Job Search Success Guide
Special Edition: Job Searching During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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❖ COVID-19 Job Search and Health and Wellness Articles

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Job Search Preparation:

Preparation is key to successfully searching and finding a job! This guidebook will provide information related to some of the above areas. A variety of guides, including Résumé Writing and Job Interviewing are available at the PBSC Career Center or you may review Student Resources on the Career’s Centers website and in Handshake. Your Career Center, college and local libraries also house books on a variety of job search and career success subject areas.

- Create an effective résumé and cover letter that will get you job interviews
- Prepare to conduct an effective job interview, including researching organization and industry
- Attend Career Center in-person or virtual workshops to help you prepare your résumé and conduct a job interview (see Handshake for workshop schedule)
- Conduct a mock job interview with a Career Advisor (call to set an appointment)
- Learn how to use virtual technology like Skype and Zoom to conduct virtual interview interviews
  - How to Look Good in a Skype Interviews
  - 14 Tips for Skype Interview Success
  - How to Ace your Video Interview
- Develop a list of prospective employers and list of networking contacts
- Know and develop a list of your transferrable skills that can transfer to a variety of jobs (see Transferrable Skills section below)
- Focus on jobs you are interested in and are qualified to do
- Set aside time each week to job search
- Ensure that your voicemail has a professional message
- Read articles and other resources about effective job searching
- Ensure you have a professional online presence, and create a professional LinkedIn profile (See Social Networking section)
- Take care of your emotional, physical and mental health during your job search
  - 10 Ways to Practice Self Care During the Job Search
Networking your Way to a Job:

A great way to find a job is through networking. Networking simply means telling people in your network of friends, family, friends, professors and professional connections that you are looking for a job. The idea is that they have a circle of contacts and they can help you get the word out that you are looking for a job. Employers sometimes prefer receiving job candidate referrals from people they know.

There are a variety of ways to network, including conducting informational interviews, joining professional associations/organizations, volunteering for civic organizations, using social networking websites (i.e. LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.). Tips and information on these networking methods follows:

Informational Interviewing:

Informational Interviewing involves contacting people in your field and/or industry of interest and asking them questions about their career and/or industry that they work in. It can be used to help you explore and learn about occupations to make informed decisions about your career and college choices.

Although, it would not be your primary expectation to land a job opportunity, informational interviewing may help you learn about job opportunities. At the end of the interview, you can ask for advice on how to find a job in your field and let the person know you are looking. Take a résumé with you in case you can provide it to the person. You may wish to ask for their feedback on your résumé. Remember even if there are no job opportunities available now, you now know someone you can talk to should one become available.

There are a variety of resources you may use to generate potential contacts for informational interviews, including company websites, professional associations, LinkedIn, PBSC’s Career Mentor Network, etc. Tips on how to find and contact PBSC’s Career Mentors for an informational interview, along with sample questions you can ask during the interview, can be found on the Career Center’s website.
Joining Professional Associations/Organizations:

Joining professional associations and/or organizations is a good way to network and stay up-to-date on your skills and industry specific information and training. If you are currently a student, you may want to inquire if they provide a student membership. Sometimes you may be able to join at a reduced membership fee. See if they have a state and local chapter for their organizations as it may be easier to participate in their activities. Members may also have access to membership directories and job boards that can help you find jobs and network. Your active participation in the association/organization will provide an excellent opportunity for you to acquire new skills and knowledge through their learning opportunities and resources (i.e., conferences, webinars, journals, newsletters, etc.).

The Occupational Outlook Handbook can be utilized to find career information and professional associations affiliated to a variety of occupations (search for your desired occupation and under the “more info” tab to find professional associations which may have career and career and/or industry specific job boards).

Volunteering and Service Learning:

Civic and community organizations can help you contribute to the local community. They are based on interests or groups, such as veterans, minorities, women, environmental protections, etc. You will be with others who have similar interests and participation may provide similar benefits of joining a professional association/organization.

Volunteering or performing service-learning for organizations, associations and/or civic and non-profit organizations can help you develop your network. It will also help you gain skills and abilities that you can highlight on your résumé along with your memberships and/or volunteer activities. Volunteering may also give you a “foot-in-the-door”, which may develop into a paying job.
PBSC has service learning opportunities, and you may also find them on Handshake. To find volunteer opportunities, google organizations or causes of interest and utilize websites listed on the attached Volunteer Opportunities handout.

**Social Networking:**

As a potential job candidate, employers may find you on social networks. Does your online presence represent you well? Perform a Google search on your name to see how your online presence would appear to employers. If it does not represent you well, clean up your social media sites by making posts private or deleting them. Practice good privacy protocols for your social media posts and comments.

LinkedIn ([www.LinkedIn.com](http://www.LinkedIn.com)) is a great social networking platform for professionals. LinkedIn has an alumni finder tool that allows students to locate and connect with alumni employed in industries and companies of interest. There is also a job search feature that will enable you to find job opportunities and review company information. Recruiters use LinkedIn to find potential job candidates.

Create a complete professional profile, add a professional photo, and use specific job and industry keywords throughout to enable recruiters to find you using keywords. If your profile is complete, it will show up higher in search results. Here is a LinkedIn Checklist to help you create your profile. Also, review videos and articles on LinkedIn’s website to help you learn how to network and job search. https://university.linkedin.com/linkedin-for-students

There are many social networking platforms (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.). To help you learn more about using social networking for job searching, see the following helpful articles:

- Guide to Social Media and Job Search
- Self-Study Guide to 10 Tips for Using Social Media in Your Job Search
- Social Media Do’s and Don’ts During a Job Search
Broadcast Marketing:

“Broadcast marketing” means conducting a job search campaign by mailing and/or emailing your cover letter and résumé to employers you are interested in. The response rate is not as successful as some of the other job search methods. To be more successful in getting a response, do some detective work to see if you can find the manager who would do the hiring in your area of interest. This method may work better than sending it to the Human Resources Department.

To get the name of the person in charge of hiring, you may review their website and/or call the company and ask the receptionist:

“Good morning, my name is ______. I would like to send some information to the manager of your _____ department. May I have the manager’s name, so I could address to their attention? How do you spell that? What is his/her job title? What is the mailing address? Thank you very much for your help.

A follow-up telephone call can be made to the person you sent it to about five business days after you send your letter and résumé. Here is an example of what you may want to say:

“Good morning, Mr./Miss ______. My name is ______. I sent a letter to you along with a résumé last week regarding possible employment opportunities in your department. I am following up to see if you have received it (wait for an answer). I was hoping to schedule an appointment for an interview. Do you have some time to see me?

In your letter of inquiry, indicate the type of job you are seeking or that you would like to find out about career opportunities in the _____ department.

Cold Calling:

Cold calling is similar to broadcasting, but you are contacting employers by telephone to find out if they have any job opportunities. You may hear “We don’t have any openings right now.” It may be hard to get past the receptionist and human resources may direct you to their job board.
Just like with broadcasting, you will be more successful if you can find and speak to the person who hires for the department you are interested in. Then, you may call that person directly by phone. Keep in mind that some managers may not appreciate you cold calling by stopping by the organization or company without an appointment. If you decide that you will cold call in person, dress as if you were going to a job interview.

Here is an example script you may utilize:

“Hello, my name is ______, I have been studying _____ at Palm Beach State College and have experience in ______ (mention a few of your relevant and/or transferrable skills sets that you could utilize in the type of job you are seeking). I am interested in working for your department and was hoping to schedule an appointment to see you to discuss possible job opportunities in your organization? Would you be able to meet with me?”

You may get a common response like “We don’t have any openings right now.”
You may want to respond with

“Although you don’t have any openings, may I still meet with you to discuss my qualifications and learn more about your organization and department should a job opportunity arise.”

If you are not successful, with getting an interview, offer to send your résumé and thank them for their time.

**Private Staffing/Employment Agencies:**

Private staffing and/or employment agencies can help you find permanent and/or temporary employment. Temporary jobs are a great way to give you exposure to different industries while allowing you to enhance or gain new skills and experience. It also helps you stay actively employed while you are searching or a permanent position. In addition, these opportunities provide new networking opportunities and supervisors you may use as references.
Some agencies or headhunters specialize in placing job seekers in a specific career field (i.e., clerical, accounting, nursing, etc.). The employer usually pays the fees for their services, but read any contracts before you sign them. Also, understand if you receive any benefits for while you are employed by the employer, staffing or employment agency.

You may be a direct hire by the employer or some of these agencies hire you as their temporary employee and place you in a job with an employer (lease you out to employer). This temporary position may be a “foot-in-the-door” and could lead to a permanent position.

Career Source, Palm Beach County is a non-profit organization that provides free employment services to job seekers in the area. They offer a local job board, career advising, employment training, labor market information, veteran programs, displaced workers assistance and much more. We highly recommend that you register and visit their local office to learn more about their resources and services.

To find staffing or employment agencies, google your area of interest and “staffing agencies” and/or you may wish to use LinkedIn to find recruiters for your career field. Here are a few agencies with local opportunities:

Robert Half
David Wood Personnel
Pride Staff
Aerotek

Career/Job Fairs:

Career fairs bring large groups of employers together in on location either in person or virtually. Some companies may offer a job fairs that are specific to their organization or career field (i.e., nursing, information technology, government jobs, teaching careers, etc.). It is a great opportunity for you to network and meet hiring representatives to learn about career opportunities as well the organization or company.
Review the Virtual Career Fair and PBSC Career Fair videos and get tips from staff, students and employers.

Career/Job Fair Success Tips:

- Do your homework before you go as employers who are attending will be listed before you attend the event (know who will be there and what positions are they hiring for)
- Research the organization and review posted jobs on their website
- Prepare a résumé and have it critiqued by a Career Advisor before you attend
- Conduct a mock interview with a Career Advisor before you attend
- **Dress** in interview attire as you don’t get a second chance to make a great first impression
- Take a professional portfolio to put your résumés and information you pick up from employers
- Bring résumés and offer them to employers (they may not accept them and direct you to apply online)
- Introduce yourself to recruiters and tell them a little about your education, skills and experience and ask about job opportunities in your field of interest
- Ask for their business card so you can follow-up with individuals that you meet. Try to add these individuals to your LinkedIn connections if they are using LinkedIn.
- Send a cover letter and thank them for speaking with you at the Career/Job Fair and ask for an interview.

**Researching Organizations and Industries:**

Researching is an important step in helping you prepare for a variety of job search activities, including attending job fairs and/or job interviews. You may be asked what you know about the organization and why you want to work for them. Because you did your research, you will be able to answer their question in this regard.

One of the best ways to research an organization is by reviewing their website and looking at their “about us” page, if they have one. Also, reviewing any recent news articles can be helpful too.
Tips on some of information you may want to research:

- What they do (area of specialty, services, products, etc.)
- Major accomplishments and awards they have received (what they are recognized for doing the best)
- Major competitors
- Mission statement
- Annual Report (sometimes this is posted online)
- Who their customers and/or clients are
- Their future plans (new locations, products and services, etc.)
- When established
- Subsidiaries

**Transferrable Skills:**

Transferrable skills are skills that you have that you have acquired in the classroom, on the job or even while you handled the COVID-19 pandemic. These transferrable skills could be utilized in any job you are apply for. For example, if the job requires you to organize a filing system, what are things that you have done that required you to organize something. Or, did you learn and acquire new technology skills like using SKYPE or Zoom during COVID-19? Providing examples of your transferrable skills on a résumé and in your job interview, will help you show employers that you have the skills, abilities and knowledge to do the job.

Be sure to analyze the job posting to identify the types of skills they are looking for and match your skills. You may also utilize the O’Net to help you identify the skills, abilities, tools and other criteria employers will be looking for.

The [National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)](https://www.naceweb.org) has identified the top transferrable skills that employers are looking for (see list below). Utilize this [Transferrable Skills Worksheet](https://www.fsu.edu) from Florida State University to provide examples of your transferrable skills in each area.

1. Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
2. Oral/Written Communication Skills
3. Teamwork/Collaboration
4. Digital Technology
5. Leadership
6. Professionalism/Work Ethic
7. Career Management
8. Global/Intercultural Fluency

To learn about hard skills and soft skills and how they play an important part in your job search process, review this article 10 Best Skills to include in a Résumé.

**Job Boards and COVID-19 Career Assistance:**

Check the job boards at companies that you would like to work for as many may not post on other job boards. Here is a small sample of resources you may find helpful:

**PBSC Career Center** – resources for job searching, Handshake job board, career mentors, job interviewing résumé writing, résumé samples, etc.
[www.palmbeachstate.edu/career](http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/career)

**Career Source, Palm Beach County** – jobs, reemployment assistance, training opportunities, and more job seeker COVID-19 career assistance
[www.careersourcepbc.com](http://www.careersourcepbc.com)

**Indeed.com** - general job board [www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com)

**Employflorida.com**- jobs throughout Florida [www.employflorida.com](http://www.employflorida.com)

**Unemployment and Health Insurance Resources:**

**Department of Economic Opportunity (Florida)** - file for unemployment assistance and find COVID-19 employment resources and information. You may also find useful job search sites here. [www.floridajobs.org/](http://www.floridajobs.org/)

**U.S. Dept. of Labor** - COVID-19 Employment and Reemployment Resources
[www.dolcoronavirus.com](http://www.dolcoronavirus.com)

**Healthcare.gov** - Marketplace Health Insurance Plans
[www.healthcare.gov/choose-a-plan/plan-types](http://www.healthcare.gov/choose-a-plan/plan-types)
COVID-19 Job Search and Health and Wellness Articles and Videos:

To learn about your job searching during the economic slowdown because of COVID-19, read the articles below for ideas on how to cope and navigate the job marketing during these challenging times. Here are a few samples of articles you can find. If you are on LinkedIn, your daily feed may also provide some interesting articles, especially if you follow #jobsearchcoronavirus, #findjobs #nowhiring, etc.

What Does the Coronavirus Pandemic Mean for Your Job Search?

The 25+ Best Sites for Finding Remote Work Online In 2020

COVID-19 and Your Job: Tips and Actions to Consider

COVID-19 Stress and Coping

How will Coronavirus Affect your Job Search in 2020

What is going to Happen to the Class of 2020

Working Remotely During COVID-19: Your Mental Health and Well Being

At Home Networking Strategies (COVID-19)

Websites to Help You Find Jobs During the Covid-19 Crisis

Job Searching During the COVID-19 Crisis (Video)

5 Things you Must Do to have a Successful Job Interview on Video during the COVID-19 outbreak
The following organizations represent a multitude of industries and activities through local, statewide, national and online communities. Volunteering is a great career networking opportunity!

### YOUTH & EDUCATION
- Achievement Centers for Children & Families
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Palm Beach
- Boys and Girls Club Palm Beach County
- Junior Achievement of the Palm Beaches
- Literacy Coalition of PBC
- School District of Palm Beach County
- Urban League-Teen Advocacy/WPB
- Y.M.C.A.

### HUMAN SERVICES
- Children's Home Society of S. Florida
- Community Partners of S. Florida
- Guardian Ad Litem (Child Advocacy)
- Homesafe Palm Beach County
- Meals on Wheels
- Morserlife Hospice
- The Arc
- The Quantum House

### ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC SAFETY
- Florida State Parks
- Habitat for Humanity Palm Beach County
- Loggerhead Marinelife Center
- Palm Beach County 4-H
- Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation
- Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office
- Palm Beach Zoo
- Peggy Adams Animal Rescue League

### ART AND CULTURE
- Armory Art Center
- Cultural Council for Palm Beach County
- Norton Museum of Art
- Palm Beach County Performing Arts
- Palm Beach Tech
- The Guatemalan-Mayan Center
- The Lord's Place
- YWCA Palm Beach County

### ONLINE & VIRTUAL
- All For Good
- Catchafire
- Do Something
- Just Serve
- Smithsonian Digital Volunteers
- TaprooT Plus
- United Nations
- Volunteer Match
- ZoOniverse

### GENERAL SEARCH ENGINES
- American Red Cross
- Americorps
- Discover the Palm Beaches
- Hospital Volunteer Network
- Salvation Army
- United Way
- Urban League of Palm Beach County
- Volunteer Florida
- Volunteers of the Palm Beaches

Note: Not all volunteer organizations are listed here