INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CAREER GUIDE
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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this guide is to provide tips and advice for international students seeking to navigate a global job search, including U.S. domestic or multinational employment. We aim to help international students better understand the challenges they may face because of their immigration status and gain an appreciation of American style business culture.

This guide is meant to be used throughout your job search, as you craft your individual career action plan. It is not a replacement for a Success Advisor appointment. We encourage you to make an appointment with your Success Advisor and an International Student Advisor.

The more prepared you are, the higher your chances of success. There are many resources available to you as an international student at The New School, including village.newschool.edu where you can search for jobs/internships, view career events, and register an internship for credit. Additionally, career resources can be found on the career services website. The job search process is very self-directed in the United States, and it is your responsibility to stay on track. We look forward to working with you to achieve career success.

CAREER SUCCESS PLAN

<table>
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<th>YEAR</th>
<th>STEPS</th>
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| 1ST  | 1. Identify occupations in your field of interest (careers by major)  
2. Get involved in your campus community (volunteer, join clubs, SLI)  
3. Develop a pitch  
4. Attend Career Development Workshops listed on the Village |
| 2ND-3RD | 1. Talk to professionals  
2. Create a resume, cover letter, and portfolio, to be reviewed by your Success Advisor  
3. Develop a pitch  
4. Attend Career Development Workshops listed on the Village |
| 4TH  | 1. Conduct mock interview with Success Advisor  
2. Search the Village and apply for positions that match your qualifications |
DRESSING FOR SUCCESS

Don’t forget about the dress code to make a good first impression! The key is to “sell yourself” to your new employer and other employees. Your appearance is part of that.

However, dress codes vary widely among regions and fields of employment in the United States. A Wall Street broker will wear a suit and shirt to work, while start-up employees in Silicon Valley might show up in shorts and a t-shirt during office hours.

As a rule of thumb, be slightly overdressed rather than underdressed for your job interview, an initial meeting, or your first day at work. When you choose among conservative, smart casual, and casual clothing, always go for one of the first two options, depending on how traditional the company in question is. If your duties involve personal contact with customers or clients, more formal attire is often expected.

Once you know the environment better, you may dress down, if appropriate. Even American offices with a formal business culture often have “Casual Friday” when you are allowed to wear a more relaxed outfit. If you’re still not sure how to present yourself, ask a colleague.

MEET AND GREET

S-H-E (Smile, Handshake and Eye-contact)

Have a firm handshake and be friendly. Respect a “bubble” of personal space (2-3 ft) Maintaining eye contact while talking is a must. This applies even if it might disrespectful in some other cultures.

Lack of Formality

Speaking to colleagues and superiors on a first name basis. The lack of formality is also noticeable when it comes to names and titles. Calling everyone by their first name is standard in most American companies. Regarding your superior, you might err on the side of caution and initially address them as “Mr. Smith,” “Dr. Tyler,” or “Ms. Jones” but they usually do just the same as your co-workers, asking you to use their given name immediately. Don’t ignore such requests; it might be interpreted as distance or dislike. If you aren’t officially introduced to everyone, it’s probably due to an oversight or a fairly casual atmosphere, rather than a lack of courtesy. Simply take a moment to stand up and introduce yourself with your full name and job position.

Not being officially introduced to everyone

Feel comfortable taking the opportunity to introduce yourself.
COMMUNICATION STYLES

In general, the dominant style of communication in US business culture is friendly and to the point. “Yes”, “no”, and “maybe” normally mean just that; you don’t have to read a lot between the lines. You are expected to express yourself politely, but clearly, and it is assumed that you will ask directly if there is something you don’t know or understand. Be prepared to word criticism carefully.

In meetings, for example, “getting down to business” is paramount. There’s normally a clear agenda and defined goals.

On the other hand, you need to avoid being considered as overly negative or rude in your conversations. Too much bluntness appears unprofessional, and so do big emotional displays in a public setting, especially if you voice negative feelings like disappointment or anger.

SMALL TALK

Once you start making small talk, you should come across as personable, social, and positive. In the United States, it is considered good manners to “put on your happy face”. If someone asks you, “how are you?”, the expected answer is “fine, and how about you?” It’s mostly a rhetorical question, and definitely not an invitation to discuss personal problems in public.

Similarly, the suggestion “let’s do lunch some time” when saying goodbye is frequently an empty courtesy. If you’re planning on staying in touch, you should rather follow up and make specific arrangements.

Good small talk topics include hobbies and leisure, tips concerning local arts and entertainment, or dining and nightlife, and popular US sports teams.

Politics and religion should be kept out of the workplace, especially controversial issues, like abortion, capital punishment, or gun control. In general, social pleasantries keep things smooth among those working together, but they aren’t necessarily a sign of close friendship.

HOW TO PRACTICE SMALL TALK:

- ISSS Conversation Partners program (sign up at iss@newschool.edu)
- International Student Meetups (contact Sondra Morishima morishis@newschool.edu) - This group welcomes all international students who want to meet at a supportive and safe place to talk, ask, explore, and vent. The group addresses international students concerns ranging from survival skills, academic stress, social cues, friendships, and navigating the complexities of living in New York City. The groups meets every Monday 7pm-8:15pm at 80 5th Ave 3rd Floor.
- Watch US TV shows to get more familiar with slang and American culture/humor.

WAYS TO ADVOCATE YOUR INTERNATIONAL STATUS TO AN EMPLOYER

As you search for jobs or internships, it is important to understand the processes to employment associated with your visa. Employers may have false assumptions about visa limitations, costs, or processes, and it is important to be able to provide accurate information to potential employers.
Before the Job Search

• Every student’s situation is different, so make an appointment with an advisor from the ISSS Office to discuss your employment plans and to learn about relevant work permission guidelines and immigration regulations.
• Be knowledgeable about your current visa status and about the H-1B visa process. The following resources provide visa information in the U.S.
  • Department of Labor (www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/howdoi.cfm)
  • H1 Base Website (www.h1base.com)

During the Job Search

• 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. 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.

Use Online Resources such as:

• GoinGlobal (can be accessed via the MyNewSchool portal) 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.

• 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.

During the Job Interview

• At what part of 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 is 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 is 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.