

JOB SEARCHING TIPS DURING THE CORONAVIRUS

1. TAKE THIS TIME TO ANALYZE THE JOB MARKET

Take advantage of the slowing job market by getting clarity about where you want to work and the type of role you are seeking. Start by creating a list of your target companies, job titles and anything in particular you are seeking. However, you'll still want to apply to all postings that hit on some or all of your criteria. Be prepared to think about your role more broadly and the possibility of moving into an adjacent position that would utilize your skills. Given our current environment there is a lot of shifting going on right now. Beyond job opportunities, you'll also want to focus on which companies you would like to work for and who you can possibly reach out to at those companies. Be open minded to the possibilities.

2. REFLECT ON WHAT MAKES YOU A UNIQUE CANDIDATE

Reflect on your unique experiences and skills and plan how to articulate them to employers. In the wake of Covid-19 perhaps you can focus on how you would function well independently and as a team member in a remote environment. Highlight your problem-solving skills or your computer skills that would be valuable in our current environment and beyond. Don't be afraid to "sell yourself", as no one else will!

3. BE OPTIMISTIC

You may feel the world is full of doom and gloom right now, but you should find it within yourself to be optimistic and put your best and brightest foot forward each day. Employers love to hire upbeat and positive people for their work environments. No one wants to work alongside a "Debbie Downer"! Be sure to smile during your in-person, phone or web interview. Yes, you can tell when someone is smiling and get a feel for their energy over the phone. This may seem simple or perhaps insignificant, but it can make the difference between landing a position or not, especially during these times.

4. ADD REMOTE FRIENDLY LANGUAGE TO YOUR RESUME

Since many employees are now working from home and many hiring managers expect employees, they bring on will as well, it's important to show you can work from home. Mention specific video technologies or document-sharing tools you've utilized. Also include how well you manage your time or written communications.

5. DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Research each organization and then use that information to tailor your resume and cover letter to that company and position. This shows the potential employer how well you match their needs, thus increasing your chances for an interview. Don't hesitate to reach out to anyone you may know who currently works at that company and ask questions or perhaps ask for an introduction. Which leads me into our next and perhaps most important tip.

6. NETWORK. NETWORK. NETWORK

Most people find jobs through networking, so spend time making new connections and reviving old ones. Be active on networking websites such as LinkedIn or any other industry related sites, as well as participate in industry related organizations. Make sure your professional profiles are updated and be active on those sites by sharing and commenting. You'll also want to get registered with any staffing companies that cater to your industries of interest. Some of them have exclusive relationships and their jobs may never be advertised anywhere else. Make yourself as visible and valuable as possible. Don't hesitate to reach out to your connections for information on companies or positions you are interested in pursuing. Make sure you also demonstrate a thoughtful attitude. Rather than asking them to help you, ask if there is anything you can assist them with. This will allow you to connect with your contact on a human level and gives you the opportunity to highlight your skills they can tap into.

7. BE PATIENT, BUT FOLLOW UP

You should anticipate delays in the hiring process due to employers working remotely, as in-person interviews may be on hold or conducted virtually. You should be open to and prepared for alternative interviews such as telephone or on-line video interviews through platforms such as Zoom. After your interview periodically express to employers that you are excited to move forward in the hiring process. Follow up politely and ask about updates and next steps. Again, be patient, as the people the hiring manager needs to involve in the hiring process may not be as accessible during these times as well.

8. DON'T GIVE UP

Your current job is to find a job. Apply regularly and consistently. Research and network regularly and consistently. If you continue searching you will have an advantage over those who have delayed looking or decided to stop. I know this can wear you down and may seem like a grind at times, but remember number 3 and be optimistic! However, you do need to take care of yourself during your job search so you can be optimistic and not give up, so schedule time to unwind and recharge. Find time for things that bring you joy and comfort. Life is all about balance.