



How to Be a No-Brainer Tech Hire

Job Search Advice from
the Experts at Flatiron School

Introduction

A Note from Rebekah Rombom, Head of Career Services, Flatiron School	3
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Chapter 1

What Makes a No-Brainer Tech Hire?	6
---------------------------------------	---

Chapter 2

Your Support Network: How Flatiron School Shapes Your Job Search	10
--	----

Chapter 3

Student Success Tactics from our Career Services Commitment	16
--	----

Chapter 4

Making the Most of Your Interview (Even If You Bomb It)	26
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Chapter 5

Git Creative: Flatiron Alums Share Four Unique Ways to Get the Job	31
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Introduction

A Note from Rebekah Rombom,
Head of Career Services, Flatiron School



Getting a job in tech can be rewarding, fulfilling, and even life-changing – but the process is definitely hard.

Here at Flatiron School, with the help of our passionate instructors, who inspire students to achieve more than they ever thought possible, and a dedicated, sharp community of students, we’ve achieved some amazing career outcomes. Over four years, more than 98% of our NYC and online students have launched exciting new careers in tech after only a few short months of study and job seeking.

While a lot of our success can be attributed to our passionate and capable students, who learn the technical material, take our advice to heart, and hustle on their own, we’ve also developed a keen understanding of what it takes to get hired in tech – both on our end *and* what our students are empowered to do on theirs. Some of it’s simple (“keep us in the loop about your job search activity”), while some is less clear-cut and more time-consuming, such as important activities and exercises we ask our grads to perform to become better developers and better job candidates. After seeing how effective these practices were at getting students hired year after year, we compiled them into our Career Services Commitment: a

framework for the job search that our students agree to follow as they pursue a job in order to make the most of their search and to receive our Career Services resources and Job Guarantee.

In all, this stuff is hard work – no one gets hired by sitting back and waiting for an amazing offer to come in. But it *works*: Every single student who has followed the process in our Career Services Commitment has been hired.

Now we're excited to share those best practices with a larger audience, to help more eager job-seekers launch their tech careers, whether or not they're Flatiron students. In this book, you'll find the full details of our Career Services Commitment plus additional job hunt wisdom that our Career Services team has picked up by helping hundreds of students get hired and keeping a close eye on what qualities our hiring partners look for in new employees. Follow this framework diligently and you'll become – to use my favorite term for our students who commit themselves fully to this process – a **no-brainer tech hire**. Good luck!

Rebekah Rombom

VP of Career Services, Flatiron School

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// FLATIRON SCHOOL



“The interesting thing about going from good to great is that it’s kind of like going from second to first in a race. If you’re running a 26 mile marathon, often the distance between first and second place is 100 meters or less – it’s not like you have to run twice as far. In tech, if you consistently go two, three, four percent further than most of the people you spend time with, over the course of two, five, ten years, you’ll find you know way more about programming and way more about solving business problems than your peers.”

Peter Bell

Head of Online Instruction, Flatiron School
& Veteran Technologist



Chapter 1

What Makes a No-Brainer Tech Hire?

Before setting out to get a job in tech, it's important to note the difference between having technical skills and actually being ready to contribute on a tech team. Knowing how to code means you know how to write a program; *being a software engineer* at a tech company, on the other hand, means that in addition to having your coding skills down, you know how to communicate, collaborate with others, effectively learn new skills, and become part of the technical community.

Especially as you start your career in tech, it's those skills – more than your technical chops – that make you truly employable. Here at Flatiron School, we've seen students who exhibit a ton of passion, positivity, and a hunger to learn earn job offers over students who mastered the technical curriculum faster.

To truly be a no-brainer tech hire, there are **three big things to learn that go beyond mastering code:**

1. **Learn to communicate across technical boundaries:**
These skills are especially important when you're working on a team of developers or need to present your work to non-technical people within your company. To build these skills, we require Flatiron students to maintain active

technical blogs. Blogging is a way to show companies that you're adept at teaching yourself, and that you can show your thought process and communicate technical ideas clearly. Presenting at meetups is another great way to improve your communication skills while contributing to the tech community.

2. **Learn to work as part of a team:** Sure, programming involves some solitary time in front of the computer, but as a software engineer, you'll spend *plenty* of time collaborating with other engineers. You can take immediate steps to get experience in this department: Go to meetups, find other aspiring developers, and start building things together.
3. **Learn how to learn:** When students learn a programming language at Flatiron School, our aim isn't just for them to learn that specific language – it's to teach them how to think, how to break problems down and abstract ideas. These skills are assets as they continue to learn new languages and concepts on the job. So as you learn, be inquisitive. Ask questions and work on increasingly complex applications. Have the drive to go deeper into a concept before moving on, and don't be afraid of concepts you don't know. Use Google, lean on your peers, utilize resources you find online and people you meet at meetups to keep expanding your knowledge. Teach yourself how to do something you can't currently do – there's no better way to become a hireable software engineer.

These aren't easy skills to learn, and we know how difficult it can be to stay positive and keep moving when you're in the midst of a job-search. Exhibiting positivity and a passion for tech will not only help you stay motivated – it truly will help you present yourself as the kind of candidate a company wants to work with.

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EIKOS PARTNERS



“A standout characteristic [of successful junior developers] is that they’re willing to explore, willing to investigate – very much the kind of self starter everyone wants on their team. Our junior developers approach work like no problem is too small because they’re willing to dig to find or create the answer. On the personal side of the spectrum, they’re very humble. Successful developers of any level are team players who thrive when working with others. Our company and the industry as whole needs people who can exchange ideas freely with their teams.”

David Lattimore-Gay

Senior Partner & Chief Technology Officer,
Eikos Partners



Chapter 2

Your Support Network: How Flatiron School Shapes Your Job Search

Conducting an effective job search is tough – especially if you’re doing it on your own. At Flatiron School, we ensure students get the support they need from all angles in order to be successful. Here are some of the ways our team helps students throughout the process – including the exact Career Services Commitment practices we follow. We’ll share why they’re so essential for students’ career journeys and what tips you can apply to yours.

Job Search Preparation

It’s important to not go into a job search blind. Put in the time to do your research and read up on best practices. There’s a multitude of resources available online. At Flatiron School, before students complete our technical curriculum, they have access to a full Career Prep curriculum, too, that explains how to run a job search, including everything from networking to following up after an interview. We know what it takes to be successful, and over the past four years, we’ve built curriculum and experiences to guide our students and graduates through that process.

Career Services Commitment

- Complete the careers curriculum track material for the relevant program within 30 days of passing the final verification.

Career Counseling

The job search can be hard if done in isolation. Especially if you're new to the tech world, having a mentor to demystify the processes, help with goal-setting, and hold you accountable can be invaluable. Getting an extra set of eyes on your résumé and other materials to catch things you might miss, whether it's from an expert or friend, can never hurt. At Flatiron School in particular, our Career Counselors are trained to help students get in the head of the hiring manager reviewing their candidacy and tell their story in a way that's compelling – even if their past experience isn't at all in engineering.

Before graduation, Flatiron students get access to career counselors to help them prepare for the job search – including a full review of their résumé and LinkedIn profile, practice technical and non-technical interview sessions, and a one-on-one conversations with a career counselor to discuss goals.

Graduates of programs with job-search support can expect regular check-ins from their designated career counselors.

Career counseling takes a lot of different forms, depending upon who the graduate is, and what they need. It can mean coaching graduates to tap their networks for opportunities, consulting on how best to follow-up after an interview, giving advice on how to start conversations at a meetup, offering tips on how to negotiate an offer, or really providing additional guidance wherever our graduates need it. Career Counselors help bring our Career Prep curriculum to life, working the best practices students learn through reading and exercises into each individual graduates' real-life job search.

In addition to the formalized stuff – help translating the curriculum into actual interactions with employers, structured meetings with their coaches, and guidance on what to do in specific job-search scenarios – sometimes graduates just need a sympathetic ear, and coaches will offer that, too. Job-searching, like learning to code, can be taxing and emotionally draining. Whatever the job-search issue, your career counselor's job is to help. Pro tip: If you're overwhelmed, be sure to give yourself time to process that feeling – the best way forward is to talk through it, whether it's with a mentor, friend, or career coach.

Career Services Commitment

After completing a Career Counseling Qualifying Program, you will be put in touch with a career counselor to assist you with your job search.

Such assistance will include helping you to identify and pursue job opportunities in the software development field. Career Counseling will include, at a minimum, access to:

- A designated career counselor accessible via phone, video chat and email to review and discuss your job search;
- Availability of check-in phone meeting with your career counselor every two weeks at a minimum to discuss your progress;
- At least one review of your résumé and LinkedIn profile;
- At least one mock cultural interview and one mock technical interview with your career counselor (or other Flatiron representative).

Employer Connections

Flatiron School also has a staff of individuals working directly with employers, just to figure out how best to evangelize for our graduates inside companies. While we can never be certain which companies will want to connect with which specific graduates, we've had the opportunity to make hundreds of connections over the years that have ended in jobs. Those connections can take the form of an invitation to a special recruiting event at a company's offices, an opportunity to meet employers during one of our on-campus recruiting events, or a direct introduction for an interview after graduation.

But having an employer connection is only one piece of the puzzle – students have to be ready to put in the work to leverage our extensive employer network. Lucky, they have been more than up for that challenge, using advice and preparation from their career coaches to make inroads in our network and significantly expand their own.

Career Services Commitment

- Opportunities to network with Flatiron employer partners where available and relevant.

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ThoughtWorks®



“All past experiences can be relevant in some way. There are many skills that can be picked up from non-technical experiences that can help make you a great developer. Amongst career changers, we like to hire people who clearly demonstrate a track record of commitment and success in past roles, regardless of how related or unrelated those roles were to software development. We believe that past performance is generally correlated to future success.”

Andy Cipolaro

Technical Recruiter, ThoughtWorks



Chapter 3

Student Success Tactics from our Career Services Commitment

While we have a team set up to coach students through every step of the job search and interview processes, getting a job requires a whole lot of hard work and dedication on the part of the graduate.

So what are students empowered to do to make their job search a success? Below you'll find the exact practices every Flatiron School student agrees to follow in their job search, straight from the Career Services Commitment. Keep in mind: These are practices that you can employ in your own job search, as long as you have the drive.

Be Actively Job Seeking

This one seems somewhat obvious, but it's important to know that you won't get a job if you don't put in the work, if you don't make yourself available for opportunities. Be *actively job-seeking*. At Flatiron, in a nutshell, this means a student is available to go on interviews, responsive to our communications, and making efforts to improve his or her technical skills and network. It requires a lot of time and

dedication, but suffice it to say, if you're making real and reasonable efforts to be job-seeking, we're working tirelessly on the other side to help you launch your career. And if you want a job, these are all things you should be doing whether or not you're a Flatiron student.

Career Services Commitment

To remain eligible for the Job-Offer Guarantee (in connection with a Job-Offer Guarantee Qualifying Program), you must be actively job seeking and meet all of the following job search requirements during the six (6)-month period following completion of the program under the applicable paid Service:

- Be available, if invited, to interview for a minimum of three interviews per week;
- Make contact with at least 8 specific individuals at prospective employers within the software development field each week, record evidence of such contact, and furnish it upon request by Flatiron;
- Submit responses to any code-challenges associated with any job application on-time or within one week of receipt if due date is not specified.

Be Transparent and Communicative

We also expect that students will communicate what they're up to, and respond to our attempts to help. That means, for example, if we e-mail you, you e-mail us back, and if you get a job offer, you'll let us know.

These are good practices even if you're not a Flatiron student. Stay organized; keep track of where you've applied and who you've networked with. If someone offers to help you, be responsive to that. If a recruiter at a company writes to you, be sure to respond as soon as you can.

If Flatiron graduates aren't communicative – i.e., if they disappear altogether and we can't get ahold of them – we'll try at least three times to get back in touch. After that, they'll get a message from us about what they need to do to continue to receive coaching and introductions. If they don't answer that message – and we want them to answer it! – our team will pause on trying to get ahold of them until they communicate back to us.

Career Services Commitment

- Be responsive to communications from your Career Counselor, within three business days (or within reason accounting for unforeseen or extenuating circumstances)

- Complete two mock interviews with your Career Counselor or other Flatiron representative.
- On a weekly basis, update your job-search tracking tool with a written summary of job seeking activities;
- Upon request by Flatiron, provide evidence of attending all scheduled interviews;
- Email your career counselor within one business day, of receipt of any job offer, including the date of the job offer, name and address of the entity extending the offer, and the title and compensation rate of the position being offered.

It is your sole responsibility to keep track of all job search required activities. Flatiron recommends that you keep a written log of your activities, back up all data, and make copies of relevant documentation.

Be Eligible

This one is a bit of a technicality: To get a job, you have to be eligible to work. Likewise, to be eligible for Flatiron's Job Guarantee, our students have to be able to tick that same box. When students go through our admissions process, we make sure to call out that while they can attend Flatiron School and take advantage of our career counseling services no matter their employment status, we can only offer introductions to our network for students who are authorized to work in the US.

Career Services Commitment

- Be 21 years of age or older and legally authorized to work in the United States for at least two (2) years consecutively beginning at the date of your completion of the program;
- Be proficient in both spoken and written English.

Have the Right Expectations

It's important to enter the job search with the right expectations. We offer our students two key pieces of advice before they start their search that anyone seeking to enter tech should hear:

1. **Be open minded about opportunities.** You should look everywhere for opportunities to gain experience – not just at tech giants, which are hyper-competitive and have highly structured interview processes. If you've already looked at companies you've heard of, or have checked all the job boards you can find, start looking in other places: Talk to your network, approach your favorite cafe about building them a website, find a meetup where you can meet a project partner, or identify a startup that needs an extra set of hands creating their MVP. Believe that any opportunity is an opportunity to learn, and a chance to leverage experience into another, even-more-exciting role.

At Flatiron School, we ask our grads three questions when they're considering a potential job:

- Will it give you the opportunity to write code and get more experience?
- Do you like the company culture and people you'll be working with?
- Will you be paid to do it?

If all three answers are yes, this is probably a great first job – even if it's not at the company with the coolest brand or who's using the newest version of the hottest language. If this role gives you a chance to code daily and develop your skills in the workplace, in no time at all, you'll be opening yourself up to the more and more opportunities.

We've seen over and over again at Flatiron School that any paid experience as a developer puts graduates in better position when they're job-seeking the next time: They've worked professionally already, which means they have more leverage in their next search.

2. **Find other ways in.** If you are *dead set* on working for your dream company, be open to finding other ways in. While the majority of our graduates accept full-time roles, they learn that sometimes, in order to be a no-brainer hire for a top tech company, you have to get a foot in the door first – and that may mean accepting an apprenticeship, internship, or contract work. From there, you have a great

opportunity to prove yourself and turn that into a full-time engineering role that may have been out of reach before.

Career Services Commitment

- Be willing to work remotely or in person in the United States, within a reasonable commuting distance from your main work or residence address; and
- Have not received and accepted an offer for any paid full-time job (an average of 35 hours or more per week or two (2) or more part-time jobs aggregating an average of 35 hours or more per week) in the United States as an employee, apprentice, intern or independent contractor: (i) within six months after completion of the relevant program, in any field; or (ii) during your participation in, and prior to your completion of, the relevant program, in the field of software development working directly with the engineering team.

Be a Great Job-Seeker

The reality is that a few short months at a bootcamp can't replace years of experience programming. But that doesn't mean that tech jobs are out of reach for bootcamp grads, or anyone willing to put in the work. From what we've seen here at Flatiron School, our graduates are wholly committed to continuing to learn after the completion of our programs and on the job, and they have some amazing past experiences that

they can leverage into real value for companies. The crucial step in between is to commit to being better than, and doing more than, the competition – and then showing employers that passion and value. There are three ways we ask our students to do that:

1. **Blog:** Have an active technical blog. This shows companies that you're adept at teaching yourself, and that you can show your thought process while communicating about technical topics.
2. **Build:** While a lucky few grads will get jobs immediately after (or even before) graduating, the majority have to work hard at the job search for a few months. But that shouldn't mean you're spending every waking moment slinging résumés. A good percentage of your time should be spent building things: Create side projects, develop your skills, solve real problems. Go to meetups to find other aspiring developers to collaborate with and develop some stories for yourself about the process that you'll be able to reference in interviews. Learning doesn't stop when a course ends; our most successful grads are the ones who jump *right back* into building after graduation.
3. **Present:** Beyond attending meetups, present at them – it'll show employers that you're curious, committed to the craft of coding, and invested in the technical community. It's also a great way to demonstrate that you can communicate, learn fast, and make connections within the tech world.

Without years of experience under your belt, you have to prove your worth through your candidacy. It's hard work, but it's also rewarding, and will make you a better job-seeker and candidate overall.

Career Services Commitment

- Post at least 5 GitHub commits per week;
- Post at least 1 technical blog post per week on a public URL that can be verified by Flatiron.

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“Flatiron School grads already stand out as well rounded, sociable, and generally impressive people with a solid technical foundation. For me, an additional factor that sets one junior developer apart from the others is having examples of work that demonstrate some depth. A real-world project that is actually being used by someone, even if that someone is only the developer, is something that I rarely see, but when I do I know that the developer had to think through real problems and come up with real, workable solutions.”

Mike Nicholaides
CTO, PromptWorks



Chapter 4

Making the Most of Your Interview (Even If You Bomb It)

Even if the hiring manager is sporting jeans and a t-shirt, interviewing at a tech company can be nerve-wracking – whether you’re a coding school grad seeking your first programming job or an old pro changing companies. Luckily, we’ve learned a thing or two about how to put your best foot forward in interviews.

In addition to the personalized strategies worked out by our Career Counselors, we teach students three steps you can take during the interview process that show a hiring manager you’re a no-brainer tech hire:

1. **Put yourself in the hiring manager’s shoes.** No matter the type of job you’re applying for, remember that, for the hiring manager, the interview is a chance to learn three things about you:
 - a. **Will you perform well in this job?** I.e., do you have the skills to thrive in the role, or at least execute the role to a reasonable degree of competence? Will you be able to start contributing from day one and continue learning on the job?
 - b. **Will you work well with the team?** Do you

collaborate well? Can you fit in seamlessly to the workflows of the existing team and get along with the team members (*and* with the hiring manager)?

- c. **Do you have the passion and smarts to keep learning on the job?** While a few months in an immersive coding program can give you the skills to land a software engineering job, programming is something you spend your whole life learning. Do you have the dedication and capacity to continue learning the craft?

For aspiring software engineers, these questions go well beyond testing your programming knowhow. They show the employer what it would be like to actually have you on their team. Be ready to communicate, collaborate, and show curiosity.

- 2. **Use the interview as a chance to learn something.** In an interview, you'll often be in a room with a person in your field who has more experience than you – it's a valuable opportunity to learn something. Consider this scenario: You're working through a technical interview and you hit a roadblock – there's something you don't know – and you realize you may not move on in the interview process. Should you panic and give up? Far from it. Embrace the challenge. Use this as a chance to learn something. Be engaged, ask the interviewer lots of thoughtful questions, and take advantage of this valuable time with someone who knows more than you. Even if you don't know exactly how to proceed, asking questions can show the interviewer your thought process and how you

approach problems.

If something truly stumps you during an interview, you can take additional steps to impress the interviewer: Go home, study up on the subject or concept, figure out how to do it, and write a blog post on it that offers tips to others on the subject. Again, even if you don't know something or don't have the answer, you can use the opportunity to learn something – and then *demonstrate* that you've learned something. You never know where that will lead.

3. **Find a way to contribute something.** Let's say you ace the interview... but so does everyone else (there's a lot of great talent entering and already in the workforce!). How do you stand out from the rest? Being ready – and hungry – to contribute to the company is one of the most important qualities companies look for in potential employees. It's what will make you successful in the job, and it's a very difficult quality for hiring managers to assess in an interview. If you can demonstrate your drive *before even working for the company*, you'll be miles ahead of other candidates.

So how can you show that during an interview? A surefire tactic we share with our students: When it comes time to ask questions (see tip #2), ask the interviewer what the company's biggest challenge is when using their preferred framework or database. Then research solutions. Write a blog post about it; create a cool visualization of a problem you solved, deploy it, and send it to them; write and send

a thank you note for your front-end interview styled in object-oriented CSS. This is another chance to show your thought process and creativity.

The main takeaway here? *You don't stop interviewing when you walk out of the room.* If you really want to stand out from other applicants, find a way to make a contribution after the fact.

Now, these three steps are certainly challenging – but you should expect that interviewing will be a challenge. And even if your efforts don't lead to a job at the first company that interviews you, it's still valuable experience: You've learned something, you've contributed something, you've built something – and you've put yourself in a position to do even better in your next interview.

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FAST COMPANY

“Get out there! Shake hands, ask questions, and be awesome at every tech-related function you go to. The squeaky wheel gets the job.”

Hannah Nordgrend

Flatiron Alumna & Front-End Developer, Fast Company



“Stay in touch with your classmates. Those that have been hired might be at companies that need to keep hiring. Your network is your biggest asset in job hunting.”

Jeremy Sklarsky

Flatiron Alumnus & Software Engineer II, MediaMath



“I was able to network with a lot of amazing, talented people through Flatiron School who made me realize that I wanted to work in tech. It helped me look at this industry in a completely new way. I thought, ‘These are the people I want to work with.’ Suddenly, I had ideas for apps and businesses I was inspired to pursue.”

Basar Akyelli

Flatiron Alumnus & Technical Program Manager, Google



Chapter 5

Git Creative: Flatiron Alums Share Four Unique Ways to Get the Job

With over a thousand students going through our programs and starting new careers, we've had a front-row seat to how our alumni take our Career Services Commitment to heart and bring its practices to life. Our students consistently go above and beyond, putting the curiosity and outside-the-box thinking they demonstrated *during* our programs into their job searches.

We're thrilled to share how four Flatiron alumni launched their new careers using a little creativity and a lot of dedication – and how you can use their methods in your own job search.



1. **Git in there.** Lucas Moore graduated from our Online Web Developer Program in Denver – a city with a glut of bootcamp grads seeking jobs as junior developers. But Lucas employed a creative tactic to stand out to companies.

“The first thing I did for each company I was interested in was check out their GitHub account,” Lucas says. “I examined all their repos to see what technologies they use. The information is out there – this meant in interviews, I could ask highly specific questions about their tech stack instead of inquiring generally. Getting

specific like this shows intense interest and allows you to use your limited time in an interview more wisely.”

After taking the time to understand what he was looking at, Lucas spent a few hours writing tests that worked, published an updated version of the gem, and opened a well-articulated pull request. That was at around 3pm. As it turned out, that night Lucas was heading to a networking event hosted at Ibotta headquarters.

“I strolled into the party at 5:30 and struck up a conversation with a few employees – one of whom is now my boss. I mentioned that I had just submitted a pull request to one of their repos. He said, ‘*That was you?!*’ It seemed the whole dev team knew about it. I spent the night chatting with the team and, before I left, I asked them to introduce me to the internal recruiter (whose name I had already looked up). I got her card and promised her I’d be applying to an open position that night.”

In the end, Ibotta carved out a position (Platform Engineer) on their dev team for Lucas: “They said they weren’t actively hiring for that team, but they made space for me because I had so strongly demonstrated one of their company values: **boldness**.”



2. **Research a company's technology – then build something.** NYC iOS Developer Program alumnus Kavan Brandon had applied for a position at KeyMe, a robotics company that helps people copy keys and solve lockouts through key-copying kiosks and a mobile app. The kiosks and app utilize cutting-edge computer vision and machine learning technology to decipher what kind of key its customers need duplicated.

As Kavan says, “The concept of computer vision sounded incredibly interesting but seemed foreign to me as a beginning developer.” He had, however, interacted with applications using computer vision technology for analyzing roads and image enhancement, which provided a valuable foundation for learning more. “I decided to follow a few computer vision tutorials I found online and create a basic facial recognition app that detected the faces of my friends in a group photo I had on my phone.”

Kavan then gave a short demo of his app to his interviewers at KeyMe and explained some of the new topics he learned during the development process. “Creating an application using technology I'd potentially be interacting with on the job displayed my capability to learn and ability to pick up concepts I was unfamiliar with. It was also fun learning something new!”

It *also* got Kavan the job – he now works as an iOS Developer for KeyMe.



3. **Go beyond technical on your blog.** As we mentioned earlier, an important requirement in Flatiron's Career Services Commitment is to maintain a presence on your technical blog. But there are also more creative ways to utilize your blog to impress a company. Take Kristin Donovan, an alumna of our NYC Web Developer Program, who sought a job at Rochester's creative agency Makeway.

"The last stage of the interview process was a freelance project and by the end of the project, I *knew* that I would really enjoy the job," says Kristin. "They let me know that they were ready to make a decision and that it was down to me and two other people." But Makeway had a concern: Would Kristin be happy relocating from NYC to Rochester?

"The idea of relocating to a new city is pretty scary for a lot of people," she said. "On top of that, there's a pretty huge difference between NYC and Rochester in terms of lifestyles." But Kristin knew she was serious about the move – she just had to convince Makeway of that. After a quick brainstorming session with her Flatiron career counselor, Kristin realized she had a powerful tool at her disposal: her blog.

"I did some research into the Rochester area and wrote a blog post about some of things I was excited to do/try/experience once I moved up there," Kristin says. "I wrote the owner a quick follow up email that addressed the concern about me being unhappy relocating and linked to

my blog post. They called and offered me the job about two hours later.”

Kristin thinks that the blog post showed Makeway that she wasn’t just excited about the job, but the whole idea of living in Rochester, noting that Makeway puts “a huge focus on work/life balance.” She reflects, “Before the blog post, all of our interactions had been in interview settings, and, therefore, more formal. This was my opportunity to show a little bit more of my personality and the things I’m super passionate about outside of work. I think it helped to let them get to know me as a person, not just an employee.”

Kristin is now Lead Developer at Makeway.



4. **Always Be Revising.** NYC Web Developer Program alumna Anna Rasshivkina undertook a code challenge when applying for (and ultimately accepting) an internship at Razorfish: “Choose two website elements (like a chart, a navigation menu, a user widget with numbers of likes and comments, etc.) from a PDF and create them from scratch. They didn’t give any guidelines on how to build them, but I decided to use React, since I’d recently done a tutorial on it, and I wanted an opportunity to practice,” Anna says.

As her internship came to an end, a front-end developer role opened up at Razorfish for a rebuild of the Hyundai Canada website using React. According to Anna, “I’d learned a lot about styling during my internship, and I

knew I could now take better advantage of the React framework.” So she took what she had learned and went back to refactor and improve upon her original code challenge. They clearly liked what Anna built because they hired her for the job. So why not just build something from scratch? As Anna says, “I think revising past work is one of the best things you can do to impress an employer – it's more efficient than starting something from scratch, it shows off your skills, and maybe most importantly, it shows your commitment to growth and your ability to learn.”

So, if you're an aspiring software engineer beginning to approach the job search, just remember: The hard work isn't over; there are challenges ahead. But if you stay positive and keep up the creative thinking you put into your studies, there's an amazing tech career in store for you.



FlatironSchool.com