

Millennial Money: How to stand out in this tough job market

Dear Class of 2020: You are graduating into one of the worst economies in history. But this isn't news to you. Many of you have already felt the impact, with summer **internships** and full-time job offers pulled out from under you as the depth and duration of the coronavirus pandemic truly sets in.

As a product of the last recession, I'm here to tell you that all is not lost. You will eventually land a job. It might not be in your field, but if you're **scrappy** and creative, you will get there.

My path looked like this: A call center job (to pay the bills), plus a freelance writing gig (to build my resume), then graduate school (to expand my network) followed by a temporary job with a textbook company (again, to pay the bills). Then, finally, a reporting internship that turned into my first full-time journalism job.



Your path may not look like mine or your parents' or your classmates', and it will likely look different from what you planned. These tips from career coaches can help you stand out from the other newly minted associate's, bachelor's and master's degree holders — not to mention the over 40 million newly unemployed workers.

BEEF UP YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

"You don't have as much face-to-face opportunity, so it's important to optimize online visibility," says Debra Rodenbaugh-Schaub, a career services consultant at the Alumni Association of Kansas State University.

The place to do that: LinkedIn.

The professional networking platform is heavily trafficked by **recruiters** and **hiring managers**, making it crucial to put your best foot forward.

Amp up your profile with links to websites you've created, articles you've written or presentations you've given. You can even upload recordings to highlight public-speaking skills.

Look at profiles of people who are leaders in the industry you're targeting to get inspiration for what to highlight and how to present yourself in your own profile.

NETWORK VIRTUALLY

Social distancing hasn't killed networking; it's just made it virtual.

The usual players — trade organizations, alumni groups and professional organizations — are all still meeting via webinars and video conferencing.

Moving online can make networking less intimidating for newbies. You can ease into building connections, absorbing information and building the confidence to eventually become a more active participant.

You can, and should, also make meaningful one-on-one connections. Not doing so will put you at a distinct disadvantage, since jobs are often filled via an **employee referral**.

Lisa Kastor, director of career planning at the College of Wooster in Ohio, recommends building a "mentor map" with at least three mentors who can help guide you and make introductions.

"I coach students to identify a person who has at least 10 years of experience, one that knows them well academically and one who knows them well professionally," Kastor says. "Start with who (you) know, articulate what (you) want and always ask for the recommendation of two more people to reach out to."

TAILOR YOUR RESUME

Understand what a company is looking for in a candidate. Then, customize your **resume** and cover letter to that specific job posting. This is an important step under normal circumstances, but it is critical now, as the economic upheaval of the pandemic has increased competition for available jobs.

"Don't be self-defeating and copy and paste the same thing into 100 job applications. That is not the right approach," Rodenbaugh-Schaub says.

Avoid simply listing skills or tasks. Instead, give them context. Highlight how your experience and actions delivered measurable outcomes.

Tailoring your resume also means including keywords or phrases from the job posting, since companies use software to sift through the initial barrage of applicants.

CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE CAREER PATHS

"COVID-19 is unlike anything we have seen, so you have to be flexible," says Glenn Hellenga, director of career and **employability** resources at Tri-County Technical College in South Carolina.

That might mean working in a short-term contract role in your field or accepting a job that is completely outside your career path. After all, you've got bills to pay.

Taking a detour doesn't mean abandoning your goals entirely. Instead, find opportunities to develop the tools you'll need for your dream job. Pick up freelancing gigs, find volunteer opportunities and proactively seek out projects wherever you land.

"You can show that you've been actively pursuing, enhancing and honing your skills," Rodenbaugh-Schaub says. "Employers love that."

Adapted from: <https://www.chron.com/living/article/Millennial-Money-How-to-stand-out-in-this-tough-15326839.php#item-85307-tbla-1>

1. Based on the reading select whether the statements are true or false.
 - A. LinkedIn is a professional networking platform used by recruiters and hiring managers to spot candidates.
 - B. Even in times of COVID-19, it is important to make professional connections.
 - C. The author suggests asking for advice regarding what your professional aspirations are.
 - D. It is a good idea to copy and paste the same thing into different job applications.

E. Illustrating your skills with solid examples will allow to contextualize and show the outcomes.

F. It is not a good idea to use words and phrases from the job listing.

G. COVID-19 is a time to stick to what you know and not try new areas outside your career path.

2. Match the words with a suitable definition

A. internships

B. scrappy

C. recruiters

D. hiring managers

E. employee referral.

F. Resume

G. employability

A. employee who requested a new position to be filled.

B. program that companies use to find talented people by asking their employees to recommend candidates from their existing networks.

C. determined, argumentative, or pugnacious.

D. brief account of your personal details, your education, and the jobs you have had.

E. a person whose job is to enlist or enroll people as employees.

F. a period of work experience offered by an organization for a limited period of time.

G. the skills and abilities that allow you to be employed