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WELCOME *to Wharton*



Pre-MBA Programs & Early Recruiting

MBA Career Management

Pre-MBA Programs & Internships

Prior to joining Wharton, some students choose to participate in pre-MBA programs for early career exploration and/or to build their network

Pre-MBA Programs

- Designed to help students prepare for the MBA experience and/or learn about specific industries or companies through educational and networking activities
- Some companies may also interview and extend early offers for an MBA summer internship that would take place after completing your first year at Wharton
- Students typically learn about the internship through a “day in the life” or “get to know us” event or program (not direct work experience), though a few may offer a more in-depth experience at the firm

Pre-MBA Internships

- Gain actual work experience in an industry or company of interest
- Type 1: Offered by larger, established companies who provide structured experiences that may carry through to an MBA summer internship opportunity, acceptance of which may be obligatory
- Type 2: Secured through personal networking to gain industry or functional experience with no expectation or obligation of an MBA summer internship position

Pre-MBA Programs & Internships

- Typical sectors offering pre-MBA opportunities include consulting, finance, health care, tech and consumer products at companies with robust recruiting programs. Some programs offer opportunities to engage with companies across multiple sectors.
 - Details on many programs are posted on the [Admit Website](#)
- Pre-MBA programs are not an essential part of the MBA experience, but can help students explore specific interest areas, build confidence and a network
 - The decision to participate in a pre-MBA program or pursue/accept a pre-MBA internship is left to the discretion of each admitted student
 - Students should not feel that it is necessary to pursue a pre-MBA opportunity in order to be successful in recruiting for summer internships or full-time positions while at Wharton
 - At Wharton, you will have numerous academic, social, and leadership opportunities to grow your professional skill set, as well as access to a best-in-class career management team that will help you devise and implement an effective job search strategy to achieve your goals

MBACM Guidance: Early Interviews

- Many companies that offer pre-MBA interview opportunities also have an active recruiting relationship with Wharton and may have separate plans to visit campus this fall. Even if they do not recruit at Wharton, companies in general will have a separate fall job posting on their website open to all students and schools.
- Please be aware that some companies who offer pre-MBA interviews *will not let candidates re-engage in the fall campus process if they do not receive an offer from the early interview*. This policy varies by firm, so it is critically important to understand the process and policy of each firm before accepting an early interview invite.
- Assess your interview preparedness. If the company's policy is to only consider candidates once per recruiting cycle, you should accept an early interview **ONLY** if you feel prepared. If you are not ready, it is okay to defer to the fall campus process.
 - Note: Incoming students will gain access to MBA Career Management's online recruiting resources once you have set up your PennKey (required for site authentication). You will receive an email about this from the MBA Program Office in late May/early June. MBACM career advisors are focused on supporting WG'25 and WG'26 students through July. Pre-Term advising for incoming students will open on August 1.
- If you choose to defer to the campus process, you should still introduce yourself to company reps to make the connection and express your interest and intent to engage in their campus process. Ask thoughtful questions to learn more and make a strong first impression to maximize the interaction.

MBACM Guidance: Early Offers

- **Things to consider when evaluating an early offer:**

Advantages	Potential Drawbacks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Takes the pressure off of first-year recruiting• Can focus on other aspects of the MBA program, such as academics, building peer relationships, and extracurricular activities• Can learn about other industries through campus events without the pressure of having to actively recruit with companies• Some pre-MBA employers offer financial rewards, such as a sign-on bonus or fellowship• May facilitate landing your “dream job” post-MBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forgo valuable time spent in Pre-Term/Q1 engaging in thoughtful career exploration and research to help confirm your best-fit path (i.e., make a decision prematurely, potential to regret later)• May not be as entrenched in the Wharton community, particularly career-focused clubs• May miss out on opportunities to build a robust professional network through 1Y recruiting activities• Invest less time and effort cultivating real-world recruiting and on-the-job skills in Year 1, and risk being less prepared for the internship or a full-time job search (if needed) in Year 2

- **If you receive an early offer for Summer 2026:** Please [contact our office](#) before making any commitments. An MBACM advisor can help you consider your options, both in the context of your personal career goals as well as Wharton’s recruiting policies. If the firm is a Wharton recruiter, we can provide advice on how to manage the conversation with the employer and help get you the most flexibility.