The Creative Self Directed Job or Internship Search

Looking for that big break? A gateway to the thrilling world of design? Follow this 10 step program and you will be on your way! Your Career Consultant can help you with each of the following steps.

Research

1. Decide which country and city you most would like to work in and decide which firm or designer you would most like to work with.
   - Consult books, magazines, websites and ask fellow designers and professors: where would they go and who would they want to work with?
2. Make a list of at least 10 different firms and designers that you want to contact. Rank them (using criteria such as location, coolness of projects, reputation in design community, specializations, skills you will learn there) so that you know where to put your best effort.
3. Find everything you can about the city and designers and firms of your choice.
   - Again, look at books and mags, etc. Get the design firm or designer's contact information. Coroflots’ Design Firm Registry to help you with this.

Contact

4. Put together a brief letter of introduction, telling the firm or designer-
   - Why you are contacting them (for an internship)
   - Where you go to school or where you currently work
   - What you are doing there (studying, working as a draftsperson, whatever)
   - Why you are contacting them in particular (you feel their design work is the best, they specialize in the field you want to get into.)
   - What you hope to get out of working with them (better insight into the field, etc.)
   - That you are eager to relocate to their city (if applicable)
   - That you are looking to learn and not to earn. (that you don't need to be paid)
   - How to contact you if they are interested (e-mail address, phone number, address)

5. Include samples of your work! Very important!
   - Slides, color photos, color printouts, even a photocopied or laser-printed sheet with clear pictures of your projects is enough.
   - If you have particular skills or talents, like sketching or modeling or computer work, emphasize them in your samples.
   - Five or six images should be enough to whet their appetites, but send more if you have enough quality projects and photos.

6. Include your resume
   - Keep it to one page.
   - List experience with work, computer programs.
7. Don't over-design this little package! Don't spend hours working on your letterhead and picking special papers for your envelopes and letters. Don't try any crazy layouts or stunts to make your package stand out - Just be sure you:

- Make it clear
- Make it short
- Include pictures

8. Call, fax or e-mail the firm or designer to get a contact name - the person who handles hiring - and label your package to their "Attention."

- Send it off!
- Even if the firm says they are not hiring at the moment, get a contact name and send off your package anyway.

Follow up

9. After sending your packet to the list of designers:

- After a week or so, contact the firms by phone, fax, or by e-mail.
- Be sure to talk to the person you sent the package to.
- Confirm they have received your package. Ask them if there are any questions they have about it. Ask them if they would like to see more work.
- If they have questions, answer them; if they want to see work, send them some more. If they want to have you come in for an interview, do it!
- If you need to travel a long distance for the interview, try to set up a few other interviews for the same time, and give yourself some time to see the sites - make the trip as multi-purpose as possible.

10. Repeat Step 9 every month (even every 2 weeks) or so until you get someone to invite you over for an interview. Being persistent pays! Stay in contact with the firms and send them more of your work as you produce more. Gather more firms from http://www.coroflot.com/public/main_frame.asp?f=companybrowse.asp and look for firms that are hiring at http://www.coroflot.com! Keep at it!

Reprinted from Core77