

Meet Microsoft Developer Quinn Damerell

Tech Student Experience 19 Dec 2012 9:36 AM 2



Quinn Damerell is former Windows Phone intern who is now a software development engineer for Microsoft. He is also the developer of the popular Windows Phone app, [Baconit](#). Learn more about Quinn's apps in his previous [guest blog post about developing for Windows Phone](#). We asked Quinn to share a bit about his experience and advice he has for current students who are starting their careers.

Where is your Microsoft office located?

My office is located at the Redmond campus in Studio F, very close to the Microsoft Commons.

How long have you been at Microsoft?

About four months now.

What other jobs/internships did you have prior to working at Microsoft?

Prior to starting full time I had two internships, one with Raytheon and the other with Microsoft. They were both a lot of fun, but I would have to say Microsoft's was the best internship hands down.

How did you land your job at Microsoft?

I wrote a lot of apps! I started by writing apps for Android and then transitioned to Windows Phone since that was the phone I was using at the time. Mobile apps are great tools to show off your talents because you can reference and demo them directly while talking to a recruiter no matter where you are. They also really help you sharpen your coding skills and they are a great portal to show the world your work!

How would you describe your job at Microsoft?

It's honestly my dream job. I have very flexible working hours, a fun and intelligent team to work with, and free beverages! I'm a SDE (Software Development Engineer) so it's our job to take the spec documents and ideas from PMs and implement them in code. Every day I am faced with very challenging but also very rewarding projects, so the work never gets old. I love the feeling of knowing the code that I write will be used by thousands of people every day, and I can write code to support a product I am really proud of. :)

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I love the feeling of impact I get from my job. Not only do we work on things that effect millions of people, but my opinion is really valued to my team. I did not expect to work for a company as big and prestigious as Microsoft and to have my opinion valued within the first 4 months of work. But throughout every planning process and meetings everyone is very open to everyone else's opinion and always very respectful. There are some really smart people here at Microsoft, but you never know who will come up with the next big idea. :)



What piece of advice would you give a student hoping to pursue a career at Microsoft?

It doesn't matter who you are or what situation you are put in, having a career at Microsoft is achievable by anyone who wants it. I didn't even know how to program in Java before my freshmen year of college, but by the end of the 4 years I already had two internships and a full time job offer. The key goal is to let the recruiters know that you as good as you say you are. I think the best way of showing off, as I said above, is through writing mobile apps. Having an app on your phone and demoing it to a recruiter on the spot can be the perfect ice breaker to start a conversation and show them how awesome you are. Even if you app is not the next big thing, showing that you really have a passion for what you do even outside of the class room says a lot about who you are.

**What are the most important skills to learn before applying to Microsoft?
What types of classes, clubs and extracurricular activities should students complete to best position themselves for a career at a company like Microsoft?**

I think it is critical to have a solid understand of computing and how computers work, but it's just as critical to have good communication skills. Even if you get hired on to do work in purely managed language, people who know and understand what is going on under the hood can generally write better and better performing code. I would highly recommend taking classes that deal with the lower level layers of computing, such as operating systems, systems programming, or databases.

Knowing how to code is only one part of getting in the door though, another key aspect of nailing a job at Microsoft is to show you have the communication and social skills to effately work on a team. Completing projects as large as Windows, Windows Phone, or Xbox require an immense amount of communication and coordination. There is simply no way one person can learn it on their own, so you will have to be able to ask others. The recruiters understand this and they look for people who show the ability to communicate efficiently in teams and people who are easy to get along with. So I would also recommend joining some social clubs in your department or preferable outside your department. You're in college, so you also have to remember to enjoy yourself. :)

Comments

prashant 19 Dec 2012 12:15 PM

very nice and inspiring views of Quinn Damerell.

Martin Lubwama. 19 Dec 2012 12:17 PM

WOW...

This is amaizing.

i for one am an IT Fanatic and w'd love to get up there.

so thanx for the guide.