

Beginner's Guide *to* Hacking Top Jobs

A short guide by Udacity on how to prepare for and crack the employability code at top technology companies in the world.



1. Choose a skill to master

Choosing a skill should be based on your current skill set, aptitude and the current market requirements. Choosing something completely unrelated to your existing capabilities might be frustrating to learn and derail your decision to switch careers or learning a new skill.

When choosing a new skill to learn, break the task in 2-3 steps.

2. Decide on the number of hours you can dedicate

Are you a working professional or a student? Begin there to decide on the number of hours you can set aside to learning the new skill every week.

Now reduce it by 20%-40% for unforeseen circumstances and your procrastination levels; we call it keeping it practical :-)

3. Calculate the number of months you'll require to master your skill

Any new job focussed skill will take 300-600 hours of investment depending on your goal, learning speed and current levels. Check the Nanodegree pages to see our recommended hours for various skills. This step will give you important perspective on your actual timelines and help avoid disappointment during the journey.

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Further Reading

[How to Master a New Skill, by Amy Gallo](#)

4. Build your online presence

For any skill you master, make sure you create an account and nurture your profile in relevant online (LinkedIn, Kaggle, Github, Stackoverflow) and offline channels (Hackathons, Conferences).

Learning a new skill cannot be an isolated goal. Until you brand yourself correctly in the right channels, you may end up missing a lot of opportunities.

4.1. Online channels

1. *If you are into Software Development:* Contribute answers on Stackoverflow, keep updating projects and code on Github, contribute to opensource projects like Mozilla, Fedora Linux, Linux Foundation etc..
2. *If you are learning Data Analysis or Machine Learning:* Solve problems on Kaggle.
3. *If you are a designer:* Upload every creation of yours on Behance.
4. Write your personal story like [these](#) and *share on social media*. In a connected world, you never know where the next big opportunity can come from.
LinkedIn Profile: Make sure you have a professionally updated
5. *Have a strong LinkedIn profile:* Almost every recruiter is looking for talent on LinkedIn and not having one hurts your chances badly. Udacity has a resume building and LinkedIn profile updation as part of NDs.

Further Reading

[How To Create The Ideal LinkedIn Profile, by Laura Shin](#)

[How I used Stack Overflow & GitHub to get dream job before 19 without degree, by Daniel Kmak](#)

4.2. Offline presence

Participate in hackathons and online coding challenges that happen by the dozens all round the year. EVEN IF YOU THINK YOU ARE NOT GOOD.

This way you will keep building new products and applying the learned skill. Meeting great minds in the same field and winning a handsome amount of money, didn't harm anyone.

Go attend conferences, e.g. PyCon and meet other folks. Do not force yourself onto people or ask for favors. Instead, share your experience, ask for suggestions on how to improve your skills and if given a chance, showcase what you have been building. There are many a stories about how someone found their dream job through a conversation in one of these places.

5. Find your dream job

Knowing how to hunt your dream job is as important, if not more, than acquiring the most *in-demand* skills. The conventional means are fast going out of reckoning if you are looking to work with cutting edge tech companies.

Scroll further to find some pointers on how to hunt your dream job.

Further Reading

[Meetup.com: A Secret Weapon for Your Career and Personal Brand, by Stephan Spencer](#)

5.1. Channels for job hunting

1. [*Angellist*](#): Filter out companies based on your location and skill set. Thousands of companies are hiring on AngelList. Create a list of companies you want to apply and take it from there.
2. [*LinkedIn*](#): Companies put up positions on LinkedIn regularly. Have your LinkedIn profile updated at all times to apply at the tap of a button.
3. *Adopt new hiring channels*: [*HackerRank*](#) challenges are a great way to solve challenges by companies and GetHired. You can also use [*HackerEarth*](#) and participate in hiring based hackathons ([*Venturesity*](#) etc). Following [*Yourstory*](#), [*TechCrunch*](#), [*VentureBeat*](#) etc will also help you to be updated with new age tech companies that are propping up everywhere.
4. *Don't give up conventional channels*: Your chances of working with new age tech companies are substantially high if you use above channels. This does not mean you should stop using Naukri.com, monster.com and other job platforms.

All [*Nanodegree students*](#) receive dedicated training in job search, including LinkedIn and Github profile, Resume, job applications, interview preparation.

5.2. Communication is key

A lot of times you will find the company you are most excited to work for, does not have an opening that suits your profile. This is where all the products/projects, open source contributions, hackathons etc come in handy.

Trust us, almost every new age tech company wants to hear from people with refreshing thoughts on how they can help them grow. All you need in this scenario is “20 seconds of courage” to write to the Founder or Hiring Manager.

Caution: It is important to have the right skill and proper communication before you take these steps. Without them you cannot reach the desired goal.

Further Reading

[How I Hustled to Get the Perfect Job, by Ina Herlihy](#)

I hated every minute of training, but I said, ‘**Don’t quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion.**’

- Muhammad Ali

Parting Note from Team Udacity

This may sound like a long road to success. Well, great things are hard to come by.

You have to break it into steps and the first step to all this is acquiring the required skill.

Udacity India wishes you a very happy and prosperous new year. A year that lands you the dream job.