



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
 - **Muse free spreadsheet template:**
<https://www.themuse.com/advice/job-search-spreadsheet-track-application>
 - 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!