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How to find a job during COVID



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With over 16 months into **COVID** and no end in sight, more and more people are being laid off with most companies currently in a hiring freeze until the situation is further evaluated. Talent managers across sectors are hiring only on a need be bases. Even in the IT sector, we have seen a significant increase in contract staffing this year with permeant positions put on the back burner for the time being.

As new variant of the virus pop-up regularly, there is an uncertainty that looms over the economy. An optimistic assumption would be that we will see a lot more positions in the market possibly at the beginning of next year. But can you wait for a job that long? If your answer is NO, then keep reading, as I am sharing a few smart tips that can help you land a job quicker than your expectation:

Step 1: Research the Market:

Simple steps taken to research the market can give you a lot of insight into the current situation. All this negative talk about people losing jobs, layoffs, companies shutting doors, companies going out of business is true, but we also know that there are companies that are hiring as we speak. Can you name one company, that is hiring right now? Guess who, **Amazon is hiring!** we all know that they are hiring and they are hiring aggressively for a lot of functions. Remember Amazon's business is booming because we all are sitting at home and ordering stuff every day. Recently in the **Economic Times** there was an article about how big IT giants like **TCS**, **Wipro** and **Infosys** are looking for people to join their teams in various locations. These companies are hiring because their businesses have started picking up again.

So, who else is hiring right now? If you just go on google and type in search "100 companies hiring right now", you will get a list of 100 global giants that are hiring as we speak. The pool of jobs maybe small, but there are jobs out there and people are getting hired. One way to find which companies to target is to

think about who's business is growing during these times. A lot of pharma companies, food companies – target FMCG, food delivery companies, are growing and are looking for talent across the board.

Make a list of who you would like to target, and where you would like to work, and then visit their websites. Stay up to date with what's out there for you by utilizing technology, which has dramatically changed the way employers look for jobs and potential employees. Update your **LinkedIn profile** to network with recruiters. Use job-search websites to find more positions that you might not see in your immediate geographical area. Of course, doing so requires optimizing your application for online systems and making your resume computer-readable.

Step 2: *Network and talk to people. Listen:*

This is a great time to network and build new connections, why is that, because people are free to speak, in fact people are looking for that little bit of mental stimulation to speak and connect with others. It has been boring to be confined in your homes, and how long can you stare at your computer. So, connect with people on LinkedIn or other social networking sites, ask them for time to speak. Make a sincere attempt to connect with them, be a good listener and learn more about them. Not every relationship needs to bring you money, it could help you make friends for life. Networking is not only about trading information, but also serves as an avenue to create long-term relationships with mutual benefits.

Overtime, networking will help you develop and improve your skills set, stay on top of the latest trends in your industry, keep a pulse on the job market, zoom call prospective mentors, partners, and clients, and gain access to the necessary resources that will foster your career development. Making friends and winning people over is a strong skill that can help you find new job opportunities.

All the jobs that I have worked in have been through my network. The reason is because people want to hire people who they trust or know about. The process takes less time and you don't even have to waste time on background checks and other formalities.

Step 3: *Make your resume current:*

Use this time to update your resume, add some new skills that will help you stand out in the crowd. Do research and learn what skills you can learn that might make you more desirable to potential employers. As we start taking control of the COVID situation, slowly but surely the market will start opening up and new job opportunities will be available in the market. Even if you are satisfied with your current gig, it is always a good idea to keep your resume up-to-date at all times.

Unfortunately, no matter how much you love your job or how stellar you are at it, situations do arise where times might get hard. And if that does happen, it is always good to be prepared. If you keep your resume up-to-date, this would be least of your problems and will come handy while exploring new possible opportunities and applying to them. Please do yourself a favour and regularly update your job search credentials even when you are not looking for a job. By keeping your resume current, you just have to customize your cover letter to target it to the positions you are applying for. Also, by keeping your resume current, small changes will not take too much time.

Besides resumes can be used as a great benchmark to understand where are you currently with your skills and what would you need to acquire to reach a completely new destination. Having a stellar resume will help you to maintain confidence. They can remind you of your brand (your strengths and

competitive differentiators), your skills and your achievements.

Step 4: ***Apply for only relevant jobs***

A long time ago, I was in a job where I was quite happy and content, but still decided to venture into the job market to see what was available. Just to see my market value, so, I brushed up my resume and started to apply for jobs in the area. Within the next few days, I started getting calls, for one of the positions, they wanted me to come in for an in-person interview and asked me to dress-up sharp. So, I got ready, wore my best suite from Brook Brothers and took the Amtrak into Boston nice and early. It was a chilly January morning and it had snowed the past weekend. I got to the interview, and met with the interview coordinator, who told me that Amy, who was their best sales recruit was going to interview me. I was greeted by Amy, and she asked me to jump into her car and we headed to a local community around Boston.

I got the shock of my life, as we were going from Door-to-Door in the area trying to sell Subway discount coupons. I did not realize that it was a field job. When I reached back home and looked at the job posting again, I realized that I had made a huge mistake, the job description clearly stated that they were looking for someone with 3-5 years of experience in field sales.

The moral of the story, please read the job opportunity before uploading your resume. Don't feel satisfied if you hit apply and submit your resume to 500 jobs in a day. The jobs may not be relevant to your skill set. When we post a job on our portal we get so many applications that are not relevant to the position. Recently, we had posted a job for a professional with experience in bread making for one of the biggest companies in India and we received applications from candidates who have experience in Law and have been practicing law for many years. When I got on the phone and asked them if they had read the JD, of course, their response was a clear no. Please do yourself a favour and do not apply for any and every job, you are just wasting everyone's time.

Step 5: ***Stay Feasible and keep your options open***

Since the job opportunities are scarce and the talent pool to select from is massive, this is pretty much an employer's market, which means the talent managers can be choosy who they would want to extend the offer too. This also means that they would have an upper hand during salary negotiation. In an Employer's Market, the number of active job seekers is proportionally higher than the number of job openings, as compared to a normal time. So, if 5-10 people usually apply for a given job, in an Employer's Market 20-30 people may be applying for the same job. *As a job seeker, that means your odds of getting hired are lower than normal for a given job. But fear not.* "The job search right now requires thinking outside of the box and also being open to an opportunity that isn't your dream job. Instead of thinking about the next traditional step up the career path for someone in your area of job, you should consider a horizontal career move which actually might be more beneficial. Don't assume during your search that whatever job you take up right now would be for the long haul, as mentioned previously temporary or contract positions can be an invaluable way to build your skillset and gain experience in different areas, and these roles could end up becoming permanent later on.

A lot of people are working from home now and will be for the foreseeable future. This includes HR professionals and hiring managers who are now facing a deluge of applications with many people on the job market. In the office, decisions on who to interview and hire are made quicker but with video calls and emails those choices may take longer.

It's important to be patient if you're asking for confirmation of your application having arrived or if you are looking for feedback on an interview you've had recently. As processes are slower, the wait can be agonising, but there's a

chance that a long wait will be worth it, and you get the news you want.

My advice is, unless you are desperate to join a new job, this is a time to just wait it out. I feel that you can find a job, but it might not be on your terms.






Research the market, upgrade your skills, and be flexible, keep your options open. Take something only if it is a really attractive opportunity.



Stay Positive and keep applying!

Good Luck! Stay Safe!


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