Dear SHPE

Are you an international student looking for an internship or for an entry-level job position?

The following information is to help the international members of your chapter to know the basic information that will enable them to get a step ahead with their process of getting a job position in the U.S.

First of all, an international student is defined as a foreign student who is not U.S. citizen, immigrant or refugee that is enrolled in an institution of higher education in the United States. Most international students hold an F-1 Visa status, or in special cases a J-1 Visa status, which means that the student is financially sponsored by an organization or their country’s government.

For international students to have a chance of being hired in the U.S., they should be the top of their class, with a high GPA, and with good technical as well as interpersonal skills.

For an internship:

If you have an international member in your chapter that is looking for an internship, he/she will most likely hold an F-1 visa status. Internships are for freshmen, sophomore, and juniors students; and the period of time they’ll be using will be from their Curricular Practical Training, CPT. The process for international students for getting an internship in the U.S is not that complicated, its really simple; just that it might take a while to get all the paperwork done.

Therefore, the first step for an international student to get an internship in the U.S is:

- Getting the internship position

Then, the international student should contact his respective international center and:

- Go to the International Center, and ask for the “Curricular Practical Training Application Form” and fill it out
- Also, take your Passport with your I-20

When filling this application, the student must also take to the International Center:

- A copy of the original internship/training offer and/or letter of acceptance from the Employer- letter should be on company letterhead and state the following:
  - The physical address of the employer (NOT a PO Box)
- Position title and description
- Dates of employment.

- Is the position paid or unpaid?

And of course, ask to your International Center about when and how to apply to a Social Security Number, and if any additional documentation is needed.
Why to hire International Staff?

- International life and work experience
- Multi-lingual communication skills
- Understanding of global cultures, markets, and business practices
- Adaptability and perseverance in managing changing environment
- Strong motivation and work ethic
- Enthusiasm and team-oriented attitude
- Ability to work internationally
- Fresh perspectives and new problem-solving skills
- Commitment to employer because of visa sponsorship
- Diversity in the workplace

**Interviewing Strategies**

- Use EAD as stepping stone to prove yourself
- Be upfront about immigration status
- Ask about company sponsorship policies
- Offer to hire own immigration attorney
- Offer to pay all fees allowed by law
- Explain extra benefits of hiring international staff

For an entry-level position:

If you are an undergraduate international student and you are about to graduate, you should be focusing in applying for an entry-level position in a company, rather than an internship. For the most part, companies are looking for people who can work full time, rather than internships; so your chances of getting a full time job are higher.

The procedure to get an entry-level position is very similar to the Internship one, however, it is a bit more complex due to the fact that the company is hiring a foreign individual to work and reside in the U.S. for a non-determine period of time.

Therefore, the first step for this is:

- Getting the actual job position at the company

After getting the job position, its time to get started with the paperwork:

- Go to the International Center at your university and ask what documentation is needed in order for you to apply for an “Optional Practical Training”
- You will be ask to fill out the “Optional Practical Training Application Form”
  - For the OPT, you could have applied to this 90 days prior to graduation or 60 days after graduation
  - Also, take your Passport with your I-20
  - And take some cash

And of course, ask to your International Center about when and how to apply to a Social Security Number.

From here on, the International Center should take care of the rest. And in two to three months, you should receive your OPT card.

For more detailed information on how to apply for OPT, go here:

[http://cge.fsu.edu/f1students/opt.cfm](http://cge.fsu.edu/f1students/opt.cfm)

Based on the FSU International Center