

NASCC Direct Connect

Mentoring Tips: Finding Your First Job



Structural + Civil Engineers

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1. Start your search by determining what specific firms they would like to work for and then target those firms utilizing networking; don't just send a resume. Do you know anyone at that firm? Do you know anyone that knows someone at that firm? Use LinkedIn to determine first- and second-degree associations with individuals at these firms. Once you have a contact, mention the person in your cover letter and copy them on anything you send to the firm. Hopefully this will get your resume out of the big pile and into the small pile of selected individuals for interviews.
2. Research the firms you have the opportunity to interview with or meet at a career fair. Know a few of their current and significant projects, so that you can ask intelligent specific questions.
3. Always send a cover letter with your resume. Your cover letter should cover why you want to work for the firm, what differentiates you from your peers, and what internships and other experiences you have had. The letter should be a single page in length or slightly less. This is another opportunity to differentiate yourself; make sure you use your best professional writing skills.
4. Attend career fairs. This is a great way to exhibit your personality, drive, enthusiasm, interest, etc., in a few short minutes. This is the best opportunity to get in front with firms where you don't have a contact.
5. The ASCE website (<http://www.asce.org>) has a job posting board that lists available opening across the country.
6. Craigslist (<http://craigslist.org>) is a very popular site where you can review job openings by specific areas.
7. Keep at it. It is a difficult market, but firms are hiring. You need to differentiate yourself from your peers!