

Job Search Strategies for International Students

8 JOB SEARCH TIPS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- Begin the job search process early – it may take up to a year, so try to begin 6 months to one year in advance of when you would like to start working.
- Research the employers and the positions in which you are interested.
- Practice speaking confidently about your experience, skills and career goals.
- Utilize the resources and services accessible through the University Career Center. UCC career coaches are available to meet with you to review your resume and cover letter, conduct mock interviews, and help you identify and research potential employment opportunities.
- Every student's situation is different so be sure to make an appointment with an advisor from the ISS office to discuss your employment plans and to learn about relevant work permission guidelines and immigration regulations.
- Research alternative job titles and common skill requirements.
- Knowing about all of the variations will create a larger list of positions to target.
- Be knowledgeable about your current visa status and about the H-1B visa process.

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION FOR F-1 AND J-1 STUDENTS

F-1 Employment

On-Campus Employment

Authorized F-1 students are eligible to work on campus a maximum of 20 hours per week during the Fall and Spring academic semesters. During semester breaks, official school vacation days, and summer vacation, F-1 students are eligible to work full-time on campus. A student who has a valid I-20 and intends to enroll for next regular term may work on-campus incident to status.

Off-Campus Employment

F-1 students must be lawfully enrolled full time for one full academic year to be eligible for any of the following off-campus employment opportunities:

- Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is authorization for employment that is an integral part of an established curriculum and is directly related to a student's major area of study. It may be defined as: alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education (Co-Op), or other type of required internship practicum. The potential employment must be related to a student's major, and to specific courses in which the student has enrolled and will complete. CPT can be full-time (more than 20 hours per week) or part-time (20 hours or less per week).
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) is an opportunity for F-1 international students to participate in professional, temporary employment that is directly

related to their major area of study, but not a part of the academic curriculum. F-1 students are eligible for Optional Practical Training after they have completed two, full-time semesters (fall and spring). A maximum period of twelve months (full time) per degree level can be granted. Students are eligible for an additional twelve months with each higher degree level. Since application processing can take three months or longer, there is a risk that you will lose a portion of your period of eligibility if you apply too late. So, apply as early as possible!

J-1 Employment

On-Campus Employment

Authorized J-1 students are eligible to work on campus a maximum of 20 hours per week during the Fall and Spring academic semesters. During semester breaks, official school vacation days, and summer vacation, J-1 students are eligible to work full-time on campus. A student who has a valid DS-2019 and intends to enroll for next regular term may work on-campus incident to status.

Academic Training (AT)

Academic Training is work, training, or experience related to a student's field of study. Training may be paid or unpaid, with several employers, U.S. or foreign employer, involving sequential or simultaneous activities as long as approval procedures are followed for each employer and the time limits are not exceeded.

Source: International Student Services

When in the hiring process should I disclose my employment status?

This is ultimately your decision to make, and there is no one correct answer to this question. It's important to remember that your goal when applying to any position is to get past the initial screening of applications and get an interview. However, you don't want to wait too long to discuss this issue either. Therefore, it's often best to leave it off of your resume and either present this information in your cover letter or in your initial interview where you can elaborate further about the details of your status. Many employers do not know what is involved in hiring a foreign national, and it is therefore crucial that you are able to clearly and confidently communicate this process to them.

How do I find companies who are willing to hire international students/foreign nationals?

The best way to find companies willing to hire international students is by talking with other international students and alumni who have been hired by U.S. companies because typically companies who have hired international students/foreign nationals in the past are likely to continue to hire them. You can also search the UCC online job and internship database, KU Career Connections, for employers who indicate in their job posting that they do not require applicants to be a U.S. citizen. See below for additional online resources that can help you identify employers who have hired foreign nationals in the past. It's also important to note that some organizations are unable to hire international students/foreign nationals. In general, this includes federal government agencies, most state and local government agencies, and private companies that have contracts with the federal government.

What are H-1B Visas?

The H-1B visa permits U.S. employers to hire foreign employees who have at least a four year university degree (or equivalent work experience) and will work in their field of study or a closely related field in a "specialty occupation." A specialty occupation is one that requires theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge, as well as the attainment of a minimum of a bachelor's degree for entry into the occupation in the U.S. Specialty occupations include many positions in information technology, architecture, engineering, mathematics, physical sciences, social sciences, medicine and health, education, business specialties, accounting, law, theology and the arts. In order to qualify for H-1B visa status, you must first have a job offer with an employer who is willing to file the H-1B petition on your behalf with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Generally, a foreign national can hold H-1B status and accompanying visa for a maximum period of six years at a time, unless the process for permanent residence in the U.S. is begun prior to the end of the fifth year of H-1B employment. Barring that, at the end of six years, the employee must remain outside the United States for one year before another H-1B petition can be approved. (Source: www.goingglobal.com)

IMPORTANT: Before you pursue any type of employment in the U.S., you must meet with an ISS advisor to ensure you are aware of and adhering to all applicable restrictions, requirements and deadlines.



ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

Going Global | career.ku.edu

Going Global provides an H-1B Plus database that contains approximately 500,000 records of companies that applied for H-1B visas in the prior year. This information was gathered directly from Department of Labor (DOL) records, which is the government agency responsible for all H-1B submissions. H-1B Plus allows individuals to search for companies by industry, job title, company name, and location. To access Going Global, you must first log in to KU Career Connections at career.ku.edu, then click on the Going Global link on the left column.

Foreign Firms Operating in the U.S.

www.unitworldbp.com/search.php

Foreign firms operating in the U.S. may be more willing to hire a citizen from their country to work in the United States. This searchable database allows individuals to identify foreign firms operating in the United States by geographic location, keyword, industry, company revenue, size, and country foreign firm is based. It provides contact information, website address, and a brief description of each company.

The University Career Center provides comprehensive career services to KU students. Some of our services and resources include:

- Career coaching
- Career assessments
- Resume, cover letter, and CV reviews
- Mock interviews
- Part-time job, full-time job, and internship postings
- Career workshops
- Career courses
- Networking events (career fairs, employer information sessions, etiquette dinners)
- Comprehensive web resources
- Career resource library

To learn more about us, visit career.ku.edu.

An important resource for international students is International Student Services. Visit them online at: iss.ku.edu.