

Free Checklist

Are you applying and no one is calling?

15 quick steps before applying to your first internship or entry-level opportunity.

A practical resource for students and recent graduates who want to review their resume, cover letter, application strategy, and follow-up before hitting submit.

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Before you assume you are not qualified, review this.

Many students and recent graduates apply to internships and entry-level jobs for weeks without hearing back. It can feel personal, especially when you are sending resumes, completing applications, and still receiving silence.

But the problem is not always your potential. Sometimes the issue is how your application is being presented, where it is being submitted, or whether the process is being filtered through digital systems before a person ever sees it.

Today, many companies require candidates to apply through official career pages, job boards, or applicant tracking systems. That means your resume needs to be clear, organized, easy to scan, and aligned with the opportunity you are applying for.

What may be happening?

- Your resume may not be adapted to the role.
- Important keywords may be missing.
- The format may be hard for systems to read.
- The company may receive a high volume of applications.
- Some roles may already have internal candidates or may not be actively moving forward.
- Lack of follow-up may make your application easier to forget.

This checklist will not guarantee interviews or job offers. Its purpose is to help you review the parts of your application that are within your control before you apply.

15-Step Quick Checklist

Use this page before sending your next application.

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| 01 | Check that your contact information is correct. |
| 02 | Use a professional email address. |
| 03 | Make sure your resume has a clear direction. |
| 04 | Include education, projects, courses, and skills. |
| 05 | Adapt your resume to the internship or role. |
| 06 | Use keywords from the job description naturally. |
| 07 | Avoid overly complex designs, icons, or hard-to-read layouts. |
| 08 | Save your file with a professional name. |
| 09 | Personalize your cover letter or application message. |
| 10 | Research the company before applying. |
| 11 | Prepare your answer to "Tell me about yourself." |
| 12 | Practice explaining your limited experience with confidence. |
| 13 | Prepare at least two questions for the interviewer. |
| 14 | Track every application you submit. |
| 15 | Send a short follow-up when appropriate. |

The 5 checks that matter most

1. Resume clarity

A recruiter should quickly understand what you study, what kind of opportunity you want, and what skills you bring. A resume that is too general can make your application harder to connect to the role.

2. Keywords from the job description

Do not copy the entire job posting. Instead, identify the main skills, tools, coursework, responsibilities, or qualifications mentioned and reflect the ones you honestly have.

3. Simple, readable format

Many applications are submitted through platforms. A clean layout with clear section titles is safer than a design that is beautiful but difficult to read or scan.

4. Evidence beyond paid experience

Projects, volunteer work, coursework, certifications, part-time jobs, clubs, and leadership experiences can show responsibility, communication, organization, and learning ability.

5. Follow-up and tracking

If you apply to many roles without tracking them, it becomes difficult to know when to follow up or what version of your resume you used. Organization is part of the strategy.

If you are applying and no one is calling

Silence does not always mean rejection, and it does not always mean you are unqualified. It can mean your resume needs adjustment, the company received too many applications, the role changed, the process is delayed, or the posting was not as active as it appeared.

What you can control:

- Update your resume for each type of opportunity.
- Use a clean and readable format.
- Match honest keywords from the job description.
- Apply through the official company page when required.
- Keep a tracker of where and when you applied.
- Follow up politely when appropriate.
- Keep improving your application instead of blaming yourself immediately.

"Your resume does not need to be perfect. It needs to be clear, honest, focused, and prepared for the opportunity you are applying for."

Use this checklist as your first review. If you notice that several points are missing, that is a sign your application may need more structure before you keep applying.

Next step: prepare your full application

This free checklist helps you review the basics before you apply. But if you want to prepare your resume, cover letter, professional messages, interview answers, application tracker, and job-search strategy step by step, the next resource is the Internship Starter Pack Plus.

Internship Starter Pack Plus

Includes resume templates, a completed resume example, cover letters, professional messages, interview preparation, application tracker, AI prompts, and bonus resources about ATS, AI filters, and what to do when you apply and no one calls.

Important note

This resource is for educational purposes and does not guarantee interviews, job offers, internship placement, or hiring outcomes. The goal is to help you present your information with more clarity and confidence.

Printing note: This checklist can be used digitally or printed in color or black and white. For best results, print it on 8.5 x 11 letter-size paper.

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