

JOB SEARCHING DURING A PANDEMIC

There are thousands of resources, articles, and ideas swirling around right now about how to best approach your job search. Where to start? What to read? Who to trust? Here at Minnesota State University, Mankato in the Career Development Center, we have put together a list of resources and tips for you to consider.



MAKE A MEMORABLE FIRST IMPRESSION.

As always, make sure your resume and cover letter are complete, professional, and error free. Look through your resume and cover letter to see if you have any experiences you can highlight that illustrate your ability to work remotely. Draw attention to experience that demonstrates you are a self-starter, can take initiative, are able to learn quickly, and are adaptable. All of which are vital to working remotely. Use our [Job Search Handbook](#) to perfect your resume and cover letter available [here](#) and stop by during VIRTUAL QUICKSTOP Monday-Friday 12p-3p on Zoom by clicking [here](#).

PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE VIRTUALLY.

Be a proactive job seeker, reach out, keep engaging, and follow-through with any job leads you have. Now more than ever your network is important. Look for professional groups to follow on Facebook and LinkedIn, use pertinent hashtags in your field, and share content relevant for your career aspirations. How can you build your online brand and presence through your social media accounts? Now is a great time to clean out any inappropriate photos and pivot to a more professional online presence. Get your [Handshake](#) profile and your [LinkedIn](#) profile completed and polished.



INTERVIEW LIKE A PRO.

Brush up on your remote interview skills. Start [here](#) to refine your skills. Get comfortable talking on these different forms of technology by practicing ahead of time and learning the platform prior to the interview. Knowing how to use Zoom before a Zoom interview will calm nerves and allow you to concentrate on the interview itself and not the technology. You can also prepare some possible answers to questions ahead of time by prepping your STAR stories. Read more about them [here](#).

ENHANCE YOUR SKILL SET.

If you don't get a job right away, or you find yourself with newfound free time, learn a valuable skill that will set you up as a competitive candidate in the future. Doing so demonstrates time management, motivation, initiative, and resilience to an employer. [LinkedIn Learning](#) has a wide variety of compelling courses free to you as a Minnesota State University, Mankato student. There are also many free Massive Open Online Courses, or [MOOCs](#), as well as [EdX classes](#), and free [Microsoft](#) training and tutorials. Whether we are in a world-wide pandemic or not, people who are experts in using EXCEL or up to date on the latest technologies are always going to be in high demand.



GATHER INTEL.

Set up [Google alerts](#) of organizations you are interested in working for. Read about actions their leadership is taking and issues they are wrestling with. This data will inform your application to their company and will help you at an interview as well. Being able to speak knowledgeably about the concepts and challenges leadership is facing will set you apart. If you don't like a company's response to COVID19, they might not be who you want to work for anyway.

IT'S NOT YOU, IT'S THE PANDEMIC.

The hard truth is that your job search may take longer than expected. It will be mentally and emotionally challenging. Make sure to take care of yourself during this time. Seek out the support you need. That could look like [mental health counseling](#), scheduled time with a favorite hobby or a creative outlet, or even just conversation with trusted friends and family. It's even more likely during this time that your first job won't be your dream job or even in your field of study. It's ok to take a job that helps to pay the bills for now. Every experience will teach you something and help you build your skill set. Future employers will see the transferable skills you learned and your ability to adapt during challenging times as a positive.

