



Internship Hacks

Easy-to-understand strategies which will help you to get an assured paid internship at any startup in India



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Before you get ready to bag your first paid internship and share with us your success story, you need to be ready with the following things:

Creating a sooper-doooper Resume

Drafting a great resume does not necessarily mean you should follow the rules you hear from the experts. It does not have to be one page or follow a specific resume format. Every resume has its unique trait of communication. It should be appropriate to your situation and do exactly what you want it to do.

Below are some recommended online tools to create your resume:

1. Strikingly Resume (Free)
2. Creddle (Free)
3. Resumonk (Free)
4. Represent (Paid)

Drafting a Cover Letter

This is the only one page document, you will need to add (along with your resume) before applying to any internship or a job. Primarily, it is a letter which introduces you, explains your purpose for writing, highlights a few of your experiences or skills, and requests an opportunity to meet personally with the potential employer.

Precisely because this letter is your introduction to an employer and because first impressions matter, you should take great care to create your cover letter.

Note: A cover letter not only tells of your accomplishments & ambitions but also reveals how effectively you can communicate.

Below are some recommended utilities to create your first cover letter:

1. Smart Cover Letter
2. My Perfect Cover Letter
3. ResumeBuilder Cover Letter
4. Cover Letter Now

Reverse Engineering Strategy

Now, think of an imaginary scenario. You apply for an internship that seems absolutely perfect for you. You send your resume with a cover letter to the prospective employer. Plenty of other students think the internship sounds great too and apply for the same. A few days later, the employer is staring at a pile of several hundred resumes. Several hundred?, you ask. Isn't that an inflated number? Not really. Any great internship offer often attracts between 100 and 300 resumes these days, so you are facing a great deal of competition.

So, here's a step-by-step process to land your paid internship.

Step 1: Ask yourself "What can I give that will add value to the startup?" This ain't a simple question. In fact, it is the most important step, even before you think of getting 'paid' for any job. Spend your time asking this question repetitively to yourself on what are the key skills you have built over the years and then inter-link them with the deliverables.

Few examples:

1) Shruti is good at Photoshop. She would help (Startup_Name) by re-designing their current email newsletters and increasing the conversion by X %

2) Simran is good at communication. She would help (Startup_Name) by handling their telephonic customer support and making (X) number of customers more happy.

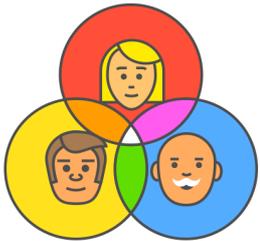
3) Raj loves writing short stories. He would help (Startup_Name) by posting interesting articles on their blog and increase the visitor engagement by X %

4) Rohan loves spending time of Facebook and Twitter. He would help (Startup_Name) by creating interesting social media posts, and help them increase their social media engagement.



Step 2: Jot down a list of all the startups that are in your area of interest (Discovery Stage)

This is the stage where you have to think yourself as an explorer. Get your pen and paper ready, before you start your exploration. Think of the preferable locations where you would love to work. Once you're ready with that, start searching for startups in that location/city. Along with your search process, you need to note down the sector of the startup (which area they position themselves), the products/services they provide, their website address, the contact numbers, and if possible their competitors in the market.



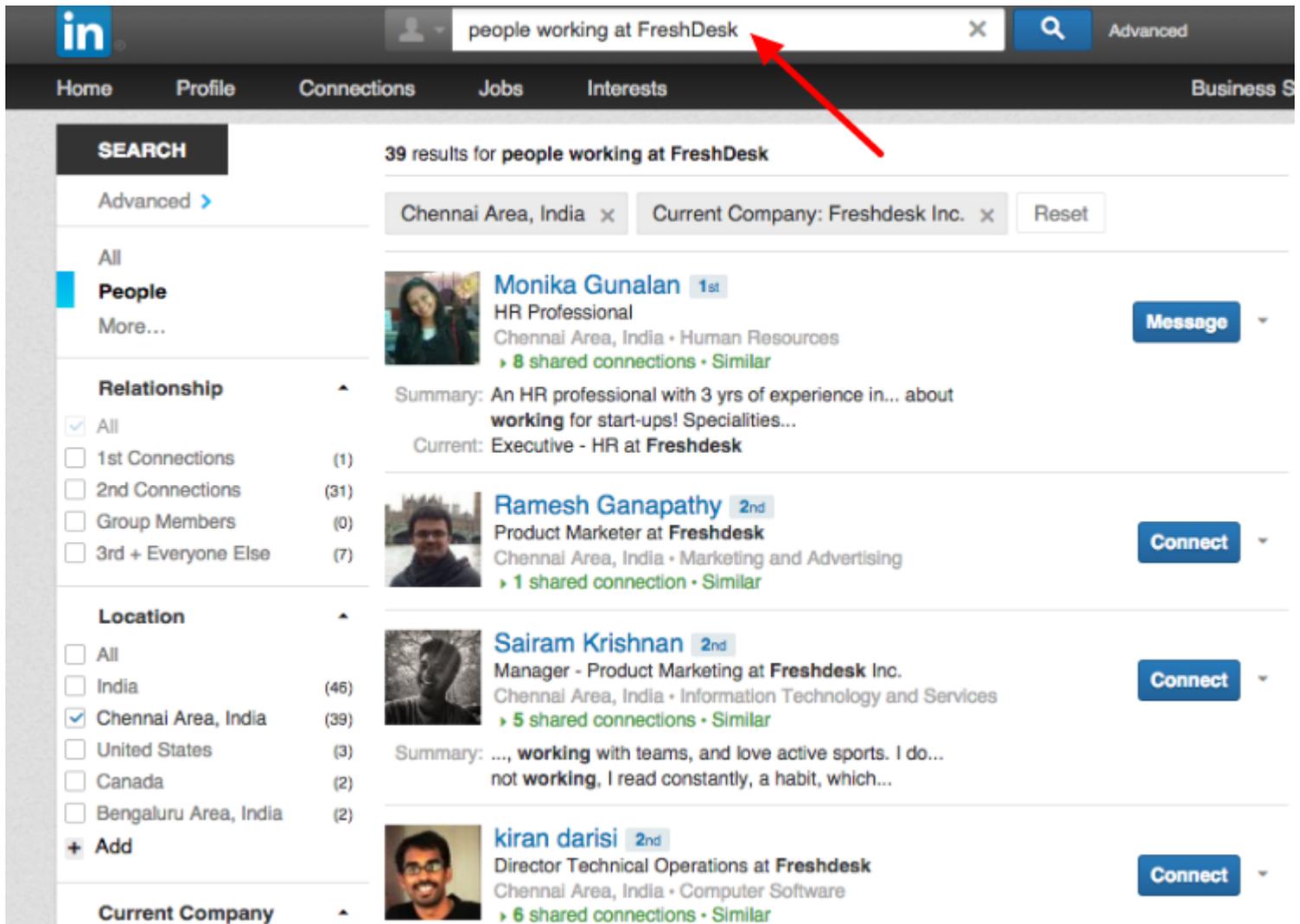
Step 3: Knowing the decision makers (BlueWhale Networking Stage)

The reason I call this process as 'BlueWhale networking' is because one has to do it so swiftly with an art that there should be no fuss, here and there; just like a whale catches its prey. Coming down to this level, the decision makers of most of the startups these days are the founders. So, how to know the people behind a startup?

LinkedIn comes to your rescue :)

If you're not on LinkedIn yet, create your profile in few minutes and start adding as many details to it as possible. You can start connecting to these decision makers very easily by searching for people from that company.

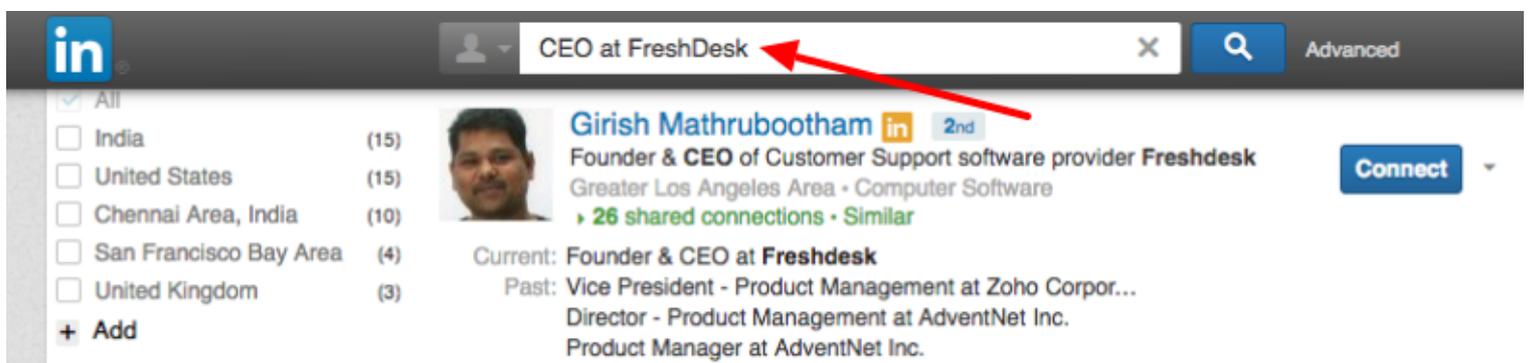
For example: I really love this startup called FreshDesk from Chennai, and I want to know the people who work over there.



The screenshot shows a LinkedIn search interface. The search bar at the top contains the text "people working at FreshDesk" with a red arrow pointing to it. Below the search bar, the navigation menu includes Home, Profile, Connections, Jobs, Interests, and Business S. The search results are displayed under the heading "39 results for people working at FreshDesk". On the left side, there are filters for "Relationship" (All, 1st Connections, 2nd Connections, Group Members, 3rd + Everyone Else) and "Location" (All, India, Chennai Area, India, United States, Canada, Bengaluru Area, India). The main results list includes:

- Monika Gunalan** (1st): HR Professional, Chennai Area, India. Summary: An HR professional with 3 yrs of experience in... about working for start-ups! Specialities... Current: Executive - HR at Freshdesk. Action: Message.
- Ramesh Ganapathy** (2nd): Product Marketer at Freshdesk, Chennai Area, India. Summary: ... Summary: ..., working with teams, and love active sports. I do... not working, I read constantly, a habit, which... Action: Connect.
- Sairam Krishnan** (2nd): Manager - Product Marketing at Freshdesk Inc., Chennai Area, India. Summary: ... Action: Connect.
- kiran darisi** (2nd): Director Technical Operations at Freshdesk, Chennai Area, India. Action: Connect.

However, the person I am more interested in is the decision maker. So let me refine my search:



The screenshot shows a refined LinkedIn search. The search bar at the top contains the text "CEO at FreshDesk" with a red arrow pointing to it. The search results are displayed under the heading "CEO at FreshDesk". On the left side, there are filters for "Location" (All, India, United States, Chennai Area, India, San Francisco Bay Area, United Kingdom). The main results list includes:

- Girish Mathrubootham** (2nd): Founder & CEO of Customer Support software provider Freshdesk, Greater Los Angeles Area. Summary: ... Action: Connect.

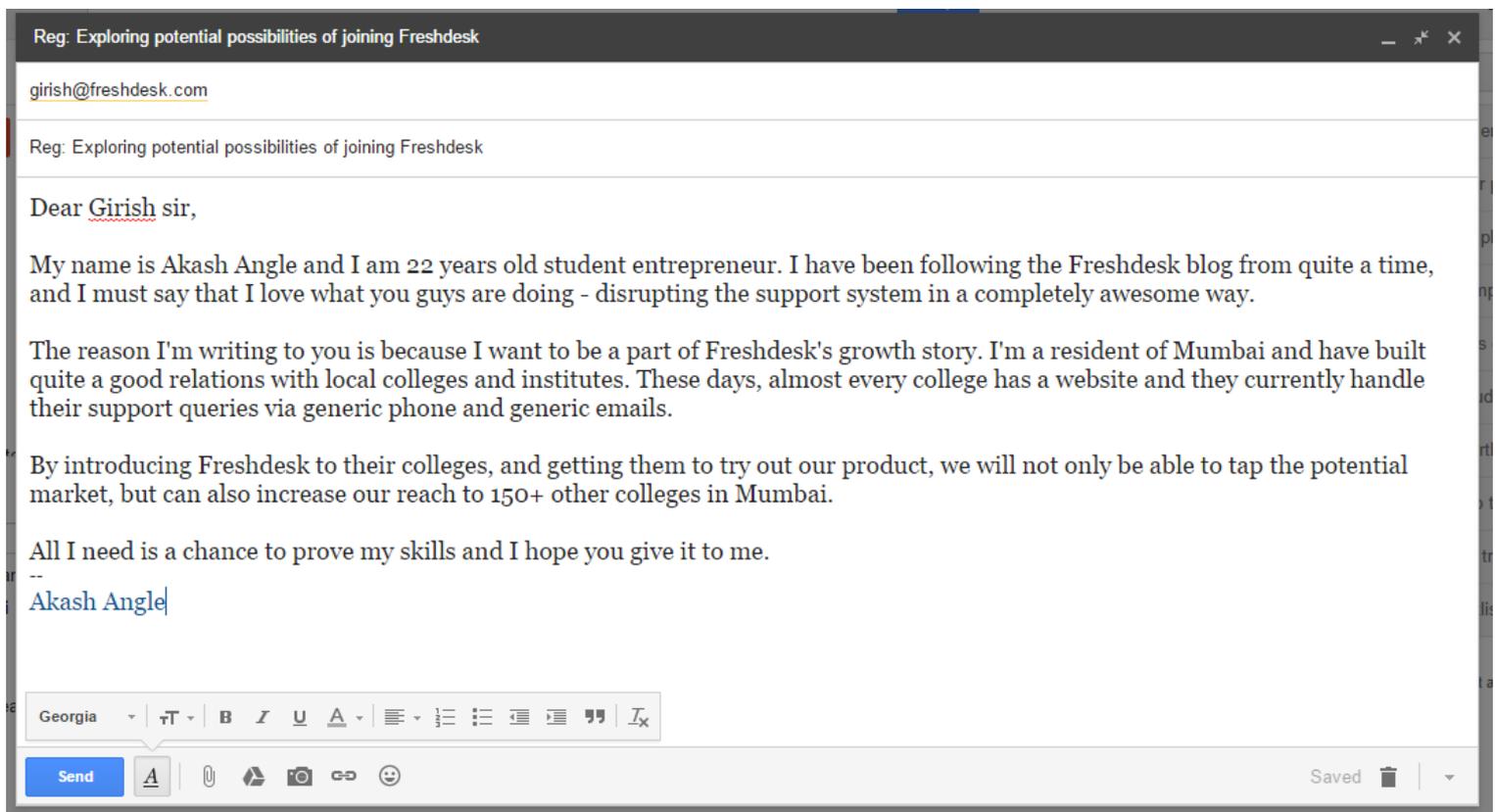
Note: Take your time to research these startups. You'd be wasting time and energy if you just apply or send random messages for any openings you find, even though you might feel like you're accomplishing something by sending out tons of resumes.



Step 4: Play the ball (Connect)

After all the required information is in place, it's now time to connect. This involves sending an email (only one) to the decision maker, introducing yourself and your value addition to their startup in a short and precise manner along with your ready resume and cover letter.

For example: My name is Akash Angle, and I am 22. I am good at sales and marketing. This would be an example of my cover letter.



Note: Waiting to hear if your internship application has been successful can be stressful. Everyone has been through this anxiousness at one point of their life. However, don't 'hold' your internship search while you wait for an answer. Since you don't know your fate, you must give the employer space until they reach out to you. And, if you don't hear back at all, then it's time to move on. The best way to move on is to stay positive and start repeating the process from *STEP 1 to STEP 4*.