



# Financial Analysis and Strategic Planning Summer Internship Position Description

February 2018 Update

**Background: *This is a Unique Opportunity to Gain Practical Experience that will Serve You Well Throughout Your Career and Throughout Life***

The SPARKS Group is seeking a college or graduate level summer intern to serve as an integral member of our Strategic Planning and Analysis/Finance Department. SPARKS is a young and dynamic Maryland-based company poised for rapid growth. Our mission is to help children with Autism Spectrum Disorders reach their highest potential and to improve the lives of their families by providing innovative and individualized Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services. We are passionate people who are exuberant about doing meaningful work, who thrive in a culture that celebrates differences, and who believe in the idea that work can be fun.

Our company was launched just 7 years ago, and our services are in high demand. There is a waiting list of families who need our support, and we aspire to serve more children in all communities where there is a need. In order to serve more families, it is imperative that we expand our organization and reengineer our business in ways that optimize both our service delivery and our financial performance.

We are at a critical juncture in our company's growth cycle, and a Financial Analysis and Strategic Planning Intern working for SPARKS will have a unique opportunity to be on the front line working directly with the SPARKS Chief Financial Officer and executive team to evaluate our business critically and develop models that will drive our service delivery and financial growth. Broadly speaking, the intern will enhance/develop his or her skills and gain valuable practical experience in business analysis, financial reporting and in structuring and presenting financial/analytical information to support 1) decision-making within an organization and 2) strategic planning for an organization's future.

**Intern Profile:**

An ideal intern candidate:

- Is an undergraduate sophomore, junior or a graduate student between years
- Is working towards a degree in Accounting, Economics, Statistics, Math, Business Management or Data Management and Analysis
- Has an analytical mind and a working knowledge of statistics
- Applies critical thinking when attempting to solve problems or make decisions
- Is creative with an eye towards non-traditional solutions
- Has prior experience working in a business setting

**Intern Responsibilities:** On a day-to-day basis, the intern will:

- Develop, prepare, analyze, and present monthly financial reports
- Track expenses and revenues vs. the budget forecast and analyze fluctuations
- Conduct business sensitivity analysis for all areas of the organization to inform critical decision making
- Assist in budget systems and processes development

- Develop and manage a database
- Provide ad hoc reports for internal client queries

**Essential and Required Technical Skills:**

- Highly Advanced Skills in **Microsoft Excel**
  - Must have had formal training in **Excel**
  - Must be able to conceive, develop and run financial models in **Excel**
  - Must be able to execute statistical functions in **Excel**, perform advanced functions (macros, databases, charts, graphs), and format and package data in ways that make meaning out of the numbers for the intended audiences.
  - Ideally will have used **Excel** previously in a business or academic setting to complete projects
- Proficiency in **Microsoft PowerPoint**
  - Must have had previous experience creating presentations in **PowerPoint**
  - Must be able to “tell a story” with data, using formatting tools to highlight trends and red flags

**Necessary Work Habits:**

- Good time management skills. Must be organized and must be a planner.
- Strong attention to detail and good listening skills. Ability to follow-through on tasks and meet deadlines without reminders. Comfort-level with taking initiative.
- Ability to communicate well (timely and with clarity) with colleagues in the organization.

**Work Samples Required:**

- Example of the candidate’s use of **Excel** in conducting a numerical analysis or in creating a financial model.
- Example of a **PowerPoint** presentation or document prepared by the candidate.

This internship is an unpaid position based in Laurel, Maryland. We are accepting applications from candidates nationwide who have access to housing in the Washington Metropolitan area. The internship timing will run from mid-June 2018 through Mid-August 2018 and working hours will generally range from 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday.