

Direct Connect - NASCC 2015 – *Suggestions for Upcoming Graduates*

1. What type of work interests you?

- a. Buildings
 - i. New Construction (High-rise, residential, low-rise commercial, etc.)
 - ii. Rehabilitation of existing structures
- b. Infrastructure
 - i. New Construction (Bridges, towers, utilities, etc.)
 - ii. Rehabilitation of existing structures
- c. Earthquake Engineering

2. Which firms are the best firms to work for?

- a. Work / life balance and what do co-workers do outside of the office (e.g. intramural sports)?
- b. How often have people been laid off from the firm?
- c. Independent review magazines. Rankings of “best firms to work for”.
 - i. Be sure to know how the rankings are compiled.
- d. Health Care out-of-pocket expenses?

3. While interviewing:

- a. What is the office culture like?
 - i. Does it seem collaborative, more independent? And what works best for your personality?
 - 1. Do you desire more interaction or will you be expected to figure things out on your own?
 - ii. What is expected of you? The number of hours / week of work, what will be your responsibilities on projects?
 - iii. What did they emphasize in the interview process?
 - 1. Good indication of expectations
 - 2. Did you meet a lot of co-workers?
 - iv. Is the office loud or quiet? What works best for you?

4. Starting your career:

- a. Start networking early in your career (university good stepping stone)
 - i. Become active in organizations such as AISC, ACI, ASCE, or your local Structural Engineers Association
- b. Find volunteer activities that pertain to your profession
- c. Explore continuing education opportunities
 - i. AISC Conference
 - ii. Companies will often finance part or all of continuing education costs
- d. Be patient and absorbent early in your career
 - i. College provides a solid foundation, but there is substantial information yet to be learned
 - ii. Utilize the experience within your company, ask questions frequently to expand your knowledge base