince someone that you have the skill set and the qualities that they're looking for. But what aren't well attended are our workshops, and our seminars, and we do get I mean, we have, depending on the population. I'm not naming any, but depending on which program we're talking about, we have better attendance in some of our programs than others in terms of workshops that were doing. But part of our struggle is when do you hold the workshop that everyone can come to I mean, everybody's so busy, it's very difficult to find that perfect schedule that people can avail themselves to the sessions. But I think the other the other, very well attended piece of what we do are the information sessions, that when we bring employers to campus, those are paramount to the success, I think of our



students, because you're not just learning from us, you're also learning from the employer. And our hope is always that the employer is conveying information that is similar to the information that we're giving students about the resume the cover letter. I mean, we critique at the undergraduate level, we have two required career courses, one for sophomores, and juniors, and the junior level course there can be anywhere between 300 and 400 students in that class. And we critique every single one of those resumes every semester, at the beginning of each semester. That's the first assignment that those students have. So we divide up those resumes, between the staff and we, we critique all those resumes.

Jake

That's intense.

Carrie

It is very intense. When we see the pile landing on our desk, we all have different feelings about the pile of resumes, but at the end of the day, then that's one of the reasons why we're here. And that's just a basic piece of like I said, that toolkit that, you know, creates the personal brand. So we also have a resume critique service at the front desk, anyone can come in and drop off their resume. And our graduate assistants have been trained to do resume critiques. And then again, you know, all the staff, you can bring your resume to an individual appointment. We have quick questions, every single day of the week, students can come in for quick questions, and bring resumes or cover letters, those should be around 15 minutes. But if no one else is in line, those can also expand a little bit longer to cover more, more ground. We have a practice interview program. We have employers, sometimes we have employers and residents that like to answer questions and give students their own insights on how to conduct a successful interview, we do something called coffee cup conversations at the undergrad level. And those are speed. Those are like speed networking sessions, where we have alumni that come in and talk about how to write a resume and what they look for how to navigate the person that answers the phone in their company. You know, students get to ask any kind of question that they want. But yeah, we have so many services here. And we are always interested in student feedback, because that's the way that we try to improve and enhance what we're offering to students. We do our MBA advantage session for first year on MBAs and second year MBAs and we do evaluations. And our hope is that students are brutally honest in those evaluations, because we do actually sit and read every single one of those we get together into a debrief. We're very big on getting feedback from students, because we feel like that's the only way that we know how to improve all the services that we provide.

Jake

Yeah. By the way, this past advantage session was actually I think, my favorite of all the one so far, I found the advantage session Friday, incredibly beneficial.

Orion

Yeah, that is what everyone, kind of the gist among the students, they were talking about.

Carrie Oh, good. Yeah, we worked hard on every aspect of it.

Jake Yeah, I think it's just now that we're all in the second year. And you know, the real job search is really on our mind. I think people were a little more engaged, but also called the sessions were spot on relevant. I, I love it all. So thank you to this office for putting it together.

Carrie Oh, that's great. Yeah, that's great. That's great to hear. I think one of the things that makes MBA advantage so successful for our students is the willingness of our alumni to give back, we're so grateful to our alumni for staying engaged. And one of the things I think that differentiates this MBA program from others is we can literally get on the phone and say, Hey, we need you, can you come in and help us facilitate this networking event, or, or, or we're going to do, you know, a showcase where we want to highlight the accomplishments of our students, or we want to have you come in and talk about networking, or whatever it is, and we have so many wonderful alumni, hopefully, the two of you, when you get when you land in your positions, you'll be two of those people that we might be able to call up and say,

Jake That's the plan

Carrie I just think it's so important for the students in the MBA program, which I believe can be so overwhelming, it's such an overwhelming program, because there's so many options, and so many things that you can do with it, I think it's really important to hear from MBAs who are just a couple of years out. And then, you know, maybe five years out a little bit more. And when we think about our programming, we very strategically think about our alumni in which ones would be a better fit for where we think the students are at the time. So the first year MBAs it's all about team building, welcoming them in and helping them understand what they're about to embark on. And, and getting a perspective from alumni that way. And then obviously, for the second years, it's a little bit more entrenched in some of the skill sets, that you're going to need to be successful in your job search. And so we do spend a lot of time thinking about who are the right people to bring on board. And one of the events that I do is, we've now called it Intern ally, and it is in January. And that's an event where we, I didn't want to try to do an internship fair, because I think sometimes fairs can just set up a certain mode of behavior, which again, can be very productive. But for this particular event, I wanted it to be a little more casual. And so we bring in companies that tell us that they're ready to hire interns, or companies that we've worked with for a very long time. And we set up the bistro tables, and we just try to make it an avenue for students to practice their networking, and to just meet people that work in these different companies' kind of as a I bill it to the companies as a preview of our MBAs, the new MBAs and just kind of make it as a more relaxed way to build connections between those alumni in our students that are looking for summer internships.

Orion                      Yeah, actually, I applied for an internship this summer, because of Intern Alley, there was a company I didn't even know existed in Buffalo. And so that was one that I that I sought after to try to see if they had any, any positions they're hiring for. So you know, good for, I think companies to kind of get their name out there as well.

Carrie                     Yeah, you know, we've really learned from that event. So the second year I did it, I tried to grow it. And I put it in an in its own room right now. It's in a hallway, where we hold it. And I put it into a room and we have food in the back, and we dressed it up. And we had all these companies, and I killed it. Because I thought making it a little bit more formal. And having a larger presence would make it feel like there were more opportunities. And I think what it did was it made it feel formal and almost stodgy. And so we got together and said, whoops. And we it was still fine. But we moved it back into the hallway where it just feels more active, and it feels more fun. And actually over the several years now that we've done it, I've had almost 100% of those companies have hired an intern. So last from last intern alley, I think we were somewhere around, right around 90 90% of the companies hired an intern, that they made a connection with an Intern Alley and then the others. Eventually, they made connections with students because they came to the events. And it's a good way for us to show the quality of students that we have in our MBA program, I think it's really important for employers to understand how careful we are about when we emit students into the MBA program, every we try to create a diverse program, you know, as you know, we have our dual degrees as well as the MBA that you know, the students that are focusing solely on the MBA, and it really has changed the face of the program. And events like Intern Alley I think are a great way to check a lot of items off the list of motivators, you know, for creating an event like that.

Jake                        Yeah, one thing I'm interested to hear your opinion on, because I've been thinking about this a lot lately, I'm starting to look for post grad jobs, but kind of back to the resume and the cover letter. So the resume, I mean, I find that easier, because it's a lot more factual. But on the cover letter, I've been trying to strike this balance between checking the proper boxes that you need to include on that cover letter, but also having your own spin. So you can stick out amongst the thousands of cover letters that are all worded exactly the same. And I've been struggling a little bit to find that balance. And I've been asking a bunch of people lately just trying to get as many opinions as I can. But I'm interested in yours, too. You know, how do you make sure the cover letter has what it needs to have, but also can help you stick out

Orion                        I struggle with the cover letter as well. So

Carrie                     The planet struggles with cover letters, and no one wants to write a cover letter. And I think some employers don't even like to read them. So one of the things that I always tell students to remember is, the cover letter is written to drive the

employer to your resume, you are not going to get a job based on your cover letter. So take a pressure off yourself immediately. You're trying to reach out to the employer and say you need to look at my resume. And this is why. So the cover letter needs to be concise. Obviously, I we you know, I'll have students come in and literally, their cover letters on two pages. And I'm like, No, no one will ever, stop. No one's no one's reading that. No one has time. But you know, if you can't hook the person in, in the first maybe you have your introductory paragraph, which again should be very brief. If you can't hook them in, in the top like third of anything that you're giving them, they will not finish reading it, they'll just flip the page, hopefully and look at the resume. So I like to think about it is how can we front load these materials? How can we Front Load the cover letter and make a good impression on the cover letter so that they look at the resume? How can we front load sort of the idea of you know, what are the main things that I'm trying to do with the resume to get this in internship opportunity? The trick with the cover letter is you know who the company is you spelled the company's name correctly, you know the name of your degree. Now this I'm not being facetious. I'm being serious, because these are some of the goofy errors that we make that kill us in terms of our you know, candidacy for it for position. So the standard stuff is how did you hear about this opportunity? If you heard about it through networking contact, you need to drop that name immediately. In that letter, you can't hide it, and you can't be secretive or evasive about it or whatever. And you need to tell the networking contact, I'd like to drop your name in this cover letter. Do I have your permission to do that? Okay, and you always need to keep your networking contact informed of this is how I'm using your name. This is how I'm leveraging our connection. Do I have your permission? Can you help me with that strategy? So we talked a lot about 48% of students finding internships through networking last year, they need to drop names in cover letters, obviously a name that somebody would know. So the name is a person in the company that you're applying to. But companies also spend a lot of time and effort on promoting their opportunities. So they need to know how you found it. Because that's one of the ways they understand the return on their investment in promoting their opportunities. Did you see it on our website? Or do you follow our Twitter? Did you see something? Did we reach out to you on LinkedIn? Did you attend an event? So they like to see that because immediately you've engaged them in the letter, they're part of the letter, it a lot of the cover letters that I critique are all about the student, which obviously, you know, at the end of the day, you're trying to promote yourself, but you have to engage your reader immediately right away, they have to be engaged right away. And that's, I think, the challenge of the cover letter. And then if you think about it as a matching game, you can look at maybe two concepts, I wouldn't try to go further than that. Because then you have a long letter in your hands, maybe two strong concepts. You look at them, you pull those concepts either from the internship posting itself, maybe from a current event of the company, a good one out a negative.

And then you find concrete examples that you've outlined on your resume and you draw the match in the body of the cover letter, you make a match between the two. And that briefly, because remember, you're trying it's a cover letter, it's the cover of your resume. That's all it is. So you're trying to get them to look okay, now this person Wow. Okay, I have to go find this on the resume the read this, the details of this example on the resume. And then in the last paragraph, the last paragraph should be action oriented. What do you want from them? What do you want them to do? Do you want them to call you? Are you going to call them? Don't get too forceful, though, in the closing paragraph, if I wouldn't say, I will call you tomorrow at 9am to schedule my interview, like I would not get that aggressive. There's a fine line between being assertive and then sounding too boisterous or

Orion

Pesky

Carrie

Pesky. pesky. Okay. Yeah, that's a good one. But the last paragraph is about action. And it's about saying thank you, lots of students forget to say thank you. And, and, you know, some companies draw the line at that. I mean, if you think about a company with a large brand, they could be getting 1000 applicants a week for an internship. And so your point is very well taken, you have to figure out a way to stand out I think being concise, being on point, and being correct, and accurate. Everything in there needs to be correct and accurate, I think are very helpful, especially in the cover letter. And it shouldn't just be I, I, I, everything and the company. If they're looking for an answer, turn, they are not looking for you to improve their entire company or improve their entire business model. I see that a lot. I feel I I'm a good in, I would be a good intern to help you improve the performance of overall of your company. That's too broad. It isn't tangible. And it almost sounds like you're saying that to everyone. I bet you say that to all the companies, you know what I mean? So it the more specific the cover letter, I think the more genuine, the employer interprets it, and they know that maybe you've done your homework.

Jake

Okay

Orion

That makes sense

Jake

Um, one of the one of the final things I know we're coming close on time here. But for students who are potentially listening, I know there's a big difference between a lot of the larger companies, their window for applications is much earlier than some of the smaller or local companies. So you know, what to look out for, if you do want to, you know, applied to like a Google or an Amazon or something large? You know, typically, I think a lot of those closed by November 1st. So I guess any recommendations on students who, you know, whether it's a large firm or a smaller firm, when they need to start being proactive, and getting, you know, out there,

Carrie

We actually do have a student that has an interview with Google this year. So we're very excited about that. We have had that before. But whenever we see the larger names, of course, we get excited. There is no, I have students that are not very, maybe, excuse me, I don't have a sense of urgency about the internship search, and feel like they're going to wait, I'll be fine. I'm going to wait, I'm too busy. I can't think about that right now. I'm going to wait. That's okay. But that means that in that waiting period, you are sacrificing certain opportunities. And then when you finally get to the point where you're ready, you just have to approach it from that realistic standpoint that because you didn't search early, you're now looking at probably a different category of opportunities locally. Let's start there, because we generate a lot of internships locally here in western New York, there is a little more flexibility. However, even locally, some of the more recognizable brands that are here in Western New York that are headquartered here in western New York, have also caught on to this idea of early recruitment. And so the way that that's changed our advising, and I think that the way that that's going to change the experience of the MBA, is that you actually do now need to be thinking a little more strategically in the first semester of your program. Conceptually, what kind of internship might I be going after? Or what kinds of companies am I drawn to? And why am I drawn to those companies? So for some students in the first year MBA, still kind of not exactly sure. I know I should have a concentration or maybe I don't need a concentration. I'm not sure exactly. I know, I like a lot of things, I want to take some classes and figure out what I like. There's nothing wrong with that. As a matter of fact, I feel like once you've made a decision, all the pieces that we've been talking about come together a lot with a lot more clarity, because you've kind of made a decision. I have other students that keep changing their minds and are still successful, because they understand how to leverage each one of those skill sets or the qualities that they have, that would make a difference with the company, accounting, which is not really an MBA concentration. But accounting is always the earliest. But I think what because the big four are doing this early recruiting all the other big brands now have jumped on that same kind of platform and are doing early recruiting. So the big, big names Amazon, Google, you know, some of the larger brands, if you know that you want to try to have a brand like that on your resume for the internship, then you also are saying I'm willing to do my internship search earlier probably than my peers. And so you can't always look to your colleagues to see what they're doing as an indicator of what you should be doing. And that naturally, we kind of do that in any group that we're in right to say, well, what's, what are these people doing over here? I'm going to be okay, because these people are telling me they're waiting, you know, another couple of months. So I'm just going to do that. Again, I'm a big believer in, you know, as we started the conversation, if you're engaged, that's how you're going to draw the opportunities. So you just have to kind of for yourself, think about what are the components that I need to have a successful internship search? And how can I get help. So come to the Career

Resource Center, come to an advising, appointment, come two quick questions, whatever and start to develop plan. And part of the plan needs to be a timeline, the larger brands are not super flexible. So once they do the first couple of rounds, and you've missed out in the first couple of rounds, they might say, well, we might have another grouping of postings that come up later. But those will be those won't be part of our recruiting strategy, those might be some one off things that people are promoting on their own. If it's a local company, and we know people, we might be able to help you. And we might have a little bit more flexibility, because it is a local company. And you know, the idea is we'd have some alumni there that could be instrumental. If it's a startup company, a smaller startup company, yes, there, I believe more in the space of the need has arisen, and oh, my gosh, we need help. And we try to serve those companies as well. But even the startups, now we're coaching them and working with them, and helping them understand that they can have a much, much more effective plan by posting at least a semester before you actually need the intern, I mean, business will always generate opportunity, there's never going to be a time when there are zero opportunities, it's just there might be a time that's more advantageous than others. And as you mentioned, Jacob, the larger programs are getting early and earlier and earlier with their deadlines. What I don't like about that is I believe that it creates too much pressure on our students in terms of the turnaround that they expect with your decision. So some of these companies want to lock everything up by December, or January 1, they want everything locked up. And that removes all the other avenues that you could pursue, you sort of have to not pursue them anymore. For some students. That's, you know, I feel great, I want that my friends are scrambling around, and I already have my internship and I can't wait. And I'm excited. And that's great. But for others, I'm I do believe that there's a percentage of people that accept offers, but think in the back of their minds, I can always get out of this if I find something better. And we struggle with that in terms of our advising, because while we believe that you have the right to make the best decisions, we also have to think about our relationships with employers. And if we have a lot of students just taking things, accepting offers, just for the sake of having something

Orion

It affects the reputation of the market, right?

Carrie

Yeah, it kind of has an impact on our relationships with the employers. So we always have kind of a personal, there's always a struggle with our advising around that. But yeah, there earlier the better. And that means, as you pointed out so many times today, that needs availing yourself to all the services that we provide so that we can create a map and we don't even imagine or even want every single student in the MBA program or the MS programs that we serve, to have the same exact path. And we do not want to create a cookie cutter MBA, that is not what we are trying to do. And so I think one of the things that differentiates what our approach is not just in the Career Resource Center with

the Graduate Programs Office, all of the offices that serve our students, is we really try to customize what we do based on what your own individual situation is. And we try to be sensitive to that. Given that though, there are some things tried and true, kind of traditional approaches that work can work for everyone.

Jake                      Awesome. Well, Carrie, thank you so much for doing this. We appreciate having you on this has been a ton of useful information. I think for current students, prospective students, even for myself, this has been awesome.

Orion                     For sure.

Jake                      So for anyone listening, if you would like to meet with Carrie, you can go on to biz link. And you can set up an appointment with Carrie and you can ask her some more detailed questions if you're interested on your own internship or just looking to get some advice. And with that, we thank you.

Orion                     Thank you

Carrie                    You're welcome, thank you!

Orion                     It goes by fast huh?

Carrie                    It did go by fast.

Orion                     Everybody is like oh, 45 minutes already?