

The background of the slide is a stylized, wavy American flag. The blue field with white stars is on the left, and the red and white stripes are on the right. The text is overlaid on this background.

Applying for Cybersecurity Jobs

Presented by Walter Houser

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Hack your way into a job!

Think of a job hunt as a social engineering or penetration test.

Assemble your tools and plan your work



What is your objective?



Focus versus a broad net?



Prepare your elevator speech



Write your resume



Conducting job searches (alerts, a professional email address)



Cleansing your social media activity.



Network with family, friends, neighbors, teachers, parents of others, etc.



Reconnaissance

Lots of open-source intelligence for you to study

Government agencies are easy targets; they exist in a fishbowl

Corporate Website | Earnings Call Transcripts
Social Media: LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram
Wikipedia, Glassdoor, Indeed, or Trustpilot
SEC EDGAR filings
News Articles and Press Releases
Industry Reports and Publications
Bloomberg, Reuters, and Yahoo Finance
Patent databases USPTO or EPO
Blogs and Forums

Mission statements
Budget documents
Organization charts
Vocal stakeholders
News reports
FISMA data
Privacy Impact Assessments
OIG and GAO reports
Congressional reports

Reconnaissance

- What companies and agencies are near you and visit them?
 - NIH, Navy Medical Bethesda, FDA, NOAA, NIST, NRC, NSWC, and DoE.
 - Look out for training repayment agreements and noncompete agreements
- Everyone is online, so everyone needs cybersecurity help.
 - So volunteer your services.
- Join professional associations and local chapters: ISSA, OWASP, ISC2, WiCys, and ISACA.
- Go to public events and conferences to meet employees and managers.
 - RSA, ISSA, Bsides, AFCEA, ShmooCon, SANS, CyberMaryland
 - Checking event platforms like Eventbrite, Meetup, or cybersecurity community websites.
- Participate in competitions: PicoCTF, CyberStart, CyberPatriot
- Post your work on GitHub.
- See Major Employers In Montgomery County <https://commerce.maryland.gov/Documents/ResearchDocument/MajorEmployersInMontgomeryCounty.pdf>

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Subscribe to newsletters and podcasts.

- Security Now! podcast <https://twit.tv/shows/security-now>
- Security Now! podcast archive <https://www.grc.com/securitynow.htm>
- The Cyberwire Podcasts <https://thecyberwire.com/podcasts>
- Security Weekly <https://securityweekly.com/>

Read papers and books to learn concepts and techniques.

- NIST Cybersecurity Framework
- Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC)
- Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI)
- Cyber Kill Chain by Lockheed Martin
- MITRE ATT&CK and MITRE D3FEND
- [Cybersecurity Canon Hall of Fame](#)

Preparation:
Research



Preparation: The Elevator Pitch

- An elevator pitch that is a quick summary of yourself.
- It is the cornerstone of your job search.
- It's named for the time it takes to deliver it during an elevator ride (roughly 30 to 60 seconds or 75 words).
- Elevator pitches sell you, your mission, and talents.
- Always have talking points so you're ready for unexpected opportunities.
- Include a written version of your elevator pitch to "introduce" yourself to employers virtually.
- This can help recruiters find you in a targeted search.
- Eliminate the employers that are not right for you.
- Give your elevator speech. Over and over.
- Prepare practice videos. Post on social media.

[What is an Elevator Pitch? Examples for Students and Job Seekers](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGkIVxwxrCk)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGkIVxwxrCk>

Preparation: The Resume

What should I include in my resume?

- Contact information
- Dates, hours, level of experience, and examples for each work experience
- Relevant volunteer work and roles in community organizations
- Use numbers to highlight your accomplishments
- Give examples of how you saved costs, earned revenue, or managed resources.
- Give examples of how you saved or managed time.



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Preparation: The Resume

What should I leave out of my resume?

- Typos, Lies, and Fluff (I use Grammarly)
- Clever formatting and graphics
- Social Security Number (SSN)
- Photos of yourself
- Confidential information
- Classified or government-sensitive information
- Personal information, such as age, gender, religious affiliation, etc.
- Encrypted and digitally signed documents



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Preparation: The Resume

Format and organization

- Chronological – starting with the most recent and working backward
- Dealing with employment gaps
- Thematic – knowledge, skills, and abilities
- Indentation and bullet points to present job history compactly
- Bold and italics to highlight how you meet job requirements



Preparation: The Resume

- Word allows companies to use your resume as a proposal without your knowledge.
- PDF is resistant to editing and random font changes.
- Automatic Tracking Systems (ATS) like standard fonts, not arty or cute fonts that may be hard to parse.
- Info in images may not make it into the ATS.



Preparation: The Resume

References and past employers

- Don't include them unless required.
- Save them for later.
- Ask references for their permission.
- Get current contact information.
- How to deal with negative supervisors.



Internships

Employer	Eligibility	Location	Deadline	Apply Link
NIH SIP	HS–Grad	Bethesda	Mid-Nov opening	https://www.training.nih.gov/research-training/pb/sip
DoD CySP/Pathways	HS–Grad	Fort Meade, MD	Varies	https://www.usajobs.gov
NSA Student Programs	HS–PhD	Fort Meade, MD	Sept 3–14, 2025	https://www.nsa.gov/Careers/Student-Programs/ & USAJobs links
FDA – JIFSAN	Undergrad	White Oak, MD	Varies	https://www.fda.gov/.../jifsan-undergraduate-internship
NOAA Internships	HS–Grad	Silver Spring	Varies	https://www.noaa.gov/.../hollings-scholarship
NIST SURF	Undergrad	Gaithersburg	Opens mid-Oct	https://www.nist.gov/surf
Other Fed	Varies	MoCo	Varies	https://www.usajobs.gov

Internships

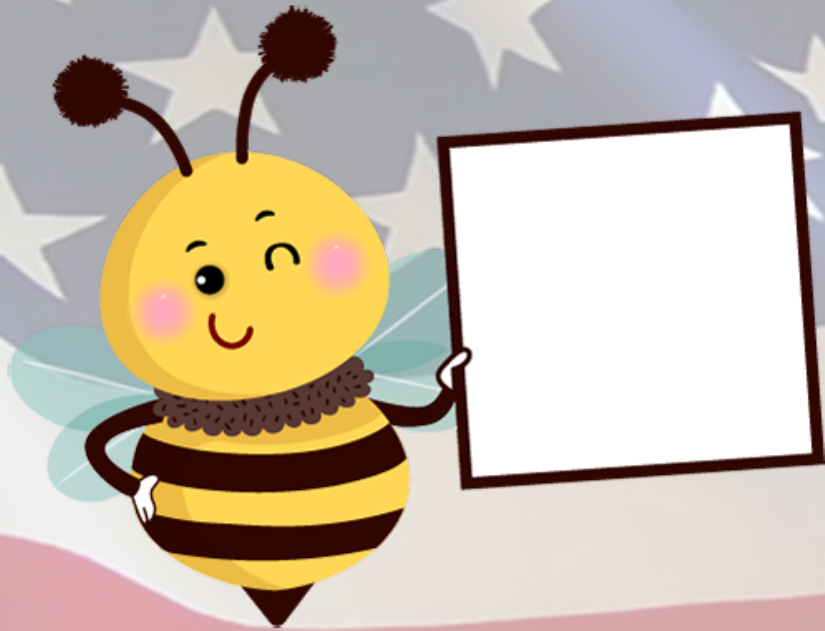
Employer	Eligibility	Location	Deadline	Link
NIH	U.S. citizen or permanent resident; age 18+; enrolled in high school (senior), college, or grad school	Bethesda, MD & other NIH campuses	Opens mid-Oct; closes early Jan	NIH SIP Program
FDA (ORISE)	U.S. citizen; undergrad or grad student in STEM	Silver Spring, MD & other FDA sites	Rolling deadlines	FDA ORISE Internships
NSA Bethesda (AFRRI)	U.S. citizen; age 15+; high school or college student	Walter Reed campus, Bethesda, MD	Varies by lab	Naval STEM Internships
NOAA (Lapenta Program)	U.S. citizen; undergrad (sophomore/junior) or grad student in STEM	Multiple NOAA sites nationwide	Opens Oct 15; closes Dec 17	Lapenta Internship
NIST (SURF & PREP)	U.S. citizen; undergrad or grad student in STEM	Gaithersburg, MD & Boulder, CO	SURF opens Nov; closes Feb	NIST Student Programs
NRC (Summer Program)	Enrolled in 4-year college; GPA-based pay scale	Rockville, MD & regional offices	Opens Jan; closes Mar	NRC Summer Internships
DOE (Omni Tech Program)	U.S. citizen; undergrad or grad in cybersecurity or IT	DOE HQ, labs, PMAs nationwide	Opens Oct; closes Jan 15	DOE Omni Internship

Internships

Employer	Eligibility	Location	Deadline	Link
Kaiser Permanente	High school or college student; U.S. work eligibility	Mid-Atlantic medical centers	Closed for 2025; reopens early 2026	KP Internships
Lockheed Martin	High school, community college, or university student in STEM	Nationwide, including Bethesda, MD	Rolling deadlines	Lockheed Internships
Marriott International	College student; interest in cybersecurity or IT	Bethesda, MD HQ & Orlando, FL	Opens Jan; closes Mar	Marriott Cybersecurity Internships
Verizon	Undergrad in cybersecurity, CS, or engineering; GPA ≥ 3.0	Ashburn, VA; Irving, TX; Temple Terrace, FL	Closes Sept 12	Verizon Cybersecurity Internship
GEICO	Undergrad in CS, cybersecurity, or engineering; GPA ≥ 3.0	Chevy Chase, MD & remote	Opens Oct; closes Jan	GEICO Tech Internships
Montgomery College	MC student in cybersecurity or IT; must apply via faculty	Germantown Campus, MD	Varies by program	MC Cybersecurity Internships
Westat	Undergrad or grad student in cybersecurity or IT	Rockville, MD	June 2–Aug 15; apply by April	Westat InfoSec Internship

<https://commerce.maryland.gov/Documents/ResearchDocument/MajorEmployersInMontgomeryCounty.pdf>

TIPS



- Don't miss the deadline; apply in plenty of time to make corrections.
- You can avoid being a pest by using the link to check on the Application status: [Track this application](https://www.usajobs.gov/Applicant/Application/ApplyHistoryPost) at <https://www.usajobs.gov/Applicant/Application/ApplyHistoryPost>

Commercial Job Boards

- LinkedIn
- Indeed
- Zip Recruiter
- Dice
- Monster
- [CyberSecJobs](#)
- [InfoSec Jobs](#)
- <https://www.trueup.io/>

Beware of the Downsides



Job Offer Scams, Montgomery County Police Dept.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pol/fraud/job-offer-scams.html>

Interviewing

Types of Interviews

- Receptionist, janitor, security guard
- Traditional One-stop
- Phone
- Video Multi-Step
- Multi-party
- Multi-Step Interviews



Secret cultural interview etiquette tips from your Internet Big Sister! [#jobinterviewtips](https://www.youtube.com/shorts/bdz1dbpjlMk) [#career](https://www.youtube.com/shorts/bdz1dbpjlMk)
<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/bdz1dbpjlMk>

Interviewing

Interview Questions

Business case – [How to do a bubble sort?](#)

Puzzle or problem - “[How many tennis balls fit in a 747?](#)”

1. Think out loud so the interviewer understands your thinking.
2. What variables do you need to make a logical estimate?
3. Declare any assumptions you make
4. Use the standard reference libraries.



Google Interview WarmUp

<https://grow.google/certificates/interview-warmup/category/cybersecurity/>

Dealing with Oddball Interview Questions <https://www.dice.com/career-advice/dealing-oddball-interview-questions>

Federal Job Resources

- NIST Vacancy Information <https://www.nist.gov/careers/job-search/vacancy-information>
- Intelligence Careers <https://www.intelligencecareers.gov/>
- NSA Job Listings <https://apply.intelligencecareers.gov/job-listings?agency=NSA>
- Federal Internship Program <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/students-recent-graduates/#intern>
- Federal Recent Graduates Program <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/students-recent-graduates/>
- Presidential Management Fellows <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/students-recent-graduates/#pmf>
- CISA Students & Recent Graduates Employment Opportunities <https://www.cisa.gov/students-recent-graduates-employment-opportunities>
- Cybersecurity Career Week <https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/events/cybersecurity-career-week>
- NICE Webinar: Shedding Light on Security Clearances - Process, Requirements, and Considerations <https://www.nist.gov/news-events/events/2017/07/nice-webinar-shedding-light-security-clearances-process-requirements-and>
- NIST Federal Cybersecurity Workforce Webinar: Security Clearance Effective Practices and Solutions to Support Federal Cybersecurity Work <https://www.nist.gov/news-events/events/2022/10/federal-cybersecurity-workforce-webinar-security-clearance-effective>

Questions?

