Module 1 Career Connection

Welcome to your first Career Connection! This lesson at the end of each module will review real-world applications for the material covered in the past week. We'll prepare you to be tested on your new knowledge in technical interviews and suggest strategies to become employer-competitive.

We've consulted many employers to find out what will help you stand out from the crowd. Armed with that knowledge, we'll guide you through steps you can take every week to get there.

Becoming Employer-Competitive

The career services team has come up with two job-preparedness levels: employer-ready and employer-competitive. Let's look at what these terms mean:

- **Employer-ready** means that you meet the minimum requirements to apply for a developer job. You have strong, complete job search materials (e.g., resume, portfolio, LinkedIn profile). With some luck, an employer might notice you among a stack of applications and decide you fit their needs.

- **Employer-competitive** means that you've given yourself the best chance to secure your desired job. You've put together excellent job search materials, you know how to prepare for interviews, and you use multiple networking strategies to proactively seek and pursue the jobs you want.

DEEP DIVE ▼

Most of the students who work with their career team to reach the employer-competitive level find employment within six months after graduation!

Being employer-competitive means starting now to position yourself as a developer, think like a developer, and engage with the online development community. Ready to get started? Complete the following three steps, and you'll be that much closer to acing the job interview when the time comes.

Step #1: Just see what's out there.

Peruse open source projects to get a feel for what's out there. Pay attention to what other developers write in their commit messages. You can start by reviewing the following projects on GitHub:

- **Project Open Data** (https://github.com/project-open-data/)
- **Sherlock** (https://github.com/sherlock-project/sherlock)
- **United States Congress/Legislators** (https://github.com/unitedstates/congress-legislators)

Step #2: Learn how to market yourself.

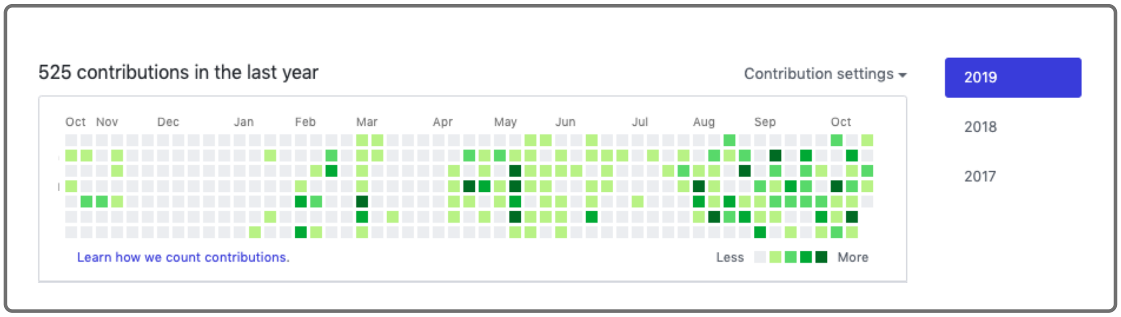
Browse professionally designed websites and apps for inspiration as you prepare to build a portfolio. The following links provide numerous examples of style and layout:

- **10 Fantastic Portfolio Websites from Silicon Valley Design Leads (https://medium.com/@bestfolios/10-fantastic-portfolio-websites-from-silicon-valley-design-leads-2d84b384dba6)**
- **One Page Love (https://onepagelove.com/inspiration/portfolio)**

Step #3: Code a lot---and put it on GitHub.

Many companies will ask you to "pair program" with one of their employees during an interview, so practice this skill with a friend or classmate. Also, because GitHub makes it easy for employers to check your commit history, make sure both you and your partner commit to GitHub regularly. Don't forget to keep your commit messages clean and professional!

Review your own code commit chart periodically to see how you appear to employers. The following image shows an example of a commit chart:



525 contributions in the last year

Learn how we count contributions.

Look to the Future

This week, you learned Excel, which is fundamental to learning any data analysis and visualization technologies you'll develop in the future. You're already on your way to becoming a coder!

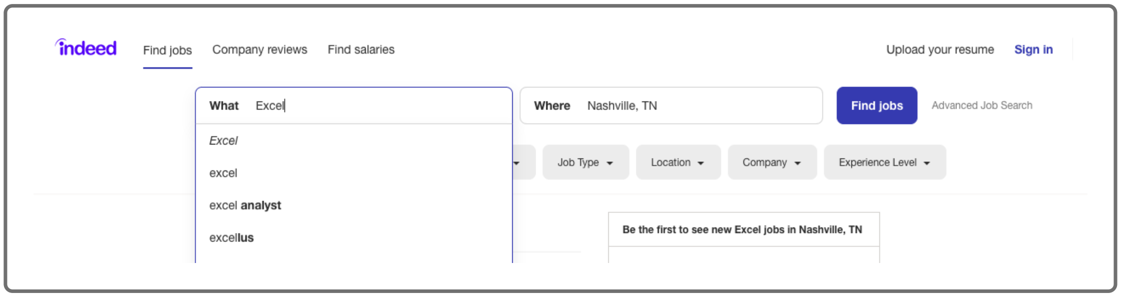
Senior analysts and/or engineers work on complex projects with a variety of technologies and tools. So when you're learning to code, use plenty of tools and methodologies from current real-world projects.

But it all begins with Excel. Though it's unlikely that you'll ever interview directly for an "Excel job," you'll almost definitely face questions about Excel and spreadsheet data at some point in the interview process. Start practicing these skills now.

Step #1: Investigate job listings.

Indeed.com (http://Indeed.com) is a great resource for finding a variety of job postings. Visit the website and search for Excel.

The following screenshot shows what that search may look like:



What Excel

Where Nashville, TN

Be the first to see new Excel jobs in Nashville, TN

Look through the search results for each category. Then write your answers to the following questions:

- **Where does Excel typically appear in the job description?**

  You may find it listed with other technologies under a heading like "Skills Required," "Tech Stack," or something similar. These lists can be intimidating, but think of them as nothing more than wish lists---most companies know they won't get everything they want. Don't be afraid to apply for jobs where you only know 60% or 70% of the required technologies. Employers are also looking for that all-important cultural fit, meaning they want someone who will work well with the team. Technical skills can be taught but cultural fit can't.

- **What other skills are listed alongside HTML, CSS, and Git?**

  Besides Excel, you might see Python, SQL, NoSQL, and Tableau, as well as a variety of other technologies. By the end of this course, you'll possess these skills too. You might see other technologies listed that aren't covered in this course. Yet the skills you'll learn transfer directly to these other technologies. They aren't all that different, anyway!

- **What level of experience, in years, are employers typically looking for?**

  You'll notice that almost all job postings specify at least two to three years of experience. Those looking for senior analysts will call for five to eight years minimum. Again, treat these requests like a wish list. If you see a job posting along the lines of "data analyst, two years experience," you can and should apply for that job.

Step #2: Add technical skills to your resume.

Before you move on to the next module, make sure to add Excel to the "Technical Skills" section on your resume. This will help you pass those pesky automated resume scanners and will indicate to potential employers that you have the skills they need.

DEEP DIVE ▼

Technical Interview

Many companies use algorithm questions during the technical interview. We'll start diving into those when we learn JavaScript. For Excel, consider the following common technical interview questions:

- What is the difference among `COUNT`, `COUNTA`, `COUNTIF` and `COUNTBLANK` in Excel?
  - `COUNT` is used to count cells containing numbers, dates, etc.
  - `COUNTA` is used to count any cell value containing numbers, text, logical values, etc. any type of value excluding blanks.

  - `COUNTBLANK` will count blank cells or cells containing an empty string.
  - `COUNTIF` and `COUNTIFS` count cells matching a certain criteria in the IF statement.

- Is it possible to make a pivot table using multiple sources of data?
  - Yes, but the multiple sources must at least be within the same workbook

- What filter should we use if you want more than two conditions?
  - The "Advanced Criteria Filter" will work for us to analyze the list or test more than two conditions.

When you've answered these questions on your own, search the internet to check your answers.

Continue to Hone Your Skills

If you're interested in learning more about the technical interviewing process and practicing algorithms in a mock interview setting, check out our **upcoming workshops.** **(https://careernetwork.2u.com/?utm_medium=Academics&utm_source=boot_camp)**