Building An Effective U.S. Job Search Strategy For International Students

Rachel Zhang
Career Coordinator for International Students
she/her/hers

UNIVERSITY CAREER CENTER

Job Searching is….

So much more than
writing a resume and
sending it out
to a gazillion employers!

A more effective approach to job searching:

1. Know yourself and what you are looking for
2. Understand the U.S. job market, employers' expectations and cultural norms
3. Develop appropriate job search materials and approaches
4. Execute, persevere, **but have alternate plans** as well!

Important:

- Thoroughly familiarize yourself with your visa and employment authorization
- Understand factors that can influence employers to hire international students
- Be prepared to educate potential employers as needed

Your superpower as international students - skills you can offer to employers

- **Cultural Adaptability:** Experience navigating diverse environments enhances adaptability.
- **Language Proficiency:** Multilingual skills facilitate communication in global workplaces.
- **Global Perspective:** Insight into global trends brings fresh perspectives
- **Resilience and Resourcefulness:** problem-solving skills
- **Cross-Cultural Communication:** Understanding nuances fosters effective collaboration.

Visa types and employment authorization
https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students

Some challenges employers face when hiring international students

- Companies' policies may restrict their ability to hire international students
- Companies may not even accept OPT knowing that they will not be able to eventually hire/retain an international student in the long run
- H1B requires application and legal fees for several thousands of dollars paid by the hiring department
- Companies may have to prove there was not an equally qualified U.S.citizen for a certain position for permanent residency

U.S. Employer's Guide to Hiring International Students (by Interstride)
https://careercenter.umich.edu/article/us-employers-guide-hiring-international-students

1. Know yourself and what you are looking for

- Understand your strengths, values, and career goals.
  - **Assessment Tools:** https://careercenter.umich.edu/article/career-assessment-tools
  - **UCC Career Tracks:** https://careercenter.umich.edu/careertracks

- Learn your visa rules--Work with the International Center
  - https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students

Start early--Your search will take longer than you think

2. Understand the U.S. job market, employers' expectations and cultural norms

- Importance of Experience: Emphasize practical experience over grades
  - **Micro-Internship: Forage**
    https://www.theforage.com/virtual-internships

- Developing Skills: Learn to align personal background with employer needs.
  - **The Competencies You Need To Be Career Ready:**
    https://careercenter.umich.edu/career-readiness

2. Understand the U.S. job market, employers' expectations and cultural norms

- *YOU* have to do it--Importance of self-advocacy, initiative and networking
  - **University Career Alumni Network (UCAN):** https://careercenter.umich.edu/content/university-career-alumni-network-ucan

- Understanding of U.S. business communication and professional etiquette
  - **Attend *International Students Career Series: How to Navigate Small Talk*. Sign up via Handshake!**

3. Develop appropriate materials and approaches

- Customize your resume for your desired industry and understand ATS.
  - **Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS):** https://youtu.be/zcU5T2rQEQE
  - **VMOCK :**https://www.vmock.com/michigan
  - **Resumeworded:** https://resumeworded.com/umich

- Learn to craft *tailored* cover letters
  - **UCC Cover Letter Resource:** https://careercenter.umich.edu/content/cover-letter-resources

3. Develop appropriate materials and approaches

- Develop a professional community--i.e. Network!
  -International Students Career Series: How to Build Your Network
  -UCC Networking Resources:
  https://careercenter.umich.edu/content/networking-resources

- Familiarize yourself with interviewing formats and practice!!
  - Sign up for 1:1 mock interviews with the University Career Center
  https://careercenter.umich.edu/contact/makeappointment

4. Execute, persevere, but have alternate plans as well

- Stay organized: Build a target list of employers, positions pursued, and application status
  - **UCC free spreadsheet template:** https://app.joinhandshake.com/edu/articles/31804
- Make time in your schedule to execute your search--ongoing process;
  - **Handshake** https://careercenter.umich.edu/content/introducing-handshake
  - **Interstride** https://student.interstride.com/login

4. Execute, persevere, but have alternate plans as well

- Remain flexible and open to possibilities
  - **GoinGlobal**

  http://www.goinglobal.com/
  - **UCC Resource Toolkit for International Students**

  https://app.joinhandshake.com/edu/articles/36094

- Revisit salary negotiation
  - **UCC Evaluating and Negotiating Offers Resource**

  https://careercenter.umich.edu/article/salary-and-relocation-information

So, to summarize:

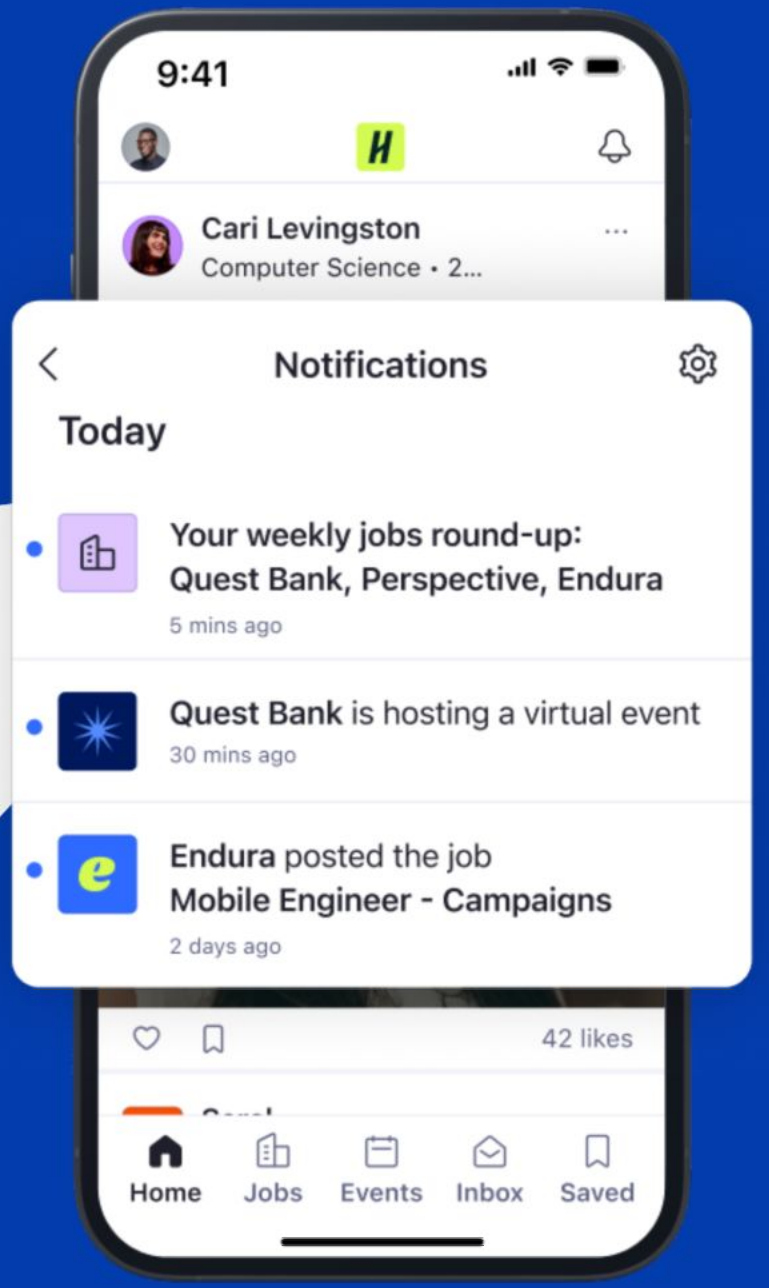
1. Know yourself and what you are looking for
2. Understand your visa, the U.S. job market, employers' expectations and cultural norms
3. Develop appropriate job/internship search materials and approaches
4. Execute, persevere, but have alternate plans as well!

STUDENT LIFE
UNIVERSITY CAREER CENTER

Handshake is the #1 way students & graduates find jobs

Join today and get recruited by the top employers for full-time, part-time jobs, and internships

SCAN ME



umich.joinhandshake.com

Handshake

Overarching Resources

- **International Center**
  https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/
- **Your School/College Career Services Office**
  https://hireblue.umich.edu/career-services-offices
- **UM University Career Center**
  https://umich.joinhandshake.com/edu/appointments/new

Wishing you the best in your search!