

Job Search Strategies For International Students

How to Find Job Openings

In some countries, people find jobs primarily through the government or family members. In the U.S., self-reliance is more the rule, and it is important for everyone, including international students, to use a wide variety of resources to identify jobs.

About 20% of the jobs that exist in the U.S. are advertised in newspapers, trade magazines, or on the Internet. The other 80% of job openings are in the "hidden" job market and are never advertised. These positions are filled by word of mouth.

For this reason, it is important to contact as many people as possible to find out about job openings. This technique is called networking. Contacts include friends, classmates, neighbors, family members, professors, alumni, and community members. The Career Services Center has many books on the job search and networking, as well as networking workshops and opportunities.

Working for International Companies

The best employment prospects for international students may be with international companies. International students are great assets to global organizations desiring language skills, respect for diversity, and/or knowledge of overseas economies.

Occupations in Need of International Students

Statistics suggest that international students who wish to work in the United States would be wise to study **technical subjects and pursue "specialty occupations" such as IT, finance/accounting, computer science, engineering, hospitality, medicine and business** in order to increase their chance of employment. The primary problem surrounding the H-1B application process is the number of visas available and the high demand for them. Pursuing technical or "specialty" career paths greatly increases an individual's likelihood of sponsorship. More detailed information on the occupations of approved H-1B petitions as well as the petitioners personal characteristics can be found in the following H-1B Special Reports which are part of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services web page.

Once you've discovered the companies that offered H-1B visas in the past, contact those companies to request a listing of job openings or internships or set up an informational interview.

Internships

Students who lack experience in their career fields should complete one or more internships while working towards their degrees. According to "US Multinationals and the Foreign MBA," more than 53% of foreign survey respondents received a job offer from an American company where they completed an internship. Obtaining an internship is important not only in terms of resume building, but in terms of its potential to translate into a full-time job after graduation. Please be aware that in order to participate in ANY type of internship an international student will require some type of employment authorization. F-1 visa holders will need CPT, J-1 students will need AT. For further details visit, www.udel.edu/oiss.

Approaching the Topic of H1-B Visas with Employers

Many employers are intimidated by the U.S. immigration process and are reluctant to sponsor H1-B visas, or simply have a policy against it.

Do not begin an employment interview or letter with an inquiry regarding H1-B sponsorship.

Discussions about H1-B sponsorship should come later, either when the employer brings it up or when the applicant is offered a position.

The applicant's first task in an interview is to convince the employer of his/her suitability for the job. Only later, when an employer is close to making, or has made an offer, should the applicant raise the H1-B sponsorship issue.

Learn about the sponsorship process including hiring and paying for a lawyer. By explaining the simplicity of the sponsorship process, the applicant will increase the likelihood of getting hired. **Seek out companies that have a history of H1-B sponsorship.** To identify companies that have sponsored H1-B's in the past consider the following sources:

1. **The U. S. Department of Labor**, Employment and Training Administration's website contains a wealth of useful information regarding Foreign Labor Certification, including applying for H1-B visas. The site features an overview of the H1-B visa, a brief description of the filing process, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and updates about H1-B regulations -- <http://www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/>
2. **The ForeignMBA.com** is reportedly the #1 internet community for MBA students from around the world. The site includes a list of more than 70 employers that have a history of hiring foreign MBAs. The site also offers a guide, "Getting a Job in the U.S. -- a Guide for International MBA Students," which can be purchased online -- <http://www.foreignmba.com>
3. **Going Global** is a web site with career and employment resources including world-wide job openings, internship listings, industry profiles and country-specific career information. More than 30,000 pages of constantly-updated content is included on topics such as work permit/visa regulations, resume writing guidelines and examples, employment trends, salary ranges, networking groups, cultural/interviewing advice, corporate profiles and worldwide job listings...plus much more! **H1-B employer listings** are also listed for all 50 states! Students must access Going Global by logging into Blue Hen Careers and following the link from the homepage.
4. **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services** provides information on their website about working in the U.S. Topics include eligibility criteria, the application process, period of stay, H1-B cap and more. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services also provides annual reports of employers who have received

approval for H1-B petitions, characteristics of specialty occupation workers, and more --
<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>

5. **MyVisaJobs** is an excellent resource for finding H1-B sponsors in the United States. Students can view reports of H1-B sponsors and view information by industry, economic sector, state and more. Reports feature information regarding the number of visa petitions/applications and salary --
<http://www.myvisajobs.com>

Additional Advice for International Students

- **Market Yourself Positively** - It is very important for International students to turn employers' objections into positives.

By virtue of living and studying abroad, International students demonstrate tenacity and resourcefulness. It is important for them to tell employers about the challenges they faced in studying overseas and how they overcame them.

International students should be prepared to tell employers how hiring them offers more advantages than disadvantages.

- **Choose a Major/Specialization in Demand** - The demand for employees in technical fields, such as information technology and accounting, far outweighs the supply.

Therefore, International students who study these subjects may have more opportunities than those select majors in low-demand areas.

- **Be Flexible** - International students may need to expand their job search by considering jobs outside their desired career.

For example, an Information Technology major who would like to do web development may want to search for jobs in web development AND other areas of information technology.

- **Patience and Persistence** - Although finding employment as an International student can be challenging, it is not impossible. Each year the U.S. grants almost 200,000 H1-B visas.
- **Network** with friends, professors, other students, and staff of the university.
- Become familiar with **visa** application processes.
- Participating in an internship experience may lead to a full-time, paid position. Be sure to remember that an F-1 visa holder requires CPT in order to participate in an internship and a J-1 requires AT.
- International students seeking additional guidance regarding your visa and working in the US should contact Susan Lee, Office for International Students & Scholars located at 413 Academy Street. You may also contact her at susanl@udel.edu or call (302) 831-2115.

The Career Services Center offers job search strategy workshops throughout the year. Career resources and handouts on various career topics can be found in the Career Library or on our website. Visit our website at <http://www.udel.edu/CSC> to obtain a list of events and workshops or contact the Career Services Center at udcareers@udel.edu or by calling (302) 831-2392.