

MICROSOFT – CLASS NOTES

Quick recap

Microsoft representatives Neil and Zach introduced themselves and shared insights about Microsoft's technology offerings and current hiring landscape, emphasizing the importance of LinkedIn profiles and technical skills in the job market. The instructor provided detailed information about Microsoft internship opportunities, including application processes and specific projects, while discussing the company's culture and the value of internships in providing real-world experience.

Next steps

- Students need to create Microsoft careers profiles at careers@microsoft.com.
- Students need to update and polish their LinkedIn profiles for recruiter visibility.
- Students need to apply for Microsoft internships before the end of October for best acceptance rates.
- Students need to reach out to Microsoft University recruiting team and connect with them.
- Students need to consider connecting with Valerie Curse-Kistrina (Microsoft) on LinkedIn.
- Students need to create GitHub profiles if interested in developer roles.
- Students need to register for the STEM job fair.
- Students need to sign up for the etiquette dinner.
- Students need to consider participating in the Savannah River National Labs campus visit on October 1st.
- Students interested in graduation with leadership distinction (GLD) to reach out for more information.

Student Opportunities and Health Updates

The instructor discussed upcoming events and opportunities for students, including a job fair, an etiquette dinner, and a visit from Savannah River National Labs. He encouraged students to register for these events and mentioned that several internships and job opportunities are available through Handshake. The instructor also advised students to stay home if they are feeling sick due to the spread of flu and Covid-19 in the class.

Microsoft Tech Career Insights

Microsoft representatives Neil and Zach introduced themselves to the USC audience, sharing their backgrounds and experiences at Microsoft. They discussed Microsoft's technology offerings, particularly highlighting Windows, Microsoft 365, and Copilot, while emphasizing the importance of LinkedIn profiles in the tech job market. Neil and Zach encouraged students to connect with them on LinkedIn and provided guidance on creating strong profiles, noting that recruiters often use AI to screen candidates first.

Microsoft's Cloud-Focused Hiring Shift

The guest speakers discussed Microsoft's current hiring landscape, noting a shift from traditional software development to cloud-focused roles, while acknowledging recent layoffs and performance cuts. He emphasized that individual contributors are currently in high demand, particularly in AI-related infrastructure and technical program management, though non-software development internships are harder to come by. Neil and Zack shared insights about their respective roles, with Zack explaining his work in product management and Nick describing his consulting and customer delivery position, while both highlighted the quarterly performance review culture common in tech companies.

Microsoft Internship Application Tips

Neil discussed Microsoft internship opportunities, emphasizing the importance of creating a careers profile at careers.microsoft.com for job applications. He advised students to start applying for internships now, as the highest acceptance rates are from September to October. Neil also recommended connecting with the Microsoft University recruiting team and leveraging LinkedIn to network with current and former interns. He explained the typical internship interview process and mentioned that most internships are based in Redmond, Washington, but other major cities also host Microsoft offices. Zach briefly touched on the Aspire program, a 2-year rotational program for seniors, and encouraged students to explore this option if interested.

Intern Success Stories at Microsoft

Zach shared his experience working with interns at Microsoft, highlighting two significant projects. The first involved an intern, a George Mason University graduate who built a virtual lab to improve testing for their product, addressing performance issues in an old storage closet. The second project involved a software developer who created a monitoring tool to help engineers respond more efficiently to outages in classified cloud environments. Both interns made meaningful contributions that could potentially be implemented in production, demonstrating the value of internships in providing real-world experience and solving pressing technical challenges.

Microsoft's Evolving Workplace Culture

Neil discussed Microsoft's company culture, emphasizing that while the company has changed since 2019, with a shift towards data infrastructure and increased layoff culture, individual team dynamics and manager support significantly impact workplace experience. He highlighted the importance of GitHub profiles for developers, noting that self-taught projects and problem-solving skills are valued more than formal training. Neil also explained that Microsoft offers internships at various locations, with Redmond being the primary headquarters, and mentioned that while software sales roles are limited, certifications like CompTIA and Microsoft's own foundational certifications can enhance a candidate's resume.