

# JOB SEARCH FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

[career.virginia.edu/international-students](https://career.virginia.edu/international-students)

## INTERNATIONAL STUDIES OFFICE (MINOR HALL 208)

International students should also contact the International Studies Office (ISO) before seeking any form of employment (paid or unpaid) whether as a student or in preparation for graduation so that you are aware of all applicable restrictions, requirements and deadlines. Remember: it is your responsibility to connect with the ISO to obtain the most current information as the rules are constantly changing. Walk-In Advising Hours: [issp.virginia.edu/staff](https://issp.virginia.edu/staff)

## U.S. EMPLOYMENT REGULATIONS

This handout is targeted towards students in a F-1 or J-1 visa status. However, other foreign nationals or those with newly acquired American citizenship or permanent resident status may find some of the information included to be both relevant and useful.

### EMPLOYMENT AS A STUDENT

As an international student, you may have the opportunity to gain experience on Grounds and, in some cases, off Grounds. Before you begin seeking employment, it is extremely important that you connect with the International Studies Office (ISO) to ensure that you are aware of all applicable restrictions, requirements and deadlines. If you are unsure if an opportunity you are pursuing constitutes as employment, visit the ISO for more information. There are many types of training that allow certain international students to gain experience: Optional Practical Training (OPT), Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Academic Training. It is important as you begin to pursue these opportunities that you plan ahead. Some approvals to work can take anywhere from 30-120 days. In preparation for your meeting with the ISO, review their webpage on student visa statuses: [issp.virginia.edu](https://issp.virginia.edu)

### EMPLOYMENT AFTER GRADUATION

If you plan to conduct a job search in the U.S., you need to make sure you understand not only the process for securing a work visa but also the challenges of securing work permission in the U.S. Below are a the most common work visas pursued by international students and employers.

#### H-1B VISAS/NON-IMMIGRANT TEMPORARY WORK VISA

Some F-1 and J-1 visa holders may be eligible to change their status in the U.S. and acquire H-1B status. In order to qualify for H-1B visa status, you must first have a job offer with an employer who is willing to file an H-1B petition on your behalf with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). H-1B visa status is reserved for individuals in "specialty occupations" which are jobs requiring at least a Bachelor's degree. An attorney is usually hired by the employer, in order to file the H-1B petition on your behalf. Every fiscal year, the U.S. government allows approximately 65,000 new foreign nationals from around the world to gain H-1B status in the U.S. This limit on new H-1B holders is known as the "H-1B cap." There are separate 20,000 H-1B visas available for foreign nationals who earn at least a Master's degree from a U.S. institution as well. **Some employers are exempt from the H-1B cap, such as institutions of higher education and non-profit research organizations associated with those institutions. In recent years, the H-1B cap has been reached with more than double the allotted number of petitions filed. Because over half of those who apply for the H-1B visa do not receive it, many U.S. employers are hesitant to hire international applicants.** For current information about the number of petitions received and deadlines, visit [uscis.gov](https://uscis.gov).

#### TN, H-1B1 AND E-3 CLASSIFICATIONS

Citizens of Canada, Mexico, Singapore, Chile, and Australia can often find opportunities in these classifications. If you will work in a specific occupation and you are from Canada or Mexico, you may qualify for TN status. Citizens of Singapore and Chile are given an allotment of H-1B numbers that is separate from other foreign nationals and has never been exhausted. Australians who qualify for H-1B status also qualify for E-3 status and this quota has also never been exhausted.

#### PERMANENT RESIDENTS (GREEN CARD HOLDERS)

If you are a permanent resident, you are eligible to work in the United States without restriction. The application process to become a permanent resident is time-consuming and complicated. If you believe you are eligible to apply for permanent residence, contact an immigration attorney for a consultation.

## CHALLENGES AND MISCONCEPTIONS OF GAINING EMPLOYMENT IN THE U.S.

These are common challenges and misconceptions U.S. employers may hold about international student applicants.

**Hiring Complexities:** Employers are unfamiliar with the process of hiring an international student and therefore believe it to be complicated and expensive.

**Current Immigration Climate:** Employers are concerned future legislation might change or impact their ability to hire or retain international employees.

**Visa Quotas:** Because work in the U.S. is not guaranteed, nor promised, to international students entering the country on a student visa, and quotas are set on the number of skilled foreign workers legally permitted in the country, you will experience challenges trying to find employment.

**Lack of Commitment to the Job:** Employers fear that foreign nationals will return to their home country after a year or two and are therefore reluctant to invest time and resources into training them.

**Communication:** Employers are concerned about foreign nationals' ability to communicate effectively in verbal/written English with their team or clients.

**Employment Restrictions:** In general, you must be a U.S. citizen to work for the U.S. Federal Government as well as for private companies contracted by the government. Some local and state governments may be more open. Your visa status will be less of an absolute barrier with other industries/employers.

# THE DUAL LOCATION JOB SEARCH

Knowing the challenges and misconceptions you may face as an international student is paramount. While it is not impossible to find full-time opportunities in the U.S., it is becoming more difficult. With these added complexities, it is important that you not only plan to search for opportunities in the U.S., but also look for positions in your home country/region. Depending on your interests, you may also want to consider other countries as well. Searching in both the U.S. and your home country at the same time is a strategy known as the Dual Location Job Search. Below you will find strategies for searching in both the U.S. and in your home country or a third country. In addition to this handout, you can also visit the Career Center to customize these steps to your individual search!

## STRATEGIES FOR SEEKING EMPLOYMENT IN THE U.S.

The job search in the U.S. requires research, reflection and implementing these strategies:

### *Be Informed*

Recognizing that employers will have misconceptions about hiring international students can provide you the opportunity to best articulate why you are the right fit for an employer in a manner that helps alleviate misconceptions. For example, if you know that employers may be hesitant to hire international students because they perceive the process to petition for a visa as too complex, during a networking conversation or an interview, you might take the opportunity to educate an employer on the steps it takes to file a petition helping them to see that it is not as difficult of a process as they may think. If you know that employers may be concerned about an international student applicant's commitment to the job, you can emphasize in your interview your intention for wanting to learn and grow over time with that particular company.

### *Perfect Your English Skills*

If you have concerns about your ability to effectively communicate (both orally and on paper) in English with employers, take steps to practice and increase your English language abilities. Look for organizations and resources at the University where you can continue to hone your speaking and writing skills. Consider participating in the Volunteers with International Students and Scholars, and Staff Program (VISAS). Visit [caelc.virginia.edu/visas-connect](http://caelc.virginia.edu/visas-connect). Also, consider ways you can incorporate practice into your everyday life: joining a student organization, participating during class discussions, joining a study group, or volunteering in the community are great ways to increase your skills.

### *Employers with an International Focus or Presence*

Strong employment prospects may be with organizations that have an international focus. You may also find success with U.S. companies that have an international presence/office in other countries. Keep in mind that U.S. institutions of higher education may be an option. Your international experience, language, and cultural fluency may make you a very appealing candidate to these organizations. In addition, if your U.S. work authorization is delayed, you may be able to continue to work at one of their branches outside of the U.S.

### *Seek Exposure to Industries in Demand*

As an international student, you may find the job search process less difficult if you study or gain exposure to subjects in demand. Currently firms in the U.S. desire skilled workers, particularly in the areas of Systems Analysis and Programming, Engineering, Computer Science, Information Technology, Business, Finance, Renewable Energy and some Healthcare fields. If you are not majoring in one of these areas, consider developing computer skills (programming, word processing, spreadsheet design), quantitative skills (statistics, economics) and/or scientific skills (lab research) through elective classes, independent studies, or extracurricular activities to make yourself a more marketable applicant.

### *Articulate the Unique Benefits of Hiring an International Student*

Because you are searching for employment in the U.S., you may feel that, in order to be successful in your job search, you will need to assimilate to be more like U.S. applicants. While there are some customs and cultural barriers that you will need to consider (see the next section), your experience as an international student is just as important when articulating your fit to an employer. Consider how you might convey to an employer the unique advantages you can bring to a company as an international student. For example, in a resume, cover letter, or in an interview, discuss your language skills as well as your ability to adapt to new cultures and environments as you have done in attending a university in another country.

## COMMON CULTURAL BARRIERS

The first step in designing an effective job search strategy which will lead to employment in the United States is to clearly understand the setting in which you are operating. As a student, you may not have had much experience job-hunting in your home country. Even if you have, you are likely to find job-hunting in the U.S. a different process.

The differences are culturally based and, therefore, you may have to work at overcoming the natural inclination to conduct yourself as you would if you were looking for a job in your home country. Different cultures have different sensibilities. Be aware of the setting in which you are interviewing. Below is a list of common cultural barriers you as an international student may experience in your job search. Please note that these factors are not indigenous to one particular society, but represent a cross-section of countries and continents.

Value	Expectations in U.S.	Possible Conflicting Values of Another Culture
Self-Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assertiveness, openly discussing personal strengths and job fit</li> <li>Follow-up with employers (telephone inquiries, thank you notes, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unless presented as part of a group activity, citing achieved goals, accomplishments and skills is viewed as boastful, self-serving and too individualistic</li> <li>Asking employers directly about status of application may be viewed as rude</li> </ul>
Directness in Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open and direct responses to questions</li> <li>Eye contact with interviewer, relaxed posture, and other appropriate nonverbal behavior</li> <li>Discussion of salary and benefits only when initiated by interviewer or at time of job offer</li> <li>Candidate asks questions about the job at the end of the interview</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eye contact, especially with persons of higher status (e.g., employer/interviewer), is disrespectful</li> <li>Appearance of criticism must be avoided to save face</li> <li>Asking open-ended questions about the job may be seen as rude and inappropriately direct</li> </ul>
Self-Disclosure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal descriptions of experiences, hobbies, strengths and weaknesses are common</li> <li>Answers to questions related to personality (e.g., leadership style and problem solving abilities)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal questions about likes, dislikes, etc. are considered an invasion of privacy and are discussed only with close friends and family</li> <li>Personal questions sometimes are seen as irrelevant to a candidate's qualifications</li> <li>Revealing outside interests may be considered a threat to time, energy and other resources invested by a candidate into the job</li> </ul>
Career Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstration of knowledge of self, career goals and how they relate to job</li> <li>Discussion of long-range career plans</li> <li>Ability to be self-directed in one's career development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Questions about role in company indicate potential disloyalty</li> <li>Jobs are assigned by government or family or determined by school or test score</li> <li>Individual must be flexible to accept whatever job becomes available without regard to their own career goals</li> </ul>
Individual Responsibility in Finding Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of a wide variety of resources in identifying jobs (e.g. friends, family, contacts, associations, Career Services, faculty, etc.)</li> <li>Networking by candidates; personal referrals can carry great weight in evaluating a candidate's potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs are found for the individual by government, school, or family</li> <li>Dependency relationships in job search are fostered. One resource (e.g. academic advisor or employment agent) will find work for job seeker with little proactive action on the part of the seeker</li> </ul>
Informality in the Interview Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Congenial interviewing environment that encourages openness, some joking and exchange of information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sitting with a person of higher status requires deference. The job applicant is very polite and does not ask questions or provide information that may indicate lack of respect for interviewer's position. Handshaking, using first names, crossing legs, etc., are inappropriate</li> </ul>
Punctuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrive 5-15 minutes before appointment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal relationships are more than time. Anywhere from 15 minutes to 2 hours lateness from agreed meeting time is not insulting</li> </ul>
Effective Letters of Application and Resumes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One page, error-free, concise and attractive outline of relevant job experience, skills, academic credentials and accomplishments</li> <li>Personalized to reflect each individual's strengths and capabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resumes are a detailed chronology of academic and formal work experiences and not a tool for self-promotion</li> </ul>
Individual Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Race, sex, and age are legally not supposed to affect the interview process</li> <li>Politeness and respect are shown to all employees a candidate meets, whether receptionist or CEO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Males and older persons may expect to assume dominance in interactions with females and younger persons</li> <li>Level of organizational hierarchy may determine the amount of respect an individual is given</li> <li>Attitudes on gender, race, and other individual characteristics and how they impact hiring decisions vary from culture to culture</li> </ul>
Knowledge of Organization Prior to Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain as much information as possible about the company before the interview. Demonstrate awareness of organization in letter of application and during the interview</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research about organization may indicate excessive and undesirable initiative or independence</li> </ul>

## EXPLORE RESOURCES

The UVA Career Center is a great place to start your research. The Career Center has a large number of resources online to assist you in researching various industries, generating a list of prospective employers, and finding actual job listings. Come to the Career Center in Newcomb 170 during open drop-in hours or make an appointment with a counselor for an orientation to any of the resources listed below. To schedule an appointment, please call (434)924-8900 or sign up via Handshake. For up-to-date information on open office hours, please call the Career Center or visit our website at [career.virginia.edu](http://career.virginia.edu).

### *Handshake*

A database which includes externship, internship, part-time and full-time job postings, and provides access to On Grounds Interviewing (OGI). There are thousands of postings in Handshake for both the US and abroad. You can also tailor your search to review postings where employers have indicated they are willing to consider international applicants. When searching in Handshake filter by "US work authorization optional."

Handshake also includes the following resources:

- **Career Insider by VAULT** - Includes an internship database which lists opportunities open to international students. Also a great resource for industry overviews, profiles of top career paths, and tips on resumes/cover letters and interviewing.
- **GoinGlobal** - Provides information on domestic, as well as international employment opportunities, and includes guides for working in over 20 countries. Also a great resource for researching U.S. companies who have filed H1B visa petitions in the last year.

### *myvisajobs.com*

Online database of American employers that historically petitioned for H1-B visas to sponsor international employees

### *h1base.com*

Includes US immigration details, H1-B visa information, and employment opportunities

## GAIN EXPERIENCE

Gaining relevant work experience, in addition to your degree, will make you a more competitive job candidate. Internships during the summer are a great way to build skills and augment your classroom experience. If you plan to intern in the U.S., your internship must be related to your declared major or your principal field of study. If you plan to work in the U.S. after graduating and decide to use some of your CPT to conduct an internship in the U.S. while still a student, one strategy you may want to try is to seek out internship opportunities with companies that have a history of sponsoring employees who are on a work visa. By doing this, you will be building a relationship with an organization that may hire you for a full-time position upon graduating. Many employers favor applicants for their entry-level positions who went through their internship programs.

The Career Center has extensive resources for researching internship opportunities. Internship opportunities may vary tremendously depending on your area of interest, and may be paid or unpaid. Schedule an appointment or stop by drop-in hours to have a more in-depth discussion with a career counselor about your search.

Externships are short-term job shadowing experiences (one day to three weeks in length) which enable students to clarify their career goals, gain "real world" experience, and get their foot in the door for competitive internships and jobs. Students participating in externships are not paid by the employer and must supply their own housing, food, and transportation; however, the networking opportunities provided by this kind of experience make them highly valuable. More information on externships is available on the Career Center website.

Faculty may be in a position to provide work opportunities during the academic year and summer months through grants or their departmental budgets. Check with your faculty advisor to see if there are any opportunities in your department.

**NOTE:** In exploring any of the opportunities mentioned above, always check with the International Student Advisor to confirm your eligibility for work authorization. Unlawful employment can also include engaging in unpaid work.

## NETWORK YOUR WAY TO A JOB

In seeking advice from any career counselor in the U.S., you will be advised about the benefits of interviewing for information and networking as a means to finding a suitable job. In the U.S. it is common to find employment as a result of having the right connections. The ability to make connections with people, or *networking*, is a skill you can begin developing while on Grounds.

Begin talking with faculty members and fellow students. Many faculty members have worked outside of the university context and maintain professional contacts with their former colleagues. In addition, start building relationships with upperclassmen and attend networking functions where alumni will be in attendance. It will prove to be helpful for you to connect with people who have already successfully found employment here in the U.S. and can provide you with insight about the process. The best way to find companies that are willing to hire international students is to talk to other international students and alumni. Know you can reach out to U.S. employers to ask about international student hiring practices.

Joining a professional association related to your field of interest is also a wonderful way to make connections with those who can provide you with

sound advice about how to find jobs in a particular field. Visit the websites of these organizations to request information on their publications, student rates, local chapters, and conferences. For the names of professional associations, speak with a faculty member in your department, or use the Career Center resource "[What Can I Do With This Major?](#)" under the Resource library in Handshake.

Many international students are discouraged because they believe that they have no network in the United States, as their connections are with people in their home countries. It is important to understand that, in the U.S., a network is actively developed and does not imply long-standing, life-long relationships based on family ties or status in the community. Anyone can develop a network with some knowledge of the process. Be as creative as possible in developing your network. Do you have a community host or language partner who can provide you with information or a referral? Have you joined a student organization related to your field of interest? Have you attended a career fair or asked an employer for their business card?

## PREPARING RESUMES & COVER LETTERS

A well-prepared resume and cover letter are essential to getting a job interview. For a U.S. job search, your resume and cover letter must conform to basic, generally accepted standards. The U.S. resume is succinct, including only information which is relevant to an employer's needs. Personal information is usually excluded. The resume is also limited to one page in most cases. The Career Center has several resources, which can assist you. Check out the handouts on Writing Resumes and Cover Letters.

Your resume should be free of spelling and grammatical errors. **After you have developed a resume, bring it to the Career Center to have a career counselor review it with you.** You should also have your cover letters reviewed by a counselor to ensure that the writing style, as well as, the content conforms to employers' expectations.

Remember, it is your responsibility to ease the concerns that employers may have about hiring you. This means you may need to provide the following information on your resume and/or cover letter while also highlighting the qualities that make you unique:

### *INFORMATION TO PROVIDE*

- Test scores (TOEFL and/or SATs, particularly verbal or writing scores)
- Writing and English courses completed
- Descriptions highlighting your communication skills (where applicable):
  - "Translated written and spoken English daily for 2 years."
  - "Tutored other international students in reading, writing and speaking English."
  - "Gave 15 minute PowerPoint presentation on paper entitled " \_\_\_\_\_ " before an audience of 50."
- Frame of reference for foreign employers and schools:
  - # 1 research institution in India
  - Second largest technology manufacturer in Europe
  - A \$10 million marketing firm

### *HIGHLIGHT YOUR UNIQUE QUALITIES*

- International experience:
  - "Lived in Ghana for 10 years and U.K. for 7 years."
  - "Traveled extensively throughout South and Latin America."
  - "Developed a solid understanding and appreciation for Russian culture and customs."
- Language skills:
  - Fluent in English, native speaker of Chinese, and proficient in French

## PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

The interview is your opportunity to convince the employer that you are the right person for the job. In most instances, an employer is expecting you to articulate your future career goals and past accomplishments. The interviewer is assessing you according to values such as self-confidence, initiative, directness, and individualism. It is important to learn to become comfortable with the idea of marketing yourself to an employer.

Non-verbal behavior may also be a barrier to successful communication with an interviewer. Eye contact, physical distance, personal appearance, and manner of dress all communicate things about you to an interviewer. It is important that you understand exactly what you are communicating.

Understanding and mastering appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication before an interview is essential. The Career Center offers programs, books, and videos on interviewing. Once you are feeling more

comfortable with the process, schedule a mock interview with a counselor. The counselor will make suggestions for improving your technique. Remember, the more practice you have, the more prepared and relaxed you will be when the time comes for an employment interview.

Remember preparation for an interview always includes conducting research on the employer. The interviewer will also expect you to have prepared questions for them about the job and organization.

**NOTE:** Always consult with the International Student Advisor to make sure that you understand the parameters of your visa status. Not only is this essential information for you to have as you determine your goals for employment, but you will have to clearly and accurately explain your status to most employers during the interview process.

## FOLLOWING UP WITH EMPLOYERS

After having an interview, it is always appropriate to follow-up with a thank-you note. In this follow-up correspondence, you can reiterate your interest in the position and emphasize the skills and abilities you would be bringing to the employer. This type of correspondence is not considered being overly assertive. In fact, if an employer does not hear from you after an interview, the assumption may be that you are not sincerely interested in the job. See the Career Center website for examples of a thank-you letters.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### *Should I list my visa status or permanent address on my resume?*

You are not required to include your visa status or your permanent address on your resume. Many international students opt to use their current or UVA-specific address on their resume instead of their permanent address. Hiring managers should ask appropriate questions during the recruitment process to identify if you will require work authorization. Always answer these questions honestly – whether in an application or in an interview.

However, because bias exists, if you are a green card holder or U.S. citizen and have a name that employers may perceive as indicating you are an international student, you may want to consider including your immigration or citizenship status on your resume to indicate that you are already legally authorized to work in the U.S.

### *How should I respond to questions on the job application?*

Always answer truthfully when responding to questions about your work authorization on a job application. If you are unsure of how to respond due to the wording of the question, please reach out to both the International Studies Office and the Career Center for clarification. This is the most commonly asked question:

- **Are you legally authorized to work in the U.S.?** *If you are on an F-1 visa, your answer is yes because you are eligible to use either CPT or OPT, which authorizes you to work in the U.S. for specific period of time.*

### *Are there questions that are illegal for an employer to ask me?*

An employer **MAY NOT** ask:

- “What is your visa type, nationality, place of birth?” or “Of which country are you a citizen?”
- “What is your native language?” or “What language do you most often speak?”

An employer **MAY** ask:

- “Are you legally authorized to work in the United States?” or “Will you now, or in the future, require sponsorship for an employment visa?”
- “Which languages do you read, speak or write?” (provided that foreign language skills are job related)

### *As a student with an F-1 visa searching for full-time work, how do I answer when asked about my work authorization?*

Start by explaining that you have legal authorization to work in the U.S. for 12 months on OPT (STEM majors working in STEM fields will have up to 36-months available). OPT does not require any financial commitment or obligation from the employer.

### *When in the hiring process should I disclose that I'm an international student?*

This is a very sensitive question which needs to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. While some employers adhere to strict policies against hiring foreign nationals, others may prefer to hire U.S. citizens, but can be otherwise convinced. Some employers, typically larger multinational companies, are hosting information sessions for international students to share their hiring practices. During these sessions, employer are sharing that they are not hiring international students in their U.S. offices, but are open to helping connect you with recruiters in their offices overseas. While this may be discouraging, many of these companies are being upfront so that you do not waste your time when you could be pursuing other companies.

While some companies are changing their hiring practices, others are still open or can be convinced of the benefits of hiring an international student.

Therefore, with some companies you may want to make it your goal to get past the initial screening measures to the interview. On the other hand, you should broach the subject before the employer has spent a significant amount of time and money trying to recruit you. It is usually recommended that students address the issue of their work status during the first or second interview, but no later than the time of the job offer.

### *If a company says they do not hire international students, should I even apply?*

Outside of companies who are hosting information sessions to share about their hiring practices of international students as described above, sometimes when employers say they don't hire international students it means that they haven't hired any international students yet. In order to convince these prospective employers, it is your responsibility to educate them about the process of hiring a foreign national. Be mindful that they still may not hire you, and this can be frustrating. It is recommended that you first target organizations with a history of hiring employees on a work visa.

### *What steps can I take to enhance my candidacy?*

- Get your resume and cover letters reviewed by a Career Center counselor, employer, and/or alumni
- Become thoroughly familiar with immigration regulations and benefits attached to your visa status – visit the International Studies Office for detailed information
- Research the employers and the positions in which you are interested
- Participate in a mock interview
- Practice speaking confidently about your skills, interests, and career goals, and articulate in the interview how your international experiences make you uniquely qualified

# SEARCHING FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY/REGION

Given the shortage of U.S. work visas and uncertain climate toward immigration in the U.S., it is important that you also look for employment in your home country or another country/region in addition to your search in the U.S. An international job search includes the same elements as the U.S. job search but differs slightly depending on cultural norms and expectations of each individual country. These are common elements:

- Explore Resources
- Gaining Work Experience
- Networking Your Way to a Job
- Preparing Country-Specific Resumes and Cover Letters

## EXPLORE RESOURCES

The Career Center library has a large number of print and electronic resources, which relate to finding a job in the global marketplace. Some of the material is designed for American students who are searching for employment abroad; however, much of the information is just as relevant for an international student seeking employment abroad.

The International Studies Office can also provide information and trends on the strategies of graduated international alumni. Visit both the Career Center and ISO as early as possible so you can begin building your Dual Location Career Search Strategy!

## GAIN WORK EXPERIENCE

The Career Center can help connect you with employers and provide recruitment timelines for multinational companies who come to Grounds or post in Handshake. Be sure to also search Handshake thoroughly as more multinational employers are including their many global locations in job postings. Additionally, use the numerous international resources and directories available through the UVA Library to identify a company with a subsidiary in your home country. The International Division at a company's headquarters can identify the Regional Manager of the subsidiary who, in turn, can provide you with information on summer work opportunities or internships.

**NOTE:** If you are contemplating summer work overseas, meet with an International Student Advisor in ISO regarding your visa status for re-entry into the United States to continue your academic program.

## NETWORK YOUR WAY TO A JOB

Begin talking with faculty members about your career plans. Many faculty members have worked or studied abroad and maintain professional contacts with colleagues overseas. UVA hosts visiting faculty from abroad who arrive with current information and contacts in their home countries.

UVA alumni living overseas can be valuable resources for information on employment opportunities. Use LinkedIn to contact alumni overseas. Consider joining the following [LinkedIn](#) group: [University of Virginia Alumni, Students, Faculty and Staff](#). Also, the UVA Alumni Association has developed 20+ alumni chapters overseas. Visit [uvaclubs.virginia.edu](http://uvaclubs.virginia.edu) for a complete list and contact information. While you should not contact alumni to "ask for a job," it is certainly appropriate to ask for information, advice and/or referrals.

Many professional associations have an international membership. Visit the websites of these organizations to request information on their publications, student rates, and overseas chapters. These links may lead you to knowledgeable people and, possibly, job opportunities.

Finally, don't forget to stay connected to family back home. Not only will your family and friends be happy to hear from you, but you can ask them for information about the job market. Family, friends, and former employers can all provide you with job leads while you are busy studying in the United States. In addition, these contacts may also be in a position to serve as references. References from the U.S., unless internationally known in their field, will not lend as much weight to your application as a well-known figure in your home country.

## COUNTRY-SPECIFIC RESUMES & COVER LETTERS

As you now know, a well-written resume and cover letter is critical in any job search. However, when searching for a job in your home country, your resume must conform to the local standards and not reflect U.S. styles and standards in resume writing. Just as U.S. students come to the Career Center for help in writing an appropriate U.S.-style resume, you may need some advice in designing a resume appropriate for use in your home country or another country. Dr. Frank Klein of the University Placement Center at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale offers the following advice:

*"For job searches in the U.S., the resume is most often chronological, functional, or a combination of the two. However, with regard to resume format requirements, differences exist from continent to continent, country to country. Working in the European Countries: A Guide to Graduate Recruiters and Job Seekers by A.J. Raban of the University of Cambridge Career Services makes an excellent case for a country-specific resume. In Denmark, according to Raban, extracurricular activities are defined as work experience rather than student activities and, consequently given much attention by the employer. In Germany, where extracurricular activities are defined as student activities, they receive little attention. If a single resume category, extracurricular activities, is important in Denmark, unimportant in Germany, is secondary to academic performance in Italy, and is given special attention by employers in the United Kingdom, enough cannot be said on the importance of country-specific resumes."*

Resumes targeted for some countries require more personal data than is appropriate in a U.S.-style resume. Birthdate, birthplace, citizenship, passport number and even a photograph may be appropriate. Often employers from these countries are more interested in the applicant's skillset than in the specific undergraduate or graduate degree. In many countries, transcripts, with an official university stamp or seal, or even actual photocopies of degrees, are required with the resume. Additionally, a photocopy of your degree may be required if you are applying to a university position.

In addition to the resource mentioned above, [GoinGobal](#) within Handshake, also provides country-specific sample resumes and cover letters for 40 different countries. Use your faculty contacts (especially visiting faculty) to make sure that you are constructing an appropriate resume. Send a draft of your resume home in correspondence with family and friends. Ask them to critique your resume or find someone in your career field at home who has the knowledge and background to evaluate your resume style and content