

Get a Job!

Graham Hanson
GrahamHanson Design
www.grahamhanson.com

It's never too early to begin planning for your career.

Get an internship closer to home between your sophomore and junior years.

Get an internship in the geographic location in which you intend to work before your senior year.

Start looking for permanent employment three months prior to graduation

For any job search, the following *Golden Rules* apply!

1. Pick a geographic area. Virtual and remote opportunities are not realistic for a junior level employee. A commitment to a location is important from the employer's perspective.
2. Research design firms within your chosen geographic area.
3. Select approximately 10 firms from your research that you would like to work for. Your first job will define you in the eyes of future employers. Don't take a job just to be employed.
4. Write a letter to each person at each of the 10 firms. Include a resume. The resume and cover letter must be free of errors and typos. They should also be relatively free of decorative devices must should be well designed. Gimmicks do not work. Reference the firm's work in your cover letter and tell them what you thought of it, very briefly. Tell them you will be in the area during a specific period (a period of a week or two) and that you will contact them to set up a time to meet at their convenience.
5. Contact them via telephone (not email) to set up a time to meet. IMPORTANT NOTE: They will not contact you. You must take the initiative and don't be shy. Be humble but persistent. Early in the morning or late in the afternoon are the best times to call. This is the most important and, for many, the most difficult step.
6. Show up with a clean polished portfolio presentation (no more than 10-12 pieces). Dress professionally but not too formal. Be on time and be ready to respond to questions. Do not speak at great length about the conceptual nature of your work unless you are asked to do so and try to be the one who terminates the interview, which indicates your respect for their time.
7. Write a thank you letter immediately and follow up repeatedly with phone calls (unless you are specifically asked not to). Do not look for "signs." If they have not told you to go away, assume you have a chance for the job.
8. If an opportunity is offered at one of the firms you targeted, take the job at the price offered, within reason. If you prove yourself critical to the firm, you will be rewarded before long. Get your foot in the door. Do not haggle over salary.

That should do it. Good luck.