



## Putting Together An Effective U.S. Job Search Strategy For International Students

**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/internship search materials and approaches
4. Execute, persevere, **but have alternate plans** as well!

### Important:

- Thoroughly familiarize yourself with your visa and employment authorization
- Understand employers' hesitation to hire IS
- 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 to problem-solving.
- **Resilience and Resourcefulness:** Ability to overcome challenges.
- **Cross-Cultural Communication:** Understanding nuances fosters effective collaboration.

### Relevant Resources:

Visa types and employment authorization: [Students | International Center](#)

### Why U.S. employers are often not receptive to hiring international students:

- Companies' policies may restrict their ability to hire international students
- Companies may not even offer OPT knowing that they will not be able to eventually hire an international student
- H1B requires applications 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
- If a company needs to downsize, they may have to terminate the foreign employee before they can lay off any U.S. citizen for similar roles.

## U.S. Employer's Guide to Hiring International Students (by Interstride)

[U.S. Employer's Guide to Hiring International Students | University Career Center](#)

### 1. Know yourself and what you are looking for

- Know yourself--What are your skills and strengths? What can you offer an employer? What problems can you solve?
  - **Assessment Tools:**  
<https://careercenter.umich.edu/article/career-assessment-tools>
  - **O'Net:** <https://www.onetonline.org/>
- What are you looking for--In which industry? For what function?
  - **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

- Grades alone are not enough--Emphasis on experience and co-curricular engagements
  - **UM Student Organizations Directory:**  
<https://maizepages.umich.edu/organizations>
  - **Micro-Internship: Forage:**  
<https://www.theforage.com/virtual-internships>
- Specific skills and traits--Ability to link personal background to employers' needs
  - **The Competencies You Need To Be Career Ready:**  
<https://careercenter.umich.edu/career-readiness>
- \*YOU\* have to do it--Importance of self-advocacy, initiative and networking
  - **UM LinkedIn and beyond:**  
<https://www.linkedin.com/school/university-of-michigan/>
  - **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

- Develop a resume/CV *targeted* to the industry or function in which you are interested. Understand how Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) work
  - **Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS):** <https://youtu.be/zcU5T2rQEQE>
  - **VMOCK :**<https://www.vmock.com/michigan>
  - **Targeted Resume:** <https://resumeworded.com/umich>

- Learn to craft *tailored* cover letters
  - **UCC Cover Letter Resources:**  
<https://careercenter.umich.edu/content/cover-letter-resources>
  - **LetterSmith:** <https://lettersmith.ai.umich.edu/> Use code **OCLAL835** to join the University Career Center's template.
- Develop a professional community--i.e. Network!
  - **UCC Networking Resources:**  
<https://careercenter.umich.edu/content/networking-resources>
- Stay organized: Build a target list of employers, positions pursued, and application status
  - **UCC free spreadsheet template:**  
<https://app.joinhandshake.com/stu/articles/31804>
- Familiarize yourself with interviewing formats--behavioral, case, technical; both in person and *virtual*; and practice!!
  - **Big Interview:** <https://umich.biginterview.com/members/dashboard>
  - **UCC Labs and Appointments**  
<https://app.joinhandshake.com/edu/events>  
<https://careercenter.umich.edu/contact/makeappointment>

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

- Make time in your schedule to execute your search--ongoing process; don't wait to hear back from employers before pursuing more options
  - **Handshake**  
<https://careercenter.umich.edu/content/introducing-handshake>
  - **Interstride**  
<https://www.interstride.com/students/>
- Continue to leverage your networks and adjust your approach accordingly
  - **UCC international student career series: How to build your network**
- Remain flexible and open to possibilities, also make parallel plans in the home country and globally
  - **GoinGlobal**  
<http://www.goinglobal.com/>
  - **Global Job/Internship Search (UCC Resources for International Students)**  
<https://careercenter.umich.edu/content/international-student-resources-toolkit>
- Revisit salary negotiation, work authorization rules
  - **UCC Evaluating and Negotiating Offers Resource**  
<https://careercenter.umich.edu/article/salary-and-relocation-information>
  - You are welcome to sign up for a 1:1 appointment with one of the career coaches at the University Career Center

#### 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!

## Overarching Resources

- **International Center**  
<https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/>
- **Your School/College Career Services Office**  
<https://hireblue.umich.edu/career-offices>
- **UM University Career Center**  
<https://umich.joinhandshake.com/edu/appointments/new>
  - **International Student Resources**  
<https://careercenter.umich.edu/content/international-student-resources-toolkit>

**Wishing you the best in your search!**