

JOB SEARCH FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: NOTES TO REMEMBER

The Truth Is Tough

1. Few international students will find employment.
2. You must work much harder than domestic students to find a job.
3. English language skills matter.
4. You must bridge the cultural gap to sell yourself.

Why Employers Do Hire Internationals?

1. Technical skills
2. Language and cultural skills
3. Affinity
4. Loyalty
5. Faster, smarter, better

Where Opportunity Isn't

1. Direct, head-to-head competition with domestics when you have no edge
2. Announced openings (drawing hundreds or thousands of applications)
3. On-campus recruiters who don't want to interview foreign nationals

Where Opportunity Is

1. Hidden job market
2. Others from your home country who are officers or owners of companies
3. Others from your home country who have jobs here
4. Former international students with jobs here (Internships or H1-B)
5. Smaller companies in rural areas that are exporting
6. College or university employment after graduation
7. Your home country consulate

Plan Your Work / Work Your Plan

What is your marketing plan?

What is your backup plan?

Be sure to consider

1. Working for academic institution, teaching, TA
2. Grad school
3. Working internationally for a company based in home country
4. Returning home and achieving success with your American education

Sample Email to an Employer

Attn: Raymond Smith, VP of Operations
XYZ Corporation

Dear Mr. Smith:

I recently read in the *Wall Street Journal* of your company's intention to expand production in Guangdong province in China, and noticed your name. Let me congratulate you on your company's continuing success. I am an international student from this area of China, and I am interested in obtaining an internship with your company this coming summer, either in your company headquarters in Indianapolis, or in some role involving travel to China. There are several ways I could support your company's China business. I speak four dialects of Chinese, including Cantonese and Mandarin, which might be of great benefit to logistics or operations functions within your company. Also, I can help you with any company trips to China as an interpreter and a guide. There are many aspects of Chinese culture that are subtle, and it might be useful to your team to have someone who understands protocol as well as the local languages.

Who would be the person in your company most likely to be interested in someone like me? Please let me know who I should try to contact, and I will follow your advice exactly. Upon graduation, my student visa qualifies me for employment related to my studies, and I would be happy to explain the process to your human resources staff if they have not hired an international student before.

Thank you for your kind consideration, and I look forward to your advice!

Respectfully submitted,
Cheng-Chung "Sidney" Lee

JOB SEARCH FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

USC Career Center's web resources for foreign nationals:

- Click on <http://www.sc.edu/career/Webresources/foreignnationals.html>
- View especially
 - Foreign Labor Data Certification Center, FLC Case Data - US Department of Labor
 - About Foreign Labor Certification - US Department of Labor

Other Web sites of note:

- foreignmba.com
- H1Base.com
- bilingual-jobs.com
- H1visajobs.com
- workabroad.monster.com

Also, consider attending events sponsored by:

- Global MBA/master's Employment Conference
- National Society of Hispanic MBAs
- International Career Information
- Disco International Resources

Also, be sure to utilize these resources in book form:

- *Directory of Foreign Firms Operating in the United States*

- *Director of American Firms Operating in Foreign Countries (3 vols.)*
- *International Business Information on the Web*

EASY GUIDE TO HIRING FOREIGN GRADUATES

Do not let fear of the simple visa process prevent you from hiring the best and brightest graduates available. U. S. law provides several ways for employers to hire foreign college graduates. For example, CIS (formerly INS) issues tens of thousands of H-1B work visas each year. In addition, graduates of U.S. institutions on F-1 visa are eligible for one year of “practical training” and are hired regularly by U.S. employers.

The two most common mechanisms for hiring foreign graduates are:

I. **PRACTICAL TRAINING:** This allows up to twelve months of employment after graduation for students in F-1 student visa status. The student need only obtain permission from the university foreign student advisor, and a work authorization card from the CIS (formerly INS). Some students (on J visas) may even be eligible for up to 18 months of training without even getting a work authorization card from CIS. The university can provide additional information.

Timing: Graduate can begin working immediately upon receipt of the work authorization card.

Cost: No cost to employer. Student pays \$175 filing fee to CIS to get card.

Employer Obligations: Treat employees on practical training just like other U.S. employees in terms of pay, discipline, termination, etc.

II. **H-1B VISAS:** This is an extremely popular work visa. Available to foreign nationals who (a) have at least a U.S. Bachelor’s Degree or foreign equivalent and (b) will be working in a job that requires at least a Bachelor’s Degree. The employer must submit a visa petition to the CIS. Approvals can take as little as two weeks.

Employer Obligations: The employer must:

- Post a notice for ten days at the worksite stating that you are hiring an H-1B worker, providing information about the job. Maintain public access file.
- Pay the same wage and benefits provided to U.S. workers in similar jobs. Pay return transportation in some circumstances.
- There is no need to advertise the position, and no need to determine if U.S. workers are available to fill the position.

Timing: Normal processing times can vary depending on the work location. However, CIS has special “premium processing” which guarantees processing in 15 days. Premium Processing requires an extra \$1,000 filing fee.

Cost: CIS’ normal filing fee for private employers is \$ 185. All other costs (including attorney’s fees which will typically average \$1,500) may be paid in certain circumstances by either the employer or the employee, or a combination of both. Premium processing (15 day processing) has an additional \$1,000 filing fee to CIS.

Reed Smith LLP Immigration Practice Group – Richmond, VA: Mark Rhoads, Esquire (mrhoads@reedsmith.com); Helen L. Konrad, Esquire (hkonrad@reedsmith.com); Eliot Norman, Esquire (enorman@reedsmith.com); Laura Khatcheressian, Esquire (laurak@reedsmith.com); Philadelphia, PA: Min Suh (msuh@reedsmith.com) Pittsburgh, PA: Mark Knapp (mknapp@reedsmith.com). Main Office phone (Richmond) 804-344-3400