JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES for International Students

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Presentation Outline

I. Your Cross-Cultural Job Search
II. Recruitment Process
III. Your Strengths and Challenges as an International Applicant
IV. Options Beyond the US
V. Work Authorization
VI. VISA Issues
VII. Additional Resources
I. Your Cross-Cultural Job Search
Source: University of Michigan International Center
Individual Responsibility in Finding Employment

U.S. Employment Framework

- Use of wide variety of resources for identifying jobs (friends, family contacts, associations, career services, academic mentors, etc.)
- Networking

Other Cultural Frameworks

- Jobs are found through government or family
- Dependency relationships in job search are fostered. One resource (e.g., academic adviser, employment agent) will find appropriate work for job seeker
Identify Potential Employers…

• When looking for jobs, consider:
  – International companies
    • They often desire individuals with languages skills, respect for diversity, and a knowledge of overseas economies.
  – Companies that have previously sponsored H-1B visas
    • They are familiar with and have successfully completed the hiring process before.
  – Medium and small companies
    • Although they are not large companies, they may have openings for international students and should not be discounted.
Career Self-Awareness

U.S. Employment Framework

• Who are you professionally? Discussion of long and short term career plans
• Identity, motivated, passionate
• Demonstrating knowledge of self, career goals, and how they relate to a specific job

Other Cultural Frameworks

• Jobs are assigned by government or family
• Questions about role in a company indicates potential disloyalty
• Company assigns work responsibilities
• Individual must be flexible to accept whatever job becomes available
Individual Equity

U.S. Employment Framework:

• Race, sex, age, etc… should not affect potential for job opportunities

• Expected to shake hands, use first names if given permission

Other Cultural Frameworks:

• Gender expectations may be different

• Age signifies more knowledge and respect
Be Organized and Prepared to Network

U.S. Employment Framework
• Obtain as much information as possible about job and organization before a possible interview
• Demonstrate awareness of organization in letter of application and during interview

Other Cultural Frameworks
• Research about organization may indicate excessive and undesirable initiative or independence
II. Recruitment Process

**AKA: Ways to look for a Job**

- Job Search Websites (e.g. Goldpass)
  - goldpass.umn.edu
- Recruiters
- 80% Rule – only 20% of all jobs are publicized.
Networking

• Allows access to the 80% of ‘hidden’ jobs
• No “Are you authorized to work in the US?” questions to screen out candidates

Examples:
• Referrals
• Informational interviews
• Linked-in
• Alumni events
• Career fairs
• Conferences
III. Possible Limitations as an International Applicant

- Work Authorization
- Fierce Competition
- The Length of OPT
- Culture & Language
III. Possible Strengths as an International Applicant

• VALUES
  - International perspective/Cultural sensitivity
  - Language
  - Desire to work/Enthusiasm
  - Diversity
  - Adaptability
  - Independence
  - Problem solving
  - Communication skills

• How do you express your strengths?
IV. Options Beyond the US

• Is finding a job in the U.S. the only option?

• What are other options for international students?
  – Looking for a job in the home/different country
  – Finding volunteer/internship work

• What are the pros and cons?
V. Work Authorization

• F-1 students
  – Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
    • Still in school
  – Optional Practical Training (OPT)
    • Post graduation
    • 17-month extension of post-completion OPT is available for STEM degree holders

J-1 students
  – Academic Training (AT) During and After graduation
Work Authorization Resources

• CPT/OPT Workshop Wednesday, April 10 1:30-3:30pm, 110 Heller Hall

• Please watch the online workshop videos (CPT/OPT) on the ISSS website!

• H1B & Employment Based Permanent Residency workshops will be held by ISSS later this semester and next Fall. Please check the weekly update email for information.
VI. Visa Issues

• When do you think it is a good idea to bring up your visa status?
  – Cover letter / Resume?
  – Informational interview?
  – Formal interview?
  – After a job offer?
VII. Resources

• Career Centers (CLA, CEHD, CSE, etc)
  – http://career.umn.edu/

• ISSS

• UCCS – Career counseling

• StrengthsQuest:
  – http://www.strengths.umn.edu/

• Faculty, Adviser, Cohort, Alumni, Friends..

• Power Ties – The International Student's Guide to Finding a Job in the United States by Dan Beaudry

• The 2-Hour Job Search by Steve Dalton
Questions?

• Please feel free to email us with any questions you have later

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• To schedule a mock interview or resume critique at ISSS, please contact ISSS