

Can I Find Employment During a Pandemic?

Due to implications of the spread of COVID-19, the face of the labor market and job searching has changed drastically in recent weeks. It does not mean, however, that your job search has come to a complete stop. In fact, as some industries have stopped hiring or are taking time to reassess their needs and how to fulfill them, others are busy ramping up their hiring because of the drastic shift of employment needs in the labor market.

Positions employers are immediately hiring for include healthcare workers, cleaning services workers, delivery drivers, grocery stockers and cashiers, and gas station and pharmacy associates. Be aware that this new hiring process will be slower, but it is still active.

For those companies who are not hiring today, remember that they will resume hiring practices in the near future. Therefore, it is important to keep your job search practices up-to-date and active. Whether you are looking for a transitional job to pay the bills right now or are focusing on continuing your job search for a position you truly want down the road, staying productive and positive in your search is key.

Below are some helpful tips for searching for a new job during COVID-19:

- 1). Build Your Network** It is important to continue to network and build relationships with potential employers. This can be done from calling, emailing or researching companies online who you hope to work for, whether now or later when more companies begin hiring again.
- 2). Be a Problem-Solver** While searching, it is also important to keep a helpful attitude. Think about how you can help the employer in their time of need instead of focusing on how they can help you. Highlight your skills to employers; show them how your skills are transferable to the ones they need right now during this pandemic and how you can be a problem-solver for them.
- 3). Become Very Familiar with Applying On-line** Instead of applying for jobs in person, you will now need to focus your search on-line through job search sites such as CareerBuilder or Indeed, in addition to using other forms of social media and applying directly on company websites. Indeed.com has listed positions that are urgently hiring and have added a pandemic notation to their job postings pages.
- 4). Get in Front of the Camera** Almost overnight, interview methods have also changed. Employers are mainly conducting interviews via phone or video. This means you will need to adapt to an interviewing style you may have little or no experience with. Practice your interviewing skills with and without a camera before doing an actual interview with a hiring professional. You will need to become familiar with video

technology such as Skype or Zoom. When practicing, pay close attention to your position in front of the camera, the lighting, sound, and background, as well as how your outfit appears on camera.

5). Stay Educated Now is the time to put more focus on your professional development. Update your resume and cover letter, and add to your profiles on job search sites like Indeed or LinkedIn. The time is now for continuing your learning. You can brush up on the second language you already know, or begin learning a second language for the very first time. With extra time, you can develop your Microsoft Office skills, math skills, or identify your skill gaps to build on them and make them stronger for when the hiring market opens back up. Don't forget to record all of your self-development and learning on either your resume or cover letter.

6). Focus on You Through all of this change, don't forget to take care of yourself. Make sure to eat well, exercise, socialize with family and friends (while practicing safe social distancing), read, meditate or do any other activities that bring you joy. Continue to be patient, positive and productive and know that we are here for you. Contact the FSET office – we can support you in your job search and answer your questions during these challenging times. Watch for new positions and job searching resources on MyFSET.net as they are updated regularly. You can also find job openings on the Job Center website at jobcenterofwisconsin.com.

Sources:

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