JOB SEARCH FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

AGENDA

- Job Search Strategies
- Video: Interviewing American Style
- Immigration Options for Employment in the U.S.
KNOW THE JOB MARKET

* USCIS makes the rules that govern all US hiring of non-US citizens.
* USCIS restrictions have gotten tougher.
* Organizations need to prove that required skills cannot be found in the US.
* Sponsoring employees for H-1B visas can be quite expensive.
* Although employers are permitted to hire on 1 year work permits, they may want longer commitments from employees.
* Know your visa status and how it may affect your job search.
IDENTIFY THE RIGHT MARKET

- Multinational/global organizations often hire non-US citizens.
- Focus on large organizations since small organizations may not be familiar with process.
- Federal government, defense contractors must hire US citizens.
- Some state and local governments may hire non-US citizens, especially for internships.
CHOOSE THE BEST APPROACH

- Networking is very effective - talk to other international students.
- Identify on-campus recruiters who hire international students.
- Search for alumni.
- Talk to graduating students.
- Identify organizations who have hired Carnegie Mellon international students.
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JOB SEARCH TIPS

- If limited work experience, highlight academic project skill sets you can bring to an employer.

- In developing networks, do not forget ethnic communities, nationality clubs, classmates, professors and alumni.

- Learn how your values of assertiveness, body language, sense of time, and self-promotion fit in or clash with expectations of potential employers.
UNDERSTAND THE CULTURE

- Cultural norms vary country to country.
- In US, directness-- tempered with politeness-- is valued.
- Look people in the eye; they expect it.
- Aggressiveness vs. Assertiveness.
- Organizations’ internal cultural norms vary - learn about the organization.
- Participate in mock interviews.
- Practice speaking English with friends and family.
PRACTICE KEY TECHNIQUES

- Show confidence when discussing your skills.
- Learn to describe your strengths/weaknesses, likes/dislikes.
- Talk directly, offer a firm handshake, and steady eye contact.
- Demonstrate knowledge of yourself and career goals.
- Be well-organized, and professional.
- Take time with your appearance and grooming.
THE JOB MARKET: WHAT TO EXPECT THIS YEAR

- Much recruiting activity this year - the Career Center is overbooked for on-campus interviews
- TOC Job Fair is over booked
- Companies vary when they make offers (November - April)
WHAT YOU CAN DO…

- Be prepared for the job search
- Develop a resume and cover letter
- Polish your interviewing skills
- Find opportunities to meet employers
  - On-campus Recruiting Activities
  - Job Fairs
  - Networking Events/Information Session
- Research employers
- Be proactive in your job search
- Gain relevant work experience
CAREER CENTER RESOURCES

- Career Consultants - by College
  -- Call 412-268-2064 to make an appointment
  - Walk-In Hours - Every Wednesday 2:00pm – 4:00pm
  - College Specific Career Center Websites―go to www.cmu.edu/career and click on the ‘Information for Students and Alumni’ link on the left side of the page

- CareerSearch Database
- TartanTRAK
CAREER CENTER RESOURCES

- h1visajobs.com
  www.h1visajobs.com
  - Information on thousands of US firms that have offered jobs to international professionals (not job openings)

- Alumni Database
  www.cmu.edu/alumni
CAREER CENTER RESOURCES

- Company Research -- Vault
  - Vault.com contains over 80 career guides and employer profiles across a wide range of industries
  - Go to your College Specific Career Center Website
  - Click on Vault
  - Click “Get Your Password Now”
  - Password will be send to your email
  - To login, click on Vault
Career Center Resources

- Career Fairs
  - Technical Opportunities Conference (Sept. 18)
  - Business Opportunities Conference (Sept. 17)
  - Employment Opportunities Conference (Feb. 5)
  - Creative Arts Opportunities Conference (TBA)

- Network Nights (More details available from your Career Consultant):
  - Thurs., Oct. 16 New York
  - Mon., Jan. 5 Los Angeles
  - Tues., Jan. 6 Silicon Valley
  - Wed., Jan. 7 San Francisco
  - Thurs., Jan. 8 Seattle
  - Fri., Jan. 30 Pittsburgh
  - Thurs., March 5 Washington, DC
  - Thurs., March 10 Boston
JOB SEARCH ETHICS FOR INTERVIEWING, SITE VISITS AND JOB OFFERS

You are expected to --
- Attend all scheduled campus interviews
- Be on-time for campus interviews and site visits
- Present your qualifications in a truthful manner
- Honor all agreements made with recruiters. This is especially true with site visits.
- Honor all agreements made with recruiters. This is especially true of accepting a job offer
- Cease interviewing upon your acceptance of a job offer
NEXT STEPS

- Have your resume and cover letter reviewed by your career consultant.
- Network, network, network.
- Use your Career Center Resources.
- Schedule a Mock Interview.
- Practice English language skills.
- **INTERNS:** Acquire work authorization from Office of International Education after you receive a job offer. [www.cmu.edu/oie/](http://www.cmu.edu/oie/)
- **MAY GRADUATES:** Apply for work authorization in Feb or Mar’ from OIE.
- **AUGUST GRADUATES:** Apply for work authorization in May from OIE.
VIDEO

The Employment Interview: American Style
– available at the Career Center Library
International Student Employment in the US

Neslihan K. Ozdoganlar, Foreign Student & Scholar Advisor
Carnegie Mellon University
Office of International Education
September 16, 2008
Employment Options for F/J Students

**F-1 Students**
- On Campus Employment
- CPT – Curricular Practical Training
- OPT – Optional Practical Training
- STEM OPT – Extension

**J-1 Students**
- On Campus Employment
- AT – Academic Training
On Campus Employment

F1 and J1 student may work
- Part-time (20 hours per week) while school is in session
- Full-time during the annual vacation period or during official school breaks (i.e. winter break)
On Campus Employment

- Only while enrolled (not after graduation)
- No special USCIS or OIE authorization required for students in F-1 status
- Authorization required from J program sponsor for students in J-1 status—must have job offer to obtain authorization. Cannot work until authorized.
F-1 Employment
F-1 Curricular Practical Training

- Employment authorization for a job related to the major field of study when the employment is integral to your program as either a degree requirement or curricular option.

- Job offer and academic advisor’s recommendation required to apply for CPT
F-1 Curricular Practical Training

- Must be enrolled in a co-op or internship/practicum course and receive academic credit for the course
- Participation in more than 12 months of full-time CPT means you are no longer eligible for OPT
- Apply two weeks before employment will begin—do not work until authorized.
F-1 Optional Practical Training

- Employment authorization for obtaining a job directly related to your major field of study in order to gain practical experience in the field.
- No job offer required
- May be used during degree program or upon completion of degree program
- Full-time OPT allowed only after graduation, during annual vacation or after all course requirements (except thesis/dissertation) have been completed
F-1 Optional Practical Training

- 12 Month limit per degree level (part-time OPT accrues at half the rate of full-time OPT)
- Academic Advisor and Foreign Student Advisor recommend OPT, USCIS authorizes OPT
- Authorization from USCIS in the form of “Employment Authorization Document”
F-1 Optional Practical Training

- Application can be made 90 days prior to completing degree requirements or within the 60 day grace period. OIE recommends applying before completion due to long processing times.
- Must apply within 30 days of the I-20 issue date.
- Must begin within 60 days of completion of degree requirements.
- Periods of unemployment are limited to 90 days.
- EAD required before work begins.
- Do not travel outside US after graduation and before receipt of EAD.
F-1 Optional Practical Training
Post-Completion OPT Timing Issues

- **December Graduates** apply for OPT in September or October
- **May Graduates** apply for OPT in February or March
- **August Graduates** apply for OPT in May or June
Effective April 8, 2008, students on OPT regardless of their field of study will have their OPT extended to October 1 if:

- The employer has filed a timely H-1B petition and change of status request with an October 1 start date
- The application is either pending or has been approved

OPT employment authorization will end if H-1B is denied, rejected or withdrawn
F-1 Optional Practical Training - STEM EXTENSION

Effective April 8, 2008, F1 students who receive a bachelor’s, master’s or PhD degree in a designated STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering or Math) field are eligible for a 17 month extension of OPT.

An overview of SEVP selected CIP codes can be found in News and Communications section of our website at: http://www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/oie/news/200800505.html
F-1 Optional Practical Training - STEM EXTENSION

Specific Criteria to meet:
- Most recent degree is in a STEM field
- Must be in the post completion OPT period
- Employer must participate in the e-Verify program
- Employer agrees to report to OIE if the job ends before the end of OPT period
F-1 Optional Practical Training - STEM EXTENSION

- Student must obtain a new I-20 with a new OPT recommendation from OIE
- Timely application to USCIS prior to the end of the post completion OPT period
- Periods of unemployment are limited to 120 days

More information is on the Employment section of our website at:
http://www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/oie/forstu/jobs.cfm
F-1 Optional Practical Training
Student Reporting Requirements

- On 12 month OPT: Report address or name changes and any interruption of employment to OIE within 10 days
- On 17 month STEM extension: Report name and address, employer name and address every 6 months within a 10 business day period to OIE
J-1 Employment
J-1 Academic Training

- Employment authorization to work in job related to your major field of study
- Job offer and letter are required (dates, hours, location)
- May be used during degree program or upon completion of degree program
- Full-time only after graduation or during the annual vacation
- Must be in good academic standing
- Academic Advisor recommends AT, Foreign Student Advisor/J Program Sponsor authorizes
Authorization is required for each employer and each specific period of time. Change of employer or employment dates requires new authorization from OIE/J program sponsor.

All work, part-time and full-time accumulates at the full-time rate of maximum eligibility allowed.

Maximum Eligibility Allowed:
- 18 months max, unless program is shorter
- Post-PhD students: 36 months max
Other Employment Options

- Severe Economic Hardship (F1 and J1 students)
- Employment with an International Organization (F1 students)
- J2 Employment Authorization
- O-1 Persons of Extraordinary Ability
- Trade NAFTA (TN) - Canadian or Mexican citizens
- H1B Temporary Worker
Other issues for all international students who work...

- Social security number
- Filling out the I-9 form with your new employer
- Taxes and withholding
- W-2 forms (next January)
- Work only with authorization
- Maintain current immigration documents during employment
- Do not throw immigration documents (old I-20s, etc.) away
Additional Resources

- **Web:** www.cmu.edu/oie
  www.uscis.gov
- **Email:** oie@andrew.cmu.edu
- **Call for Appointment:** (412) 268-5231
- **Advisors:**
  - Linda Gentile: SCS (all but ETC and HCI), Heinz
  - Neslihan K. Ozdoganlar: CIT
  - Jennifer McNabb: Tepper, H&SS, MCS, CFA, SCS: only ETC and HCI
  - Lisa Krieg: H1B and other work categories