Job-hunting in a pandemic: How do I even??

A few tips, tricks, and words of encouragement for making an already-horrible process more manageable during an also-horrible time
Job-hunting during COVID-19
Job-hunting during COVID-19

- With kids/while pregnant
- With a disability
- In another city/state/country
- With elderly parents
- After you’ve been let go
- In a recession

...there’s always something!
How you’ll get through the job search

_Same as always!_

• Be organized
• Cast a wide net
• Present yourself well
• Be patient and realistic
Be organized!
Before you start your search...

• Have a “vision board” or keep a file of prospects

• **ABC: Always Be Comparing**
  • What’s out there vs. what you’re doing now
  • What you do/have done vs. what employers are looking for

• Mark them up! Highlight, underline, connect the dots

• Borrow the best bits for your cover letters and resumes
When you start hunting...

• Have a list of sites, lists, company “Careers” pages, etc. that you check regularly; add to it as you discover new resources
• Have a list of keywords that you add to as you go, as well
• If someone sends a posting to you, make a note of it. If several people send a job posting to you, make sure you apply for it.
• Capture the essentials for every job
  • Bookmark the posting AND copy the text of the job description to save
  • Summarize the essential information: deadline, application requirements
  • Share these with your references (and see my Recommendations checklist!)
• Consider a spreadsheet! (I <3 Airtable...)}
Cast a wide net!
Apply for everything

• Practice is good
• People and places can surprise you
• Even a dream job can turn into a nightmare
• Nothing lasts forever
Present yourself well!
In your application...

• Focus on **what you DO have**, not what you DON’T
  • End the use of “although” in your cover letters
  • Connect the **dots** – what they want, what you got
  • If you don’t have matches, find **parallels**

• Have someone else review your materials
  • Catch typos
  • Tell you how it reads overall
  • This can be a favor that you trade – great peer mentoring opportunity!
In your interview* ...

*Interviewing skills is a whole other session in itself! Here’s three quick tips:

• Prepare, prepare, prepare
• Take notes, and take your time responding if you need to
• Follow up and say thank you
Be patient & realistic!
Time is weird

• Organizing helps with reality checks
• Set a “self-esteem deadline” and move on if they’re not that into you
• It’s a two-way street!
  • Don’t ever expect someone to treat you better when you’re an employee than they do when you’re a candidate. Do they respect your time?
What’s different now?
In the present moment...and beyond?

- Nothing is certain; you’ll need information to make the best decisions
- You may need to work (even) harder to hide your desperation
- Almost all networking is going to be virtual
- An offer, when you get one, might not feel like quite as much of a win
Work on your passive online presence

• If you don’t have one, make one
  • Personal web site or portfolio page, LinkedIn, GitHub, social media, etc.

• If you do have one, update it

• If it’s up to date, add to it

• People are even more likely to Google you now; control the narrative
Work on your active online presence

• Social media, if you have a professional presence online
  • It’s OK to be a real and whole person, but maybe separate personal/profesh?
• Committees and volunteer projects (if you have the bandwidth)
• Virtual meetings, hangouts, symposia, etc.

All of this can be something to do while you’re waiting for the world to stop ending...and it will be useful well into the future, too.
Slides will be available on my web site: snowdenbecker.com

Along with handouts and helpful links...and you’re always welcome to get in touch with me directly!

snowdenbecker@gmail.com
@snowdenbecker