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WELCOME TO TIME2TRACK'S APPIC INTERNSHIP APPLICATION GUIDE

At Time2Track, we help thousands of students track their hours for APPIC internships each year. We also publish weekly blog articles, with a large section of our blog dedicated solely to helping students navigate the APPIC Internship Application process.

Recently, we asked ourselves, "How can we help these students more?"

The answer came in the form of this APPIC Application eBook, where we have compiled, edited, and organized all of our APPIC blog content into one easy-to-read resource.

We hope this eBook can help guide you on your journey through the APPIC Internship Application process, and we wish you the very best of luck!

- The Time2Track Team

Part I

FINDING AN APPIC INTERNSHIP

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APPIC INTERNSHIP APPLICATIONS: IS IT REALLY ALL ABOUT THE "MATCH"?

By Josephine Minardo, PsyD

YES, it REALLY is all about the Match!

Internship application season has just started, and making sure you focus on identifying good matches between you and the sites you are applying to, from the very start, is critical. I have always emphasized how important it is for students to first determine their training goals prior to even searching for sites.

Think About What You Want

That means you need to start with thinking about what it is that YOU want from an internship, rather than just focusing on what you think internship sites are looking for in you. All internship sites, from the most competitive, to the least competitive, are looking for the best matches between what they have to offer, and are looking for in an intern, and what an intern has to offer, and is looking for in an internship site.



...you need to start thinking about what it is that YOU want from an internship...

I recently presented a workshop on "Maximizing Impact and Ensuring Success When Applying to Internship and Externship" at the New York State

Psychological Association (NYSPA) Internship Fair.

Despite only 60-minutes to discuss the most important elements of successful preparation, I spent a great deal of time discussing how to identify training goals, because it's THAT important.

My workshop was followed by a panel Q&A with internship directors and the first question was, not surprisingly, "What do you look for in an intern?" Every single director made it clear that they are looking for a MATCH, and what that means varies among sites, and in most cases cannot even be captured in a simple list of qualifications because the intern needs to "make a case" for why they are a good match with the site. That is what directors are looking for.

Define Training Goals

In order to identify the best match for you, you need to know what you are looking for, and that depends on what your training goals are and what you offer in terms of the experience you bring to the site.

Directors look for signs of a match across all your materials, not just the cover letter, though that is where you need to state it explicitly and make a clear case for it. The "signs" that you are a good match for a site should be organically present if, in fact, it is genuine.

"Forcing" a fit never works well. It comes across in your materials and directors can tell when you are trying to make it work even though it's not really there. Consequently, having a "true" match with sites is ever so important, and the only way to get there is to know yourself, and your goals, and then to understand your limits and finally, to identify all your options.



Training goals should be specific and narrow, not broad.

Training goals should be specific and narrow, not broad. If you seek a "generalist" training that's ok because that is still a specific kind of training that is offered by many sites, primarily major medical centers. However, saying that you would be happy to work at any kind of setting with most any kind of patient is too broad and will only serve to misdirect you and water down the impression of how well you match to any program.

How can you truly, genuinely, make a case that you're a good match with, say, both an adult state psychiatric hospital doing long-term work with seriously mentally ill patients, and also an outpatient community mental health center focused on short-term CBT with pediatric patients suffering with anxiety? It just wouldn't be authentic and that would show through. If you truly want to work with both adults and children and have a mix of training experiences, then consider a generalist training, but be clear that is what you want, because you still need to make a case for it.

The best way to identify an authentic training goal is to really ask yourself what YOU want, without (for the moment) considering anything else, especially what the sites are looking for.

You need to find sites that fit what you want, not the other way around.

That means letting go of the idea that you will go to any internship that will have you. Not only is that disaffirming and demoralizing, it is also, truly, a BAD strategy. Begin with you, and what you want in an internship site, and the match will naturally shine through...with less work!



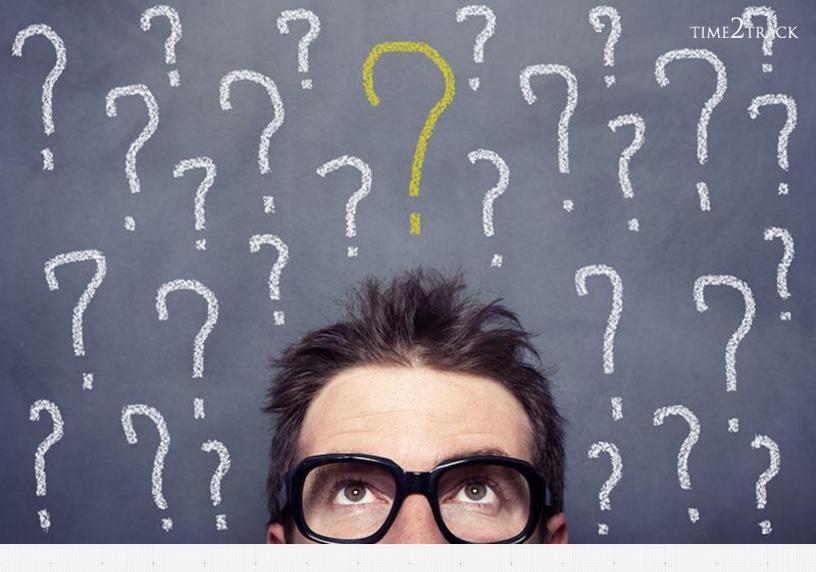
JOSEPHINE MINARDO, PsyD 🥝







Josephine S. Minardo, Psy.D. is an expert on psychology internship preparation. For over a decade, Dr. Minardo has been conducting internship preparation workshops and successfully coaching psychology internship applicants through Psych <u>Internship Prep</u>, a unique consulting service for psychology graduates students seeking assistance with internship. Dr. Minardo has created countless events and resources that offer advice, tips and proven strategies on applying to internship. In addition to organizing the annual New York State Psychological Association (NYSPA) Internship Fair from 2000-2008, Dr. Minardo has also consulted on, and presented at, many internship preparation events for several other state psychological associations around the country.



How to Find the Right APPIC Internship for You

By Sean Hornsby

It's that time of year again – doctoral students nationwide will be submitting APPIC internship applications as the last step before graduation. While it may seem like a breeze, the APPIC Match process is long, daunting, tedious, and full of uncertainty as to what to focus on and how to put your best foot forward.

For those out there who may be embarking on this journey, here are some helpful hints that can provide some direction in finding an internship that fits you best.

1. Determine Your Preferences

Choosing to enter graduate school is a big decision and determining what you want to do with your advanced degree is an even bigger one. While you don't have to know exactly what you want to do as a career when you enter your program, you will need to have a good idea when it comes time for your interviews.

Doing as much research in your field as you can (eg. different subfields, jobs offered, experts currently practicing) is the best way to figure out what your field has to offer.

Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- ✓ Do I want to do therapy or assessment?
- ✓ Do I want to work with the severely mentally ill, those who struggle with substance abuse, children, families, or other populations?
- ✓ Do I want to work in community mental health, the criminal justice system, the school system, or other settings?
- ✓ Do I want to specialize in neuropsychology, forensics, eating disorders, or other subspecialties?

These questions are not only great for helping you to choose the right internship site, but also to help you figure out what you want for your career.

2. Know What Each Site Requires

This is in connection with what was stated earlier about figuring out your specialty, and you also have to make sure it is in line with what each site specializes in. This means doing as much research as you can about internship sites with regards to who they work with, what they do, how they do it, if they are they a multidisciplinary team, what are the different rotations, and what theoretical orientations are practiced.

Furthermore, make sure you know the application requirements for each site, like the amount of hours required, writing samples, application due dates, if they require you to have a Master's degree, and when they want you to have your dissertation proposed. This type of information can be found in the APPIC Directory.



The more you know about the organization, the better you will be able to speak to why you would be a good fit.

This type of research is needed for multiple purposes: (1) helping you to know what to put in your cover letters, (2) helping you prepare for interviews, (3) helping you determine if the site's training program is right for you, and (4) showing the site that you really care about their program and that you actually want to be there.

The more you know about the organization, the better you will be able to speak to why you would be a good fit.

3. Choose States Where You May Want to Practice in the Future

One of the main reasons that students may not match with an internship is because they geographically limit themselves to one location or a small selection of locations. While this is not recommended when looking for an internship, there are understandable reasons for why people may have to do this (family obligations, health concerns, affordability of traveling, etc.).

However, it is just as important to expand your search for internships across multiple areas of the country as it is when deciding what you want to specialize in. When making the decision on what kinds of sites you want to apply to, also choose at least five or six different places (cities and/or states) you might like to live. Who knows – you may just end up wanting to stay! Here are some questions to ask yourself:

4. Know the Rules, Regulations, and Laws

Whether you get an internship in your home state or in another state, it is important to stay up to date on the licensing laws.

For many states, the type of supervised professional experience needed for obtaining a license to practice is going to be pre-doctoral internship hours. If this is the case, make sure you have all the necessary BOP (Board of Psychology) paperwork ready for you and your supervisor to sign. This will be necessary when you apply for a license to practice because if you don't have exactly what the BOP wants, obtaining a license becomes very difficult.

5. Create Your List

After researching different sites in different locations and determining whether or not you feel qualified for each program, it's time to make your list of 15-20 sites you want to apply to.

Another huge reason why applicants may not match is that they may not have applied to enough sites to increase their chances of being matched. **Making sure you have a good number of sites to apply to and across several geographic locations will produce better odds** when it comes time to submit your ranking list for the APPIC Match.



Making sure you have a good number of sites to apply to and across several geographic locations will produce better odds...

6. Stay Organized...but Practice Self-Care

While the whole APPIC internship application process is nerve-wracking, anxiety provoking, and at times disappointing, it's important to really utilize organizational skills and self-care skills. Making sure you are as organized as possible and have all the right information in the right places is critical. You don't want to mix things up and end up sending the wrong cover letters to the wrong sites!

Also, it's important to make sure you stay connected with your friends and family and have some fun during the APPIC Match. The support you get from your peers and family members can help you to stay healthy, focused, and on track for success.

Happy applying!



SEAN HORNSBY





Sean Hornsby is a 5th year doctoral student in Clinical/Forensic Psychology with a specialization in criminal behavior and community interventions. He is also a Psy.D. candidate at Alliant International University, Los Angeles and he is currently doing his pre-doctoral internship at Range Mental Health Center in Minnesota. Sean's research and clinical interests include risk assessment, criminal offender treatment and evaluations, community outreach and support services, mental health screening, malingering, and symptom fabrication. He is excited about starting a career in helping individuals and groups develop the life skills necessary to live a full and enriched life.



The AAPI Explained: Tips on APPIC's Requirements & Completing the AAPI

By Maggie Campbell Wilkerson

Applying for internship can be a daunting task, especially if you're applying through APPIC. The APPIC Application for Psychology Internships, or the AAPI, is used by doctoral level psychology students to obtain an APA accredited internship or APPIC accredited internship.

Explaining the AAPI

The AAPI requires applicants to report a large amount of somewhat complicated data, and it can be quite confusing figuring out what goes where.

At Time2Track, we've spent a great deal of time scouring the AAPI (and its instructions) to make sure we're providing the right information in the correct format. The AAPI instructions can be confusing too, so we've pulled out the parts that are often overlooked, and hopefully that will explain a little more about how our calculations (and APPIC's requirements) work.



We do recommend looking at your AAPI View report on a regular basis...to make sure you're getting the hours and demographics you need...

The <u>AAPI View report</u> in Time2Track provides your data in a format that mirrors the AAPI, with all your hours put into the correct categories. Because APPIC requires some hours and demographics to be reported in different ways, this report might not match the other reports in your Time2Track account exactly.

We do recommend looking at your AAPI View report on a regular basis, though, to make sure you're getting the hours and demographics you need to help you be competitive in the internship match process. It also helps to monitor your data and make sure you're logging things the right way.

Hours

Master's vs. Doctoral

If you've obtained a master's degree as part of your doctoral program, you should include those hours as doctoral hours on the AAPI. If you've obtained a terminal master's degree, however, you should report those hours in the Terminal Master's column on the AAPI. Below are some example instructions from the AAPI:

In this section, you will be asked to report your practicum hours separately for (a) hours accrued in your doctoral program, and (b) hours accrued as part of a terminal master's experience in a mental health field. Hours accrued while earning a master's degree as part of a doctoral program should be counted as doctoral practicum hours and not terminal master's hours. A "terminal master's" degree is defined as a degree that is earned from a program that is distinct from your current doctoral program. Thus, if you have earned a master's degree as part of your doctoral degree program, it is not considered to be a "terminal" master's degree.

- AAPI Instructions - Intervention Experience

Categorizing Your Experiences

We get a lot of questions from students about the best way to categorize activities. We've provided some information about our interpretation of APPIC's categories here, but remember that these are simply guidelines that we have put together since APPIC does not provide their own definitions. If in doubt, don't take our word for it – always consult with your DCT or supervisor. On the top of the next page are some more example instructions from the AAPI, which we will continue to include in this article.

You may have some experiences that could potentially fall under more than one category, but it is your responsibility to select the category that you feel best captures the experience. (For example, a Stress Management group might be classified as a group or as a Medical/Health-Related Intervention, but not both.) The categories are meant to be mutually exclusive; thus, any practicum hour should be counted only once.

- AAPI Instructions - Intervention Experience

Demographics

Intake / Structured Interviews

The demographics section is also pretty straightforward. But there's one big piece that's buried in the instructions, so it's easy to overlook:

Include under the assessment column those clients/patients for whom you performed assessments and/or intake interviews.

- AAPI Instructions - Additional Information About Practicum Experiences

This means that all demographics associated with Intake/Structured Interviews MUST be counted as Assessment in the Demographics portion of the AAPI.

So when you're looking at your AAPI View report and thinking "There is no way that I have this many assessment clients" or "I know I saw more intervention clients than this", it's because your Intake/Structured Interview clients are being counted as Assessment. Keep in mind that Intake/Structured Interview HOURS are still counted as Intervention.

Assessments

Time2Track provides the flexibility to track any assessments you want - whether they're full assessments or subtests. However, APPIC only allows you to report full assessments on the AAPI:

You should only include instruments for which you administered the full test. Partial tests or administering only selected subtests are NOT to be included in this accounting.

- AAPI Instructions - Psychological Assessment Experience

When you're transferring your assessments to the AAPI, make sure you ONLY transfer assessments that you administered the full test.

You may also want to check out **this article** for some more helpful information.

Finding & Fixing Mistakes

If you're looking over your AAPI View Report and find something that just doesn't look right, it may be that you made a mistake somewhere along the way when logging your activities.

Time2Track's Activities List makes it easy to search for activities based on specific criteria (eg. activity type, specific client, and/or date range) to identify activities that may have been entered incorrectly and then fix them.

You can also use the Activity Details Report if you need to print out any specific activity data.

The Activities List also makes it easy to change activities in bulk if you've made a mistake. Keep in mind, though, that if you're using Online Approvals through your school, you'll have to get your activities re-approved if you make any changes.

For more information on how the Activities List can help you, check out 5

Things you can do with Time2Track's Activities List »

I hope this roundup of commonly overlooked AAPI requirements helps as you work on your internship application.



MAGGIE CAMPBELL WILKERSON



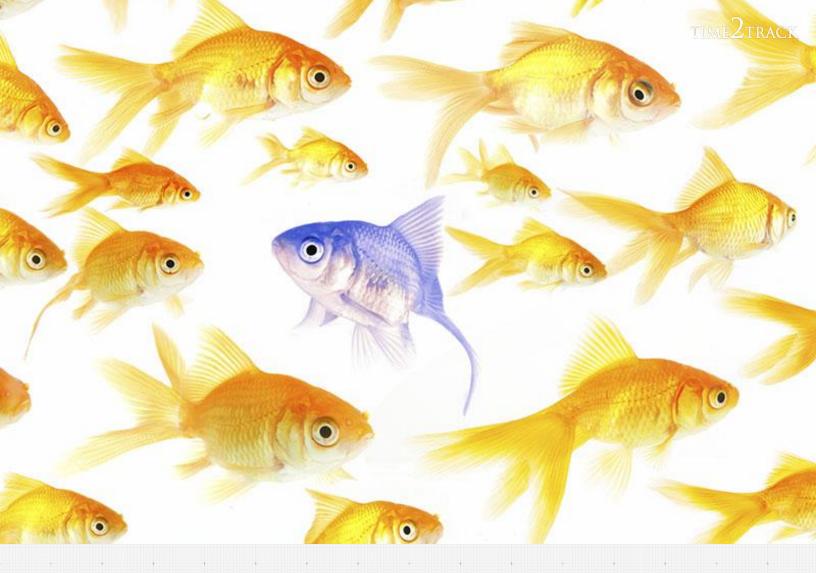


Maggie Wilkerson graduated from Wake Forest University with degrees in Psychology and Art, and is now President and Co-Owner of Time2Track. Maggie does a little bit of everything here – from talking to clients to working with guest bloggers to planning new features. When she's not working, she enjoys cooking, gardening, and spending time with her husband, their cat, and two dogs.

Part II

APPLYING FOR AN APPIC INTERNSHIP

- The APPIC Match: How to Stand Out in a Sea of Quality Applicants
 by Christina Wohleber, PsyD
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The APPIC Match: How to Stand Out in a Sea of Quality Applicants

By Christina Wohleber, PsyD

Remember the old saying "there are many fish in the sea"? Well, that saying also applies to the number of applicants to potential internship sites, and it can sometimes make an applicant feel overwhelmed and anxious.

It is no surprise to those in the psychology field that there are many more applicants than there are internship placements. This is a discouraging fact that has been present for some time now.

Although the gap continues to decrease and the field of psychology continues to find creative ways to lessen this gap, the fact remains that it is all the more important to learn how to better market and sell yourself to potential internship and training sites.

When you are competing with a large applicant pool of those with similar educational backgrounds who all have excellent qualities and abilities, the perception that potential supervisors and directors of training sites have of you can make or break your opportunity of being placed. For those who specialize in a field that focuses so much on helping others, it can sometimes be awkward - and even uncomfortable - to shift that focus to ourselves and market our strengths and abilities. Below are five tips to ensure you are putting your best foot forward and highlighting why the sites you are interested in should be just as interested in you.

1. Try New Things

Be open to trying new experiences early on in your education.

For example, try volunteering for local agencies or getting a part time job within different settings in the field of psychology.

It is important to try out as many options as possible in order to **discover** what type of placements and clientele you enjoy working with most. This can also assist you in learning about your key skills and strengths.

In addition, pay attention to what fields or clients may not feel like good fits for you, and take note of any areas you feel that you have a lot of room to improve in - focusing on your growth in these areas can benefit you immensely.

New experiences will offer you valuable skills that you can further hone during your internship. They will also give you a wide variety of knowledge - knowledge that internship supervisors and directors at different sites could be looking for in applicants - as well as helping to you stand out from other applicants by making your background more diverse.



...pay attention to what fields or clients may not feel like good fits for you...

2. Be Open

It is important to be "open" throughout your career with your peers and supervisors, in both educational and professional settings. It shows that you can communicate well and work well with others.

For the APPIC internship match, this means being open on internship site applications, during interviews, and during placement. The more open you are, the more you have a chance to build yourself up as a strong clinician, researcher, and student.

The strength that comes from being more open is what makes individuals stand out with internship site supervisors, directors, practicum supervisors, and professors who will be writing letters of recommendation. The more you stand out, the more you will pique the interest of internship supervisors – and the more you pique their interests, the more they will want to meet with you, which will come in the form of an interview offer.

3. Get Out of Your Comfort Zone

If possible, increase your search via geographical location, site setting, population, or job requirements.

You might not land the "perfect" internship site you had in mind, but that does not take away from the experience.

There are many interns that have learned much more about themselves and their skillsets after being pushed out of their comfort zones. Even if you learn that a certain type of setting or population isn't your "cup of tea", that information by itself is very powerful and useful to know.

In addition, these challenging and intimidating experiences can help you to grow both personally and professionally as you overcome them.

And, finally, the courage to challenge your comfort zone and go beyond your boundaries gives you a distinct experience that you can use to highlight skills in future job interviews or reflect upon when forming career goals.

4. Discuss Accomplishments...But be Humble

It takes practice and finesse to be able to highlight your strengths and selling points without coming across as arrogant. Use opportunities leading up to the time of internship interviews to try different approaches in talking about yourself.

Here is a list of some opportunities that can help you to practice that balance of communicating your finer qualities while remaining approachable and humble:

- **1. Attend networking events** within your school or local professional affiliations and try your approaches with the other attendees.
- **2. Practice at job interviews or practicum placement interviews** and take note of what seems to work (and what doesn't).
- **3. Try out new approaches** with classmates, professors, and when meeting new individuals.



It takes practice and finesse to be able to highlight your strengths and selling points without coming across as arrogant.

There are multiple ways to identify which skills or accomplishments you should talk about as well as how you should talk about them.

Think about things you feel you are good at or enjoy doing, and use past evaluations from supervisors at practicum sites or jobs as guidance. Tailor the way you communicate your accomplishments based on the sites you are applying to.

Identify one or two ways that you feel make you stand out from your peers. Then, make sure you can explain why this skill or accomplishment makes YOU an asset to an internship site.

One effective approach can be to use a story or concrete example that demonstrates how your unique quality, talent, or skill has assisted you in the past and how you foresee it assisting you at your internship placement.

5. Lastly, BE YOURSELF

You are going to be nervous and overwhelmed within the interview process, but remember: this is normal.

Stay composed and be confident, but allow interviewers to see who you are as a person and why you will fit in well within the company, setting, population, and (most importantly) those who will be overseeing and supervising you.

Supervisors and directors want an intern whom they feel they can work well with for the upcoming year. Your relationship with them will last a good length of time and it will be a close and collaborative one, so it is important to let your true self shine through.

By being more natural and at ease with yourself, you can even help the interviewers become more comfortable and relaxed during your interview as they pick up on your emotions. Relieving tension in the room by being genuine can also help you to better relay your answers in a clear and concise manner.

Make these tips your own: Find ways to adjust them or combine them to reflect who you are, what is important to you, and what situations you are in.

And remember: Don't Give Up.

The large sea of APPIC applicants and internship sites can be very intimidating, but if you just keep swimming, you will eventually be hooked.



CHRISTINA WOHLEBER, PsyD





Christina Wohleber, Psy.D. received her doctorate in clinical psychology from Immaculata University in Immaculata, PA. She is currently a clinical supervisor of several behavioral health programs within the same community mental health agency where she completed her pre-doctoral and post-doctoral internships. Dr. Wohleber enjoys working with children, adolescents, and adults who have experienced severe trauma histories and/or attachment issues, as well as conducting evaluations for children and adolescents to determine appropriate levels of care. In addition, she loves to supervise masters and doctoral level interns to assist them in navigating the complex world of community mental health within the Philadelphia area. She is a proud member of both the American Psychological Association and Pennsylvania Psychological Association. When she is not working within the field of psychology she enjoys spending time with family and friends, cooking, and completing arts and crafts as a means to practice self-care.



APPIC Internship Application Cover Letters

By Josephine Minardo, PsyD

Your cover letter is the first impression Internship Directors/Reviewers have of you, and also where they will be looking to determine how strong of a "match" and well suited you are for their site.

This article contains some tips that will help you craft your tailored (but templated) cover letter.

YES, it can still be a template!

It is not the best strategy, or use of time, for you to write an original cover letter for each site you are applying to.

While each should appear to be, and read as though, it is in fact written specifically for each site, it is not necessary to write each cover letter "from scratch." Here's how...

Your APPIC Application Cover Letter Template

PARAGRAPH 1 – This should simply be a brief introduction that includes the following:

- Which program/specific track you are applying for.
- Who you are (what graduate program you are in, which year of training, etc.).
- List anything you are including as supplemental materials so there is never any question you sent them.

PARAGRAPH 2 (and BEYOND) – The central task of your cover letter should be to address the question: "How do you envision this internship site meeting your training goals and interests?"

Elements of a Good Cover Letter

You should aim to include the following elements. There is no exact order and this can be done in a variety of ways.

- **State your internship goals** (and possibly short-term and/or long-term goals) as precisely as possible with regard to <u>this</u> site.
- Explain why these are your goals: What led you to want to devote internship year to this? These goals should make sense with your training history.
- Make an explicit <u>declarative</u> statement about this site being a good fit with your goals (i.e. "....makes your site is the ideal setting for me...."
 OR "your site would be an excellent fit with my training goals") AND any other similar language.
- Explain how this site is a good fit with your goals by mentioning specific past experiences that are relevant to this site (what you bring to the site) and how a particular rotation or aspect of this site achieves certain training goals for you (what the site can offer you).

Be sure to both STATE and ILLUSTRATE your points throughout your cover letter.

If it is only a series of statements without supporting what you are saying with an illustration, or "connecting the dots" for the reader, you lose out on making the strongest impression of a good fit, and the letter runs the risk of feeling generic.

Additionally, you want to "prime" the reader with explicit statements about the fact that you ARE a good fit, so you are both leading them to that conclusion (through illustrations) and also making that conclusion for them up front (with explicit statements).



Be sure to both STATE and ILLUSTRATE your points throughout your cover letter.

Continue the "Formula" Throughout the Cover Letter:

- Make strong positive statements about your fit or match with the site
- Identify clear internship goals & explain why they are important to your overall professional development
- State & illustrate how the site offering will meet your goals
- State & illustrate how your past training experiences have prepared you well for an internship at this site, with specific reference to certain offerings

Additional Paragraphs can Include:

- Other more specific training goals and how site-specific offerings match these goals.
- Some highlights from your current or previous training that are important to you in your professional development and relate to a specific quality of the internship site (e.g., supervision, a rotation, specialty, orientation).
- A particular supervisor or faculty at their site whose work you know and respect. Always explain why and make sure that this person is still working there.

The Final Paragraph...

The final paragraph should be a summary of your main points, including:

- That you ARE a good match with the site, or that the site IS a good match with your internship goals.
- A sentence or 2 with a short list of the most appealing aspects of the site for you and why you are applying there.
- A reiteration of your internship/professional goals.
- A statement that <u>primes</u> the reader to invite you for an interview, such as "I am looking forward to meeting with you to discuss my interests further."

Other Things to Keep in Mind:

- Your cover letter is the <u>FIRST</u> thing directors will see, so make sure the first impression is a good one.
- **Do not send a generic cover letter**. It must be site-specific if you want to ensure your reader believes you are a good match, but you do not need to write each letter from scratch.
- As instructed above, make a template and simply tailor key sentences or words/phrases; if your training goals are specific and genuine, most cover letters will not be too different.



Your cover letter is the FIRST thing directors will see...

- If you are applying to more than one kind of setting, you may need a different template for each setting, i.e., if you are applying to child site, you will want to emphasize your child work and goals related to this, whereas if you are applying to a VA you will want to emphasize your work with adults, with medical settings, collaborating with multi-disciplinary teams, etc. Consider a different template for:
 - Major Medical Centers
 - VAs
 - Community Mental Health Centers (outpatient)
 - College Counseling Centers
 - Child vs. Adult sites
 - Neuropsychology or Health focused

 Lastly, make sure you send the correct cover letter to the intended site. Seeing the names of other sites can offend some directors and demonstrate carelessness, so check your work!



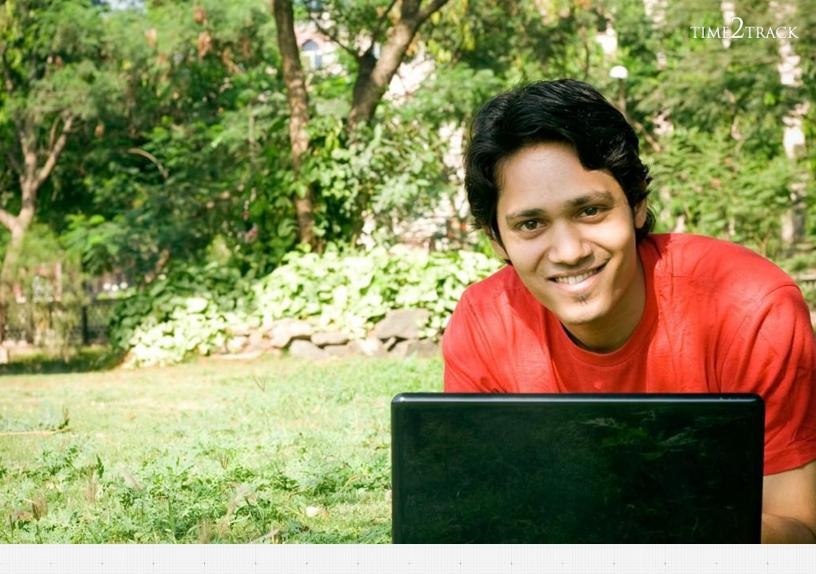
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Josephine S. Minardo, Psy.D. is an expert on psychology internship preparation. For over a decade, Dr. Minardo has been conducting internship preparation workshops and successfully coaching psychology internship applicants through Psych Internship Prep, a unique consulting service for psychology graduates students seeking assistance with internship. Dr. Minardo has created countless events and resources that offer advice, tips and proven strategies on applying to internship. In addition to organizing the annual New York State Psychological Association (NYSPA) Internship Fair from 2000-2008, Dr. Minardo has also consulted on, and presented at, many internship preparation events for several other state psychological associations around the country.



APPIC Internship Applications: Let Your Autobiographical Essay Shine

By Josephine Minardo, PsyD

Fall is in the air...the leaves are changing. It's a time of transformation and reflection.

This is also the perfect time to reflect on who you are and how to express that to internship directors. One of the most important and most scrutinized materials in your APPIC internship application is the autobiographical essay (Essay #1), yet most students agree it is the hardest to write.

While there is no exact method that is "right," there is some strategy to it, and below I'm sharing some tips for how to make the best impression and maximize the impact of your essay.

Tip #1: Make it Personal

There is very little in your application, apart from this essay, that really gives directors a feel for who you are as a person; this is entirely different than the credentials you submit that are focused exclusively on your training.

In addition to a good training fit (that I discussed in my last blog entry), directors want to work with someone they feel they can connect with, and this is your opportunity to reveal your personality to them.



...directors want to work with someone they feel they can connect with...

Tip #2: Do not Reiterate Your CV

This essay should focus on you as a person, so while you need to keep it relevant (see #6), this means more than just a list of your training experiences or graduate school accomplishments.

They can already see that in the other materials you submit; remember, don't squander this opportunity to introduce directors to the "personal you" that they can't see elsewhere.

Tip #3: Be Authentic

Be genuine. Be yourself. Don't try to write an essay about something that you think sounds good but isn't truly authentic; **trying to figure out what kind of intern sites are looking for, and trying to create a narrative to fit that, is not a good strategy.**

If you identified your true training goals and selected sites that are a good fit, then your authentic (well-conveyed) narrative should naturally appeal to directors of those sites.

When deciding on a focus for the autobiographical essay, consider what you really want to convey to directors, what quality or personal characteristic you possess that makes you uniquely you, and how that contributes to making you a more evolved or self-aware, or uniquely empathic, etc. emerging clinician.

Tip #4: Be Careful When Disclosing

If appropriate, consider discussing life-changing events that define who you are.

Even negative life events such as loss, illness, adversity, etc. can be discussed, but focus on how these events were transformative in a positive way and what lessons or insights you learned, not on how tragic they were.

The emphasis should be on how you coped with it, learned from it, overcame it, and eventually, used it, to become more self-aware and grow from it. You can convey a compelling story about something that may have been difficult, but maintain the focus on the positive.

Tip #5: Be Compelling

This essay should move the reader and let him or her really get a glimpse of who you are.

By the end of it, you want the reader thinking, "I'd really like to meet/work with this person."

Try to stay away from clichés and the trap of writing about how you were "always interested in psychology" or "everyone always thought I was a good listener."

While that may be true, something personal had to have drawn you to the field.

If you can identify that, and really create a sincere and engaging narrative about it, while tying it into your evolution as a psychologist, you will have a more compelling (and successful) essay.



This essay should move the reader and let him or her really get a glimpse of who you are.

Tip #6: Keep it Relevant

Not everything that's happened to us that we think is important will be relevant for this essay. Ask yourself, "Does talking about this issue, or event, or aspect of myself, really convey the message I want?" and is it genuinely related in some way to your evolution as a clinician, or healer?

Again, don't "force" that connection; it should be a natural one. If it's not, then reconsider the essay topic.



Ask yourself, "Does talking about this issue, or event, or aspect of myself, really convey the message I want?

Tip #7: Make it Personal

If your interest in psychology was naturally more academic than related to a personal event or circumstance, or you would simply prefer not to talk about your private personal life, that's ok. However, it still needs to be a personal essay, so consider some aspect of your work with patients that is genuinely compelling for you, and try to craft an essay around that.

You can start by thinking about a particular patient, or a specific moment with a patient(s) that truly moved you, or validated your desire and the meaning of being a healer. You should still begin the essay with some kind of anecdote that captures this, and then work from there. This can also make for a very compelling essay

Tip #8: Engage the Reader

Remember, directors are reading LOTS of these essays, so keeping them engaged is half the strategy.

Having a compelling story with a well written narrative is necessary. Consider starting with a very engaging, or "seductive" first sentence that can really grab the reader, right from the beginning, and make them want to read on. It doesn't have to be a long sentence, and it can even be a quote, a song lyric—anything that captures the essence of your message.

Start with that and build the essay around it. Make sure to somehow make reference to it at the end too; wrapping up your essay by connecting it back to the beginning is also a good strategy.

Tip #9: Write a Cohesive Essay

It should tell a story about you, with a beginning, middle and end. Make sure it sends a cohesive message about you. Try to utilize transitional sentences when bridging topics, and don't forget a summary statement at the end that ties it all together and really brings your message home.

It should wrap back, at the end, to how this "story" about you ultimately translates into who you are (as a clinician) in the room with the patient. How is the aspect of yourself you decided to write about an asset as a therapist?

If it's something transformative that really had an impact on you, chances are you have learned something profound from it about human nature, and about yourself, which helps your understanding of patients—so make sure to state that in some way.

Tip #10: Remember the Word Limit...Unless You're Writing

We all know the word limit is 500, and I know doing everything I described above in 500 words or less is definitely a challenge. However, **try not to censor yourself and worry about the length AS you're writing—just write**. You can edit later.

If you find your essay is way too long, **consider whether you need a**"hatchet" or "scalpel" approach—that is, can you cut entire sections or
sentences without compromising the message or the quality of the writing, or
do you perhaps need to go in and condense sentences and be more
parsimonious in expressing yourself?



...try not to censor yourself and worry about the length AS you're writing - just write.

That being said, if you go up to 550 or even 560-ish, that's ok; no director is going to think you are a "bad" match or that you can't follow instructions because you went a little over 500 words; it's a guideline, so use it as such. Do not make arbitrary cuts simply to reach that number. As long as it fits onto a single page with 1-inch margins, it should be ok.

Most directors just gauge the length by "eyeballing" it; no one is really counting words. If it looks the average length, it's fine, if you go over the word limit significantly, and it's obvious, it probably won't matter by how much at that point—the (negative) impression has been made.

Tip #11: Don't Forget it's a Writing Sample

Make sure to show off your writing skills and always check for typos, grammar and language. Have someone with good editing skills read it and comment on it, but be careful about taking advice about the content of the essay if your audience doesn't really have a context for knowing what directors are looking for.

Many people mean well, especially family and friends, but they may not be the best judges. If you do want "lay" people—read: non-psychologists or those unconnected to the internship process—review it, then the best way to make the most out of it, rather than simply asking for open-ended feedback, is to give them a lot of context for it, and explain a little bit about what you aim to convey BEFORE they read the essay.

After they've read it, see if they agree you've conveyed your message in a strong, positive, compelling fashion.



JOSEPHINE MINARDO, PsyD 🥝







Josephine S. Minardo, Psy.D. is an expert on psychology internship preparation. For over a decade, Dr. Minardo has been conducting internship preparation workshops and successfully coaching psychology internship applicants through Psych Internship Prep, a unique consulting service for psychology graduates students seeking assistance with internship. Dr. Minardo has created countless events and resources that offer advice, tips and proven strategies on applying to internship. In addition to organizing the annual New York State Psychological Association (NYSPA) Internship Fair from 2000-2008, Dr. Minardo has also consulted on, and presented at, many internship preparation events for several other state psychological associations around the country.

Part III

APPIC INTERNSHIP INTERVIEWS

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Your Go-To Guide for Surviving APPIC Internship Interviews

By Sean Hornsby

Deciding where you want to go and preparing a strong application for your APPIC internship choices is only half the battle. The second part of the APPIC internship match process is doing a good job in your interviews by presenting yourself in the best light and showing them that you are a good fit for their site.

Here are some tips to help you before, during, and after your APPIC internship interviews.

Pre-Interview Preparation

If you are traveling for interviews, be prepared for weather delays, flight delays, flight cancellations, car trouble, road construction, and other traveling issues that can cause problems.

Since many interviews happen in the winter, you want to be prepared for anything nature brings your way that can affect your ability to get to where you need to be.

- If possible, arrive in the city you're going to the day before the interview rather than the day of the interview.
- If you are flying, only bring carry-on luggage so that you won't waste time at baggage claim or run the risk of losing your bags.
- Pack light when traveling as this will reduce anxiety and make you more organized.
- Make sure to practice possible interview questions and your responses to them as often as you can to relieve anxiety and be more prepared.
 This leads into the next section which is about the actual interview.
- Check out this article for additional interview preparation tips »

The Actual Interview

Today's the day of your interview and you are full of excitement and worry. All the preparation in the world won't stop you from feeling these things, as they are to be expected and there is no shame in it. Here are some tips to help with the actual interview:

- Get a good night's rest and eat a good breakfast before your interview.
- Arrive at least 20 minutes early for your interview.
- It's better to be overdressed rather than underdressed for interviews. Typically, this means a suit and tie for men and a suit with slacks for women. Also, for men and women, remember to take it easy on the jewelry and not wear things that are too flashy and attract attention.



...answer questions accurately and concisely.

Don't say too much where you ramble on about unrelated things or share too many personal things.

- Be sure to bring the following things:
 - Notepad for taking notes
 - Site brochure(s)
 - Copies of your application for that site
 - Copies of your CV
- During the interview, answer questions accurately and concisely. Don't say too much to where you ramble on about unrelated things or share too many personal things.

The Actual Interview (continued)

type	of statement or answer to a question:
0	"Your program seems like a great fit for my interests based o
	This emphasizes something you would like to hear more about.
0	"I'm very excited about the possibility of working here becau
	This shows your enthusiasm and that you did your research.
0	"I'm glad/interested to hear about the opportunities to do
	I'm very interested in this because Could you tell me more about it?"
	This emphasizes why you feel that the site would be a good ma
0	"You offer and that's what I'm looking for in an
+	internship." This shows enthusiasm and that you want to be there.
Whe	en they ask about your past work experiences, make sure to tall

The Actual Interview (continued)

- When talking about weaknesses or things you have difficulty with, emphasize how they can be addressed at that agency. If they ask about disciplinary action against you (ever being suspended or fired), make sure to do "S.A.R.L." (what was the situation, what action you took, what was the result, and what you learned from it). While these topics may not be the most pleasurable to talk about, it doesn't hurt to spin them positively. However, if your interviewers don't ask about these things, don't bring them up.
- If it is a group interview, volunteer to talk and then wait a couple of turns. **Don't try to dominate the interview** as it shows that you may not be a team player or get along well with others.



Don't try to dominate the interview as it shows that you may not be a team player or get along well with others.

- If they don't offer you a tour, ask if you could take a tour of the facility and speak to current interns about their experiences. Get as much information as possible about the site (e.g., rotations, working hours, politics, or anything else you want to know).
- A final important note is to remain humble during the interview so you don't come across as fake or a know-it-all. Know that you can always request feedback in the interview and ask if there is something more they are looking for in a response. Also, make sure you are prepared to ask questions during the interview to show that you are interested.

After Interview De-escalation

- Remember to breathe, and have confidence that you did a good job.
- Always mail a thank you note or letter to your interviewers to show them that you appreciate being invited for an interview. However, if it is a large site (like a jail), they probably never get mail - in this situation, you can email them directly.

Conclusion

Interviewing is as much about who you are as what you know. Interviewers want to get a sense that the interviewee is responsible, dependable, open to feedback, and seeks help when needed.

Just make sure you follow the appropriate steps, try not to stress yourself out, and be polite and approachable (in other words, be the type of person you would want to meet).

Good luck during applications, and I hope you get to have many interviews!



SEAN HORNSBY





Sean Hornsby is a 5th year doctoral student in Clinical/Forensic Psychology with a specialization in criminal behavior and community interventions. He is also a Psy.D. candidate at Alliant International University, Los Angeles and he is currently doing his pre-doctoral internship at Range Mental Health Center in Minnesota. Sean's research and clinical interests include risk assessment, criminal offender treatment and evaluations, community outreach and support services, mental health screening, malingering, and symptom fabrication. He is excited about starting a career in helping individuals and groups develop the life skills necessary to live a full and enriched life.



Ace Your Case Presentations & Vignettes in APPIC Internship Interviews

By Josephine Minardo, PsyD

Now that APPIC internship applications have been submitted, you are hoping that you will be invited to some interviews. Yet, when those invitations come, there is often a mix of excitement and trepidation.

Naturally, going on an interview creates a lot of pressure. You are glad you made the "paper cut" and they liked you enough to want to interview you, but you worry how about how you will perform in person. We all want to come across as articulate, intelligent, likable, well-trained candidates who are a good match for the site we're interviewing at.

It's tough enough preparing to answer questions, but in most APPIC internship interview scenarios, you know you will also have to either present a case or respond to a vignette.

In my experience, this often causes the most anxiety about interviews. However, do not distress! You have solid clinical skills already, and you have likely done this kind of thing before many times over, so try to channel that. It helps to also know what to expect and how to actually best prepare. My tips below should help ease some of the angst and worry.

Selecting Your Case

When selecting a case for interviews, you should generally NOT present the one that you submitted to the site already (if they requested a written case summary as supplemental material).

Be sure to select a case that:

- Fits well with the population of the site you are interviewing for, but still highlights some of your best work.
- You know well, from EVERY angle, because you may be asked about any aspect of it.
- Is rich, including some successes, challenges, and possible unique, ethical, supervisory, or transference issues that make for good discussion (they may ask about those).
- You can be confident about. Remember, even if it was not perfect, it's ok; they know you are still learning, so just be able to represent what you did well.
- Has a clear diagnosis and rationale.
- Has a clear approach / orientation / modality you applied WELL, and reason for using it.

Preparing Your Case Presentation

Interviewers are generally looking for you to articulate your cases in a clear, concise and coherent manner that allows them to form an impression of your clinical skills.



...if you are asked for a case, they will typically not want to spend more than 10 minutes discussing it.

As most interviews, in total, last about 30 minutes, if you are asked for a case, they will typically not want to spend more than 10 minutes discussing it. **That means you need to keep your initial presentation brief but substantive**. A trick to doing this is to prepare one or two sentences that capture each of the following aspects of the case:

- Demographics (age, gender, ethnicity); treatment type & frequency (individual, weekly, etc.); setting (outpatient, inpatient, etc.)
- Presenting problem
- Psychosocial history (if relevant)
- Diagnoses and rationale
- Approach to treatment and patient's general response
- Major highlights (successes or difficulties)
- Prognosis / outcome / final disposition

The following is **sample case presentation language** that includes all the relevant aspects of the case which you could likely recite in under 2 minutes:

"Last year, I treated a 22 y.o. Hispanic female in individual weekly therapy as an outpatient at my NY Hospital externship.

It was her first time in treatment and she came in requesting grief counseling after her mother's death a few months prior. They had a close but conflictual relationship and she was experiencing a lot of guilt and anger. We soon discovered that she had a history of depression dating back to adolescence and a tumultuous and unstable family life.

I began by utilizing an integrative approach that focused on CBT to address her depression, along with some interpersonal and relational interventions that allowed us to work on the quality of her current and past relationships. As therapy progressed, she began expressing some symptoms of anxiety that had features of PTSD, and eventually disclosed some sexual trauma perpetrated by her mother's boyfriend, which she had never mentioned to her mother.

I integrated some Relaxation and Mindfulness strategies, along with elements of Trauma-Focused CBT. We also tried to process how this experience of undisclosed trauma impacted her grief about her mother.

In time, her depression and anxiety improved significantly, and she was able to more adequately address her feelings of grief. She had difficulty working on the trauma directly so we made slow progress, but by the end of my training year, she had also reported fewer PTSD symptoms. And she actually agreed to continue therapy with the next extern in order to keep working on it."

Below are some questions interviewers might ask about the sample case presentation from the previous page:

- Why an integrative approach? Why those particular interventions to address those issues?
- What gave you the impression her anxiety seemed to be more PTSD?
- What were the guilt and anger about?
- Why didn't she disclose the sexual trauma to her mother?
- What was the most difficult aspect of this case?
- How did you feel working with her?
- What would you have done differently?
- How did it feel not to have made much progress on the trauma with her?

Preparing for Vignettes

Instead of asking you to present a case, the interviewer may present you with a vignette and ask for your impressions. This is gaining popularity more and more every year, so don't be surprised if a good number of sites present you with vignettes, while the rest ask you to present a case.

Vignettes are great ways to assess your organic critical thinking and clinical reasoning skills because, by nature, you will not be familiar with the case material.

Typically, vignettes are short and sometimes vague because that requires hypothesizing, theorizing and informed speculation about the case. Remember, they are most interested in how you think clinically about cases more than creating "gotcha" situations. When the vignette is vague, it is because there is no discrete right or wrong answer, just better or worse reasoned responses.



Remember, they are most interested in how you think clinically about cases more than creating "gotcha" solutions.

You can expect that the case material in vignettes will be relevant to the population and kind of work you would be doing at that specific site. Bear in mind, however, that vignettes can be about:

- A new patient that is presenting for treatment, in which case the focus is on assessment, diagnosis, case disposition, treatment selection skills; or
- A case that you are purportedly already treating, in which case they are likely to assess your intervention, case formulation, conceptualization skills.

Vignettes are presented in a variety of ways. They can be:

- Given to you in written form for you to reference as you wish.
- Handed to you to read and then collected.
- Read to you by the interviewer and then given to you to reference.
- Read to you and then not given to you to reference.

Pay especially close attention if it is read to you, and ask if you can "take a look at it" if you feel comfortable; if they prefer not to, they just won't but you typically wouldn't lose any points for asking.

Responding to Vignettes

When responding to the vignette, just try to remember the 4 following steps:

Step 1: Offer your general impressions of what was presented

This is like a brief summary of the case material which is important so the interviewer knows what you are basing your impressions on. This is especially critical if you are not given any reference material and do not precisely recall all the details. It provides for clarification by the interviewer, if he or she chooses to. It also buys you some additional time to collect and organize your thoughts before the real clinical "heavy lifting" begins. You should also feel free to say that you need a minute to collect your thoughts before you begin at all, if you feel you need it. It's better to take it and feel more confident (no one will mind) than not take the time and stumble through it.



They want to see that you can recognize what you don't know, and decide what data you need in order to inform further clinical reasoning...

Step 2: Discuss differential diagnostic and clinical impressions and rationale for each

Unless the diagnosis/clinical presentation is absolutely clear and unequivocal in the vignette, you should always do this. Remember, they are assessing your clinical reasoning, so it's more about how you think, and why you think that way.

Step 3: Discuss what additional information you would like to have or would require to refine your diagnostic and clinical impressions (e.g. risk factors, any kind of relevant history, substance use, collateral information, medical data, etc.)

They also want to see that you can recognize what you don't know, and decide what data you need in order to inform further clinical reasoning. Remember, therapy is often an investigative process. That's a big part of what we do.

Step 4: Discuss how you would proceed with the case strictly given the data you were provided...

...and taking into consideration any differential diagnoses and/or additional information. So, you may be offering a few alternative approaches. That's OK, and in fact, often desired. It shows you know how to reason clinically and think on your feet.

Things to Remember

Some general considerations about case presentations and vignettes:

- They can take up to half of a 30 minute interview.
- You may get cut off while speaking; let them take the lead. There is usually a reason.
- You may get derailed on one particular question which ends up taking most of the time.
- You may get challenged. If so, always politely indicate that what they are saying is "an interesting point," "I (or we, meaning you and your supervisor) didn't consider that" and offer a rationale for why you chose or thought what you did. **DO NOT get defensive.**

- You may not get to finish your presentation/response before they start asking questions.
- You can end up in a conversation instead of a Q&A...that's fine and, in fact, preferred!

Avoiding common pitfalls:

- Do not use too much jargon. Clinical language is different than jargon.
- Do not disagree with them if they offer a different point of view.
- Do not pull out any notes on the case.
- Do not start talking about another case to make a comparison or for any other reason.
- Do not say anything that appears as though you are blatantly blaming your supervisor, your training program, the setting, or the patient.
- Do not get defensive (this can NOT be restated enough!).



JOSEPHINE MINARDO, PsyD







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Sample APPIC Internship Interview Questions

By Sean Hornsby

Possible Interview Questions

- Why did you apply for our site?
- What are your goals for internship?
- What is your dissertation and what stage are you at?
- Tell us about an ethical dilemma you encountered and how you dealt with it.

Possible Interview Questions (continued)

- Tell us about a case that went well, that did not go well, that was really challenging, or just tell us how you conceptualized something.
- Tell us about a time when you disagreed with or had a conflict with a supervisor.
- What kinds of supervision have you had and what style works well for you?
- What are your strengths as a therapist?
- What are your clinical weaknesses?
- Tell us about yourself.
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Talk about your theoretical orientation or therapeutic style.
- How did you decide on a career in psychology?
- What are your interests outside of psychology?
- Which of our electives/rotations appeals to you and why?
- What are your specific clinical interests?

Possible Interview Questions (continued)

- In what ways have your doctoral program, faculty, and fellow students prepared you to be a competent and responsible intern?
- What assessments have you done?
- What further assessment training do you need?
- What type of client is most difficult for you to work with? What type of feelings do you have towards such clients? How do these feelings interfere with treatment?

Questions for Interviewers

- What is a typical day like for an intern here?
- What is the division of assessment/therapy/research/didactics in a typical week?
- What are you looking for in an intern?
- What is the relationship between psychology and other disciplines here?
- Can you tell me more about rotations?
- How are rotations assigned?
- What are the documentation requirements like at this site?

Questions for Interviewers (continued)

- What theoretical orientations are represented in your program? Which is most strongly represented?
- What types of things do people who work here do after internship?
- What kinds of changes in the program will be happening in the coming year?
- What is the dress code like?
- May I ask for your business card?

Questions for Current Interns

- What was the one thing that made you think highly of this internship over other places you interviewed?
- What was the most difficult thing to adjust to when you first started internship?
- What rotations have you completed so far; which are you doing now; which one do you like the most?
- How is your relationship with your supervisor?

Questions for Current Interns (continued)

- What is the quality of the supervision provided?
- Do you feel that this site is preparing you for post-internship plans?
- What is a typical workday and workweek like so I can get an idea of the time management needed?
- Do you feel supported by the faculty here?



SEAN HORNSBY





Sean Hornsby is a 5th year doctoral student in Clinical/Forensic Psychology with a specialization in criminal behavior and community interventions. He is also a Psy.D. candidate at Alliant International University, Los Angeles and he is currently doing his pre-doctoral internship at Range Mental Health Center in Minnesota. Sean's research and clinical interests include risk assessment, criminal offender treatment and evaluations, community outreach and support services, mental health screening, malingering, and symptom fabrication. He is excited about starting a career in helping individuals and groups develop the life skills necessary to live a full and enriched life.

Part IV

YOU'VE MATCHED... NOW WHAT?

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 by Kelsey Ball
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5 Ways to Guarantee a Successful APPIC Internship - Before it Starts

By Joy Zelikovsky

You've applied for internships; maybe you're waiting for interviews, interviewing, or waiting to match. Or perhaps you did not match this year and are planning to apply again in the future.

Whatever your status, if you're thinking about internships it's very easy to become wrapped up in the process of applying – **but what do you do when the application process is over?** How do you plan for your future as an intern? What will your new site be like? How do you become successful at your new site?

Tip #1: Set Goals

You may have done some of this during interviews or interview preparation, or maybe you didn't. Either way, you have your internship, so what do you want to get out of this year?

Some people are looking for more of a training opportunity, while others are looking to become more autonomous. Some people are looking for a very specific experience or learning a very specific task, while others just want to experience their site. Whatever your goals are, it's important to know them and to be mindful of them.

A personal example for myself: I knew I wanted to supervise a practicum student during my internship year. I vocalized this in the beginning of the year during supervision. When the opportunity came, there was only one student to supervise, and because I had mentioned earlier that I was interested in this, I was the intern who got to supervise that student.



Whatever your goals are, it's important to know them and be mindful of them.

You will not get everything you want, nor will you achieve every goal that you set for yourself, but spending some time thinking about your goals is more likely to ensure that you at least meet some of those goals and get some of the experiences you want.

Tip #2: Think About Your Supervision

Similarly, how do you want supervision to look? You're most likely going to a site where you don't know the supervisors or staff members. At previous sites or during your graduate schooling you may have better known the supervisors, their styles, and how they worked. Being new to a site, you might not have any of that information available to you.



...really spend some time thinking about who would be a good match for you.

If your site allows you to meet potential supervisors and specifically rank or request someone, **really spend some time thinking about who would be a good match for you**. If you do not get to choose or haven't gotten a chance to meet potential supervisors, spend some time thinking about how you work best in supervision.

Is there a specific style of supervision you like best? Was there a specific skill you wanted to learn? In the past, have you used audio or video recordings, and were they helpful or not?

Having done some reflection as to what is important to you in a supervisor and what you are hoping to gain from the next year may help you make the most out of your supervision during internship.

Tip #3: Read the Training & Procedural Manuals

This one seems a little silly, and you might think: "Really, who actually reads the manual?" By no means do you need to go through them with a fine tooth comb, but training and procedural manuals actually have some very useful information.

First, they tell you the rules and sometimes give you an idea of the culture of your site.

Second, there is often information in the procedural manual that no one will think to mention to you during training, and this information might turn out to be very useful.

For example, I did not know that there was a specific number to call if you were sick (which was in the manual). The first couple of times I was sick I texted and called my supervisor, who didn't get back to me until I was already sitting at my desk that morning.



...there is often information in the procedural manual that no one will think to mention to you during training...

There were also many forms and procedures that I accessed through the manual, ones that even other staff members had forgotten were there and didn't know how to access.

Tip #4: Learn About Your Site

Take some time to become familiar with your site and the system in which you will be working.

When most potential interns look at the website for their site, they are looking at the training model for the internship. What else does the website have to say? If your site is part of a larger system, how does that system present itself? If the website has staff bios and pictures, it can be helpful to familiarize yourself with some key names and faces.

For example, my site is a Jesuit Catholic university. Having never worked in that system before I was unsure of what that system might look like. I learned a lot of useful information about the school, Jesuit values, and the division of student life in which I would be working. And as a plus, I knew all of the faces of the staff from their staff bios!

Tip #5: If Moving, Become a Part of Your New City

If you are moving somewhere new, this might be a big transition. There are a couple of things you can do to potentially make it easier.

First off, where are you moving? **Find some information about the city and state.**

You will be working hard at your internship, but that doesn't mean you won't have time for some fun. Make a list of things you want to experience that are not work related.

Once you actually move, see if you can make friends locally early on, as they might know some fun things to do that aren't easily accessible from surfing the web.

Also, it's nice to just make some new friends. You might be in at a site at which you are the only intern, or you might have 10 in your cohort. Either way, social relationships are important to your mental health and making those connections will make your year much more enjoyable.



JOY ZELIKOVSKY





Joy Zelikovsky is doctoral candidate finishing her pre-doctoral internship at Creighton University. Joy is a generalist by training but specializes in treating crises, eating disorders and trauma. While Joy has worked in a variety of settings, including private practice, community mental health, schools and residential settings, she has a passion for college counseling and plans to continue her career in that setting. In addition to therapy, Joy has a background in providing neuropsychological and psychodiagnostic assessment. Joy enjoys helping students mature and grow as well as learn how to manage difficult emotional and educational challenges. Joy loves teaching and it is her goal to help future and current psychologists to grow and be successful in their careers. In her free time, Joy can usually be found with her two dogs who make life a daily adventure. She also loves traveling and understanding new cultures and people.



APPIC Internship Relocation: 10 Ways to Make it Easier

By Kelsey Ball

As psychology graduate students, we accomplish many milestones along the path to earning our doctorate degrees. One milestone that can be particularly exciting is the completion of the APPIC doctoral internship. Given the hundreds of wonderful placement sites spread out across the nation, many grad students find themselves having to relocate to a new city for their internship year.

Whether you're moving across town, across state lines, or across the country, getting settled in a new city for internship can be a little nerve-racking.

In addition to the typical concerns that come with moving, you also have internship-specific concerns such as finding housing that is close to your internship site and, my personal favorite, figuring out how in the world you are going to survive off of your stipend.

The bad news is, it's a lot to juggle physically and mentally. The good news is, it's all do-able!

I recently moved from Washington, DC to Miami, Florida to begin my doctoral internship. Having grown up in Bermuda and lived in various cities on the East Coast, I have had numerous experiences with relocating and making a new home in a brand new city. But no matter how many times you've moved, it's never easy.

Fortunately, there are many things you can do to ensure a smooth transition and to help you start fresh in a new city for internship. Here are my top 10 tips and tricks...

Tip #1: Find Housing Close to Your Internship Site

If you're anything like me, the first order of business in any new city is locating housing that is in a 1-mile radius of a Chipotle restaurant.

However, when relocating to a new city for internship, finding housing that is close to your internship site is far more important.

Research shows that average commute times vary between 40 and 80 minutes and an average of 4-10% of waking time on workdays is spent commuting [1]. Furthermore, US studies have consistently found that longer work commutes induce stress [2] and negatively impact your physical and emotional health [3].

So if you want to have a happy and healthy internship year, shorten your commute!

Tip #2: Get Outside

As tempting as it can be to stay inside in the safety of your new home, it is essential that you get outside, meet new people and enjoy everything your new city has to offer. You're not going to make friends sitting on your couch!

If you're in a warm climate, explore the closest beach and if you're in a cooler climate, check out the local bookstores and cafes. Getting outside will not only help you to meet new people, but it will also help you learn the lay of the land in your new city.



So if you want to have a happy and healthy internship year, shorten your commute!

Tip #3: Talk to the Locals

If you are an extrovert, it's probably second nature for you to chat with strangers. But if you are more of an introvert, talking to the person sitting next to you on the bus might not be your thing.

Regardless of your personality, when relocating to a new city it is always helpful to reach out to those around you. If you explain that you are new to the area, you'll find that people are, in general, very willing to be of assistance.

Tip #4: Connect With People You Already Know

When moving to a new city, it is important to connect with people you already know. Perhaps it's a long lost cousin. Maybe it's a friend from high school. Or maybe it's just a friend of a friend.

Regardless of who it is, make sure to reach out to them and let them know you are in town. In my experience, **knowing just one person in a new city makes** all the difference.



...when relocating to a new city, it is always helpful to reach out to those around you.

Tip #5: Just Say YES (to Everything)

After you've begun chatting with locals, reaching out to people you know, and establishing some semblance of a social circle, you'll probably start receiving invitations to various outings.

Once again, regardless of your personality type, it is important to accept all invitations.

Yes. ALL of them.

When you are new to an area, you should never turn down an invitation from anyone, even if it's for an activity that you wouldn't normally engage in.



During internship, you will certainly need time to mentally rejuvenate, so, whatever your hobby, make sure it's something you enjoy!

Tip #6: Join a Class, Group, Club, or Organization

Yoga, dance, cooking, volleyball, jogging, cycling, tai chi, music, meditation, etc. There truly are an infinite number of activities and groups you can join when you are new to a city.

Be adventurous – don't be afraid to take up a new hobby. Many students also report the benefits of joining a religious community or spiritual group during grad school and on their internship year. During internship, you will certainly need time to mentally rejuvenate, so, whatever your hobby, make sure it's something you enjoy!

Tip #7: Find Free Fun

If you haven't already noticed, you will quickly come to realize that you are not exactly going to be rolling in dough as an intern.

Although you will receive a stipend, it is unlikely that you will have a ton of cash left over after paying for your basic living expenses. But don't worry, there are a surprising number of wonderful things you can do for free in most cities in the US.

Having just relocated to Miami for internship, I was thrilled to see free yoga classes on the beach, free concerts in the park, free Spanish classes and free food at various outdoor markets. Have fun exploring all of the ways you can have fun for free in your new city.

Tip #8: Enjoy Doing Absolutely Nothing

Sometimes when we are alone and we are faced with a new environment, we frantically try to fill each and every waking moment with activity and action. I won't get into the existential underpinnings of this, but it is important to recognize when we are avoiding alone time.

Time to be with ourselves. Time to do absolutely nothing. If you are moving to a new city a few weeks before the start of your internship, you are very fortunate because you'll have time to relax and do nothing.

Be grateful and enjoy this free time because once internship starts, you can say goodbye to sleeping in and hello to the 9-5 life!

Tip #9: Find Your "Beginner's Mind"

When you first move to a new city, you can expect to get lost at least once.

Although it can be a little intimidating, there is also something wonderful about not knowing where you are or where you are going. It brings an innocence and freshness to life.

In Zen Buddhism there is a concept called "beginner's mind" that refers to having an attitude of openness, eagerness, and acceptance of all possibilities [4]. By mindfully activating your beginner's mind, you will integrate smoothly into your new city and get the most out of your internship year.

Tip #10: Get Excited About What Lies Ahead

Last but certainly not least, when you move to a new city for internship, you will inevitably have to say goodbye to friends, to family and to a degree of familiarity with life.

But with that comes the welcoming of new and exciting opportunities for you, personally and professionally. After internship, you begin to carve out your niche in the world and truly start to create a professional identity for yourself.

I don't know about you, but after 4+ years of graduate school, I am definitely ready to transition into the exciting next chapter of my life!

I hope these tips and tricks help you to create a wonderful life in your new city and get the most out of your internship year!

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KELSEY BALL



Kelsey Ball is currently a Clinical Psychology doctoral student at Howard University in Washington, D.C. She completed a double major in Psychology and Music at the University of Virginia and has always been fascinated by human behavior. Having grown up in Bermuda, she has a particular interest in minority mental health and consistently advocates for holistic approaches to health and wellness with at-risk populations. Her training in forensic settings, schools, community mental health and private practice has provided her with a variety of clinical experiences with diverse populations. She recently defended her dissertation on cultural mistrust and attitudes towards HIV testing and looks forward to completing internship at the University of Miami Counseling Center. In her free time, Kelsey enjoys dancing, cooking and teaching violin and flute to young musicians.



After the AAPI: A Winning Game Plan for Networking as a New Intern

By Paula Freedman

I will never forget the sleepless, nail-biting anxiety I experienced the night before APPIC Match Day.

After I matched, sighed with relief, and felt my heart rate return to normal, I'll admit that I was a bit amazed to see that life simply went on. I finished my coursework and made arrangements to move to another state to begin the transition from graduate student to fully functioning clinician.

The internship year has proven to be as transformative as I'd anticipated. I have sharpened my clinical skills, taken on supervisory, leadership, and managerial roles, and gained confidence.

More importantly, I found the advantages of being in professional "limbo;" functioning simultaneously as student, trainee, clinician, supervisor, manager, and consultant has given me license to network with anyone whose job entails some aspect of learning, teaching, counseling, or training.

Admittedly, I learned to network as an intern through trial and error. Being a great Monday morning quarterback (aren't we all?), I can offer the following strategies for a networking game plan that will lead you from the internship to your dream job:

1. Network "Within" Yourself

Before you begin the position, take some personal inventory. **What draws you to people, and what do others enjoy about you?** Which of your strengths lend themselves to forming new relationships?

Conversely, who intimidates you? What situations do you dread? Which personality traits do you experience as totally off-putting?

Networking "within" yourself can help you to mentally strategize. If you are a social butterfly, you'll have no problem showing up on the first day and asking colleagues to join you for lunch, or tagging along when invited. If you despise moving through crowds, it won't be realistic to plan on making contacts at a large conference. If you have a long commute or family waiting at home, you likely won't be staying late at the office to get to know coworkers.

Pay attention to and respect your personal networking parameters. **Forcing yourself into miserable situations may lead to suppressing your grouchiness in order to feign interest**. People tend to pick up on this attitude, and honestly, nobody wants the reputation of being an inauthentic therapist! Approach networking with energy and intentionality, and it will show.

This does not mean that you don't need to push yourself outside of your comfort zone; it means that you don't want to unnecessarily force yourself into situations where you won't be your most effective self. There will certainly be times when you must exchange pleasantries with a difficult colleague, or attend a meeting that bores you to tears. As a trainee, you are still being evaluated, and that might mean biting your tongue. However, if you are secure, flexible, and willing to learn from your experiences, these situations will be few and far between.



Identify your "niche" areas and seek out professionals who can help you further those specialties.

2. Be Realistic and Strategic

Identify your "niche" areas and seek out professionals who can help you further those specialties. Whether it is more experience with a specific population, diagnosis, or treatment modality, be prepared to ask for what you need.

One of the purposes of the internship is to fill in what you perceive to be "gaps" in experience standing between your current clinical competence and your ideal future position. Consider what that ideal position might be, and look for the individuals with whom you might connect in your quest for that position.



Make social media part of your strategy. It is the easiest networking tool out there.

If you are a passionate advocate for a particular cause, participate in rallies, fundraisers, and volunteer opportunities supporting that cause. **Attend events that pique your curiosity**. While there, demonstrate your enthusiasm, and exchange contact information with everyone you meet.

For instance, if you are committed to treating patients with dementia, you'll likely find excellent networking opportunities at an Alzheimer's awareness event. Assume that everyone you meet at these events, no matter their line of work, has the potential to serve as a consultant down the road.

Make social media part of your strategy. It is the easiest networking tool out there. You can literally hang out in a bathrobe and slippers with your cat in your lap while you network. Maintain a professional presence online through LinkedIn, Twitter, or Facebook. Join online groups and forums, and share content that will further your professional reputation, such as news articles related to your clinical and research interests.

3. Be Creative

Look for creative ways of filling the needs of your internship site. **Find places** where your career interests overlap with the services you are already providing.

For instance, if you hope to specialize in treating chronic pain, you may utilize an internship in substance abuse treatment as an opportunity to learn more about the relationship between chronic pain and opioid dependence. This was the case for me. I learned that my agency wanted more specialized programming for opioid-dependent clients, and I was able to enlist a colleague to join me in developing and co-facilitating a group curriculum to address this need.

There are networking opportunities in consulting with primary care providers, physical therapists, or practitioners of alternative treatments. These professionals can provide expertise on effective interdisciplinary interventions.

At the end of the day, finding creative places of overlap helps you to further your own career, improve quality of care for your clients, enhance the services your site provides, and establish professional relationships that may one day become referral sources.

Additionally, there are ways in which your self-care activities can provide networking opportunities. An interest in chronic pain might lead to networking opportunities when you join a yoga studio, treat yourself to a massage, or visit a chiropractor. The practitioners you'll encounter in these settings may provide you with fresh, creative ways of thinking about how to best help your clients.

4. Avoid Drama and Stay Out of Office Politics

When you are working in an agency, there will inevitably be organizational flaws and power dynamics to navigate. Do so mindfully, and respect the site's expectations for its interns.

It may be difficult to balance authenticity and discretion, so use this year as a time for developing your professional "filter."

Oftentimes, agencies have a set of cultural norms that can include cliques, unspoken social hierarchies, or unequal distributions of power. Try to stay focused on your long-term career goals, and **avoid gossiping or bad-mouthing the site.**



It might be difficult to balance authenticity and discretion, so use this year as a time for developing your professional "filter."

For instance, if you have a condescending colleague, find ways of getting support that do not include venting to your fellow interns about how you can't believe the agency would hire someone so rude. If something really is unethical or outrageous, seek consultation through safe and appropriate channels, such as with a trusted supervisor or your program's training director.

Otherwise, simply treat this year as a chance to gather data on how systems behave or misbehave, and take notes on what you want to remember for your own development as a leader.

5. Don't Go off the Grid

If you are relocating for your internship, it can be especially tricky to immerse yourself in the internship experience while remaining connected to those who helped you along the journey. Even if you're not halfway across the continent from your graduate school program, it can be easy to mentally "check out" from your previous routines as a student, and to lose touch with people you were accustomed to seeing regularly.

While there are many new connections to make, it is equally important to retain the professional relationships you have developed thus far.

If you are still living nearby, invite a former supervisor, colleague, or professor to get a cup of coffee. If you've relocated and you come back to town for a weekend, plan to build in some networking time. Make the effort to reach out to your mentors, update them on how the year is going, and enlist their help in figuring out your post-internship plans. Invest in these relationships. Use them as sounding boards and ask for some guidance. Perhaps they can help you mount the next stepping-stone in your career path.



PAULA FREEDMAN, PsyD



Paula Freedman, Psy.D. is a clinical psychologist who specializes in treating adolescents and adults who struggle with addictive behaviors, impulse-control problems, perfectionism, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive tendencies, trauma, and the testing and diagnosis of ADHD and learning disabilities. Dr. Freedman is a graduate of the Adler School of Professional Psychology (now Adler University) in Chicago, Illinois. She has experience working in and with the school system, community mental health, hospitals, and chemical dependency treatment, and currently works in a small private practice in Chicago. She is certified in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) as well as in Chronic Disease Self-Management Programs. She has developed a group therapy curriculum based in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and has facilitated successful groups with adults who suffer from various chronic pain problems and young adults with co-occurring substance use and mood disorders. Both in her professional world and her personal life, she enjoys exploring how the mind and body influence one another.

Part Five

Your Ultimate List of APPIC Resources

APPIC Match Resources

The Ultimate List of APPIC Match Resources

By Maggie Campbell Wilkerson

The APPIC Internship Match tends to be one of the most stressful events of a doctoral psychology student's education and training.

Not only is there a chance that you won't match with an internship, but the sheer amount of time and money that it takes to participate in the match can be incredibly overwhelming.

Mid-August to the end of October is *APPIC Season* at our company, Time2Track. During this time of year, we receive many questions about the AAPI and the APPIC Match and every year we're reminded of the fact that resources for APPIC Applicants are few and far between. Many are outdated, and they are scattered all over the place.

To help you prepare for the AAPI, the APPIC Match, and beyond, we've compiled the ultimate list of APPIC Match Resources from around the web. Some are older, but still relevant, while others are more recent. Below you'll find news articles, videos, how-to articles, slideshares, and more. Don't forget to add any resources we might have missed in the comments section below.

General APPIC Information

About the APPIC Match

Webpage

If you're wondering, "What in the heck is the APPIC Match?" – then this link is for you.

APAGS Webisode: APPIC Match Process (2015)

Video

This video provides an overview of the APPIC Internship Match process.

APPIC Match Dates

Webpage

These are all the important dates that need to be on your calendar if you're applying for internship this year.

Match Statistics

Webpage

Wondering what chances of matching with an internship really are? Check out the match statistics from past years.

Matching Program for Couples

Webpage

Looking to match with your significant other? Learn more about applying for the match as a couple.

APPIC Policies & APPIC Match Policies

Webpages

Reading about policies might be boring, but these two pages are must-reads for upcoming APPIC applicants.

Directory of APPIC Internship & Postdoctoral Sites

Searchable Directory

Access the database of APPIC Internship Sites to start researching sites you might be interested in early. You'll be able to see details of each site along with any specific requirements they might have (eg. minimum number of Intervention hours). Knowing these requirements ahead of time will give you the best options when it's time to apply.

Guides & eBooks

Match made on earth: A student guide to navigating the psychology internship application process (2004)

Free eBook from the Canadian Psychological Association

This guide is over 10 years old, but it contains some great information about what the APPIC Match is, a realistic timeline to follow when applying, and loads of other useful tips and activities to prepare you for the match.

Internships in Psychology: The APAGS Workbook for Writing Successful Applications and Finding the Right Fit, Third Edition (2013)

Book / eBook

Although I haven't personally read this book, the Amazon reviews are very positive overall with an average of 4.6 out of 5 stars. Some reviewers say it is "essential" to the APPIC Application process, while others say some of the information is already outdated and you can save money by purchasing the 2nd edition. I personally like that the 3rd edition is available on a Kindle.

Preparing for the Match

Join the APAGS Internship-Focused Action Listserv

Listserv

Join the APAGS Internship listserv to share ideas and discuss issues surrounding the match.

Student Doctor Network

Website & Forums

The Student Doctor Network is, in my opinion, the best place to get answers to all your APPIC / AAPI related questions. With thousands of forums and threads to search through, you're bound to find some great information. And if you have a question that hasn't already been answered, just start a thread of your own.

The Couples Match (2005)

Article

Are you and your significant other trying to match together? Hint: be prepared to compromise. This article may be 10 years old, but it offers great insights into what the Couples Match is really like – and how to navigate it successfully.

9 Ideas for Increasing Your Chances of Matching (2015)

BlogArticle from PsychCentral.com

This is a great article from PsychCentral with 9 tips that can help you increase your chances of matching with an internship site.

Psych Internship Prep

Website & Consultant

Dr. Josephine Minardo is an expert on psychology internship preparation and also a Time2Track Guest Blogger. Her website offers some great information on the APPIC Match and the internship imbalance. Dr. Minardo also offers personal consultation services for students preparing for the match.

Essays, Cover Letters, & Completing the AAPI

APAGS Webisode: Writing AAPI Essays (2014)

Video

This video is a brief primer to help you write your essays for the APPIC Internship Application.

Getting The Internship You Want: How to write APPIC essays that get you noticed...without completely losing your sanity (2009)

Slideshares

Dr. John T. Carlsen provides slideshares with tips and strategies on how to conquer each AAPI Essay as well as conducting internship interviews.

Book I: Essay 1: Your Autobiographical Statement

Book II: Essay 2: Your Theoretical Orientation

Book III: Essay 3: Your Approach to Diversity and Individual/Cultural Differences

Book IV: Essay 4: Your Research Experience and Interests

Book V: Strategies for Overcoming Writer's Block to Produce Excellent Writing

How to Rank Internship Sites (2014)

Blog Article

Here's an article with very valuable tips taken directly from the APAGS Internship Workbook that will guide you through the "Dos and Don'ts" of ranking your internship sites.

APPIC Internship Application Interviews

APAGS Webisode: Interviewing for Internship (2013)

Video

This video is a quick primer for interviewing for APPIC internships.

Conducting Persuasive Internship Interviews (2009)

Slideshare

This slideshare provides some great information on preparing for internship interviews.

What Happens if You Don't Match?

Surviving a No-Match Result (2005)

Article

Written by a student while getting ready to go through her second match, this article provides some insight into what it's like not to match with an internship...and what to do next.

The Bonus Year: Thriving When I Didn't Match (2014)

gradPSYCH Blog Article

Not matching with an internship can also turn into a great opportunity. Learn how one student made the most of his "Bonus Year".

Didn't match? Move on. (2011)

gradPSYCH Article

Not matching with an internship isn't the end of the world – or your career. This article provides some much-needed perspective on a not-so-ideal result.

After the Match Results: Planning for Your Future (2013)

Webpage

Here are some tips and strategies to cope with a no-match result and how to move forward.

The Internship Crisis

Ending the Internship Crisis

Webpage

This webpage has lots of resources for students as well as a list of things you can do to help end the internship crisis.

Intern Gap Frustrates Clinicians in Training (2011)

Article from NYTimes.com

Read about some of the issues surrounding the internship shortage.

The Psychology Internship Crisis (2014)

Video from APAGS

From the Video Description: "This video presents data and personal reactions to the psychology internship crisis, discusses the importance of high quality internship training for APAGS members, and offers a call to the psychology community for greater awareness, advocacy and action to ensure the availability of internships for students in clinical, counseling and school psychology doctoral programs."

APAGS Response to the Internship Crisis (2012)

Webpage

APAGS released a full response to the internship crisis in 2012.

APAGS Actions 2000-2010 Related to the Internship Crisis (2010)

Webpage

This is a list of actions that APAGS has taken from 2000-2010 to advocate for creating change in the internship matching system.

Sign the Pledge to Help End the Internship Crisis

Online Pledge

Consider signing the APAGS pledge to stay informed about internship crisis, educate others about the crisis, and advocate for high quality training opportunities.

Match Day 2015: The Dialectic of the Internship Crisis (2015)

Blog Article

News on the 2015 APPIC Match Statistics, what they mean, and what APAGS is doing to address the continuing internship crisis.

Internship Match Rates Rise in 2015 (2015)

gradPSYCH Article

According to gradPSYCH, the match rate and number of internship sites continues to increase for a 3rd consecutive year.

More Psychology Graduate Students Secure Internships (2015)

Monitor on Psychology Article

This is another recent article describing the optimistic outlook for internship match rates.

After the Match

You've Matched! Now What? (2011)

gradPSYCH Article

Here are 7 things you need to do after you match with an internship.

7 Secrets to Getting Your Dissertation Done on Time (2015)

Blog Article from Time2Track.com

Still need to finish your dissertation? Use some of your down-time after the match to make as much progress as possible, and read this article for 7 secrets to getting your dissertation done on time.



MAGGIE CAMPBELL WILKERSON





Maggie Wilkerson graduated from Wake Forest University with degrees in Psychology and Art, and is now President and Co-Owner of Time2Track. Maggie does a little bit of everything here – from talking to clients to working with guest bloggers to planning new features. When she's not working, she enjoys cooking, gardening, and spending time with her husband, their cat, and two dogs.

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"I feel like you need Time2Track to be a competitive applicant for APPIC."

- Time2Track Student

"Time2Track is an incredibly useful tool that is clearly built around student needs. I can't imagine having to complete regular practicum reporting requirements or the AAPI without it...it saved me countless hours."

- Heather M.