



CSU Bakersfield

# Graduating in the Age of COVID-19

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## A Job-Search Guide for Seniors



# Introduction

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At the Center for Career Education and Community Engagement (CECE), we understand that entering the workforce these days must be a surreal experience for you.

In the last several weeks we've seen unprecedented changes to the labor market as entire industries and hiring processes have been impacted by the devastating effect of COVID-19.

We know that this is not the world you thought you'd be graduating into. These are stressful and uncertain times for you, for us, and for millions of graduating college students across the country.



# What's Next?

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The CECE staff has been actively liaising with other universities, employers and service providers across the nation to stay informed about job opportunities, recruiting changes, and best practices for job seekers during this pandemic. Employers, like us, were taken by surprise by the sudden impact of COVID-19, and are currently figuring out how and when to move forward with their recruiting efforts.

The good news is that there are plenty of immediate actions you can take to increase your appeal to organizations that are hiring, network and connect with professionals online, enhance your (virtual) competencies, and set action-oriented goals for yourself.

This guide provides some suggestions and resources you can utilize now to adapt to these challenging times as you search for employment after graduation.



# Polish Your Job Search Tools

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Make sure your resume is up-to-date. Highlight your education, skills, experiences, and achievements professionally and persuasively by utilizing our "WHO" method to create an outcome-oriented document.

Cover letters should always be tailored to match the specific position you are applying for. Use the job description as your guide.

You may access CECE's Resume Development Guide, sample resumes, and other helpful tips here:

- [CSUB Resume Development Guide/Resume Samples](#)
- [List of Action Verbs](#)
- [How to Quantify your Achievements](#) - The Muse
- [Resume Self-Evaluation Checklist](#)
- [Cover Letter Template](#)

# Practice Virtual Interviewing

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As in-person interviews are being canceled across the country, companies are shifting to virtual interviews. Be ready to engage with employers through a camera lens, and troubleshoot any potential technical issues ahead of time.

Optimal Resume and Interview system, available through your [Handshake](#) account in the Resources section, provides opportunities to practice with recorded mock interviews using your web cam. For additional advice, see these resources:

- [Best Practices](#) - Fast Company
- [Virtual Interview Strategies](#) - Virtual Vocations
- [9 Best Practices for Virtual Interviews](#) - Harvard
- [How to Look Good in Skype Interviews](#) - YouTube



# Manage Your Online Image

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Don't let an incomplete profile or unprofessional image derail your job search efforts. Ensure your [Handshake](#) profile is visible to employers seeking new talent, and if you don't have a [LinkedIn](#) account, now is the time to create one.

Complete all sections of your profile as completely as possible, and check it over for spelling and typographical errors.

Be aware that potential employers might search for you online. Make sure your social media accounts, such as Facebook or Instagram, portray you as the type of person they'd want to hire.

- [Creating a Good LinkedIn Profile](#) - LinkedIn

# Network! Network! Network!

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During these difficult times it is more essential than ever to stay connected and to expand your network. Reach out virtually to your friends, family, neighbors, previous employers, mentors, and other contacts to let them know you're seeking new opportunities. Conduct informational interviews via email, phone or video chat with professionals in your targeted occupation or industry, especially CSUB alumni who are usually eager to help fellow Runners. It's crucial to "get yourself out there", and you can do this from home. Here are some tips to get you started:

- [Informational Interviewing](#) - Grad Leaders
- [7 Non-Irritating Ways to Network Online](#) - [Inc.com](#)



# Continue to Apply to Open Positions

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Many companies are still hiring. Diversify your online search by using a variety of sources (e.g. [Handshake](#), [LinkedIn](#), company websites, [CaJobs](#), government websites, and other job search boards).

These resources will help you stay up-to-date on new opportunities:

- **[Handshake](#)** - 500 Companies Hiring on Handshake
- **[LinkedIn](#)** - Here's who's hiring right now.
- **[Candor](#)** - who's hiring and who's not.
- **[The Muse](#)** - who's hiring and who's not.
- Tip: follow #GetHired on LinkedIn to get real time information about companies that are hiring.
- Tip: You might also consider checking with placement/temporary agencies who hire on behalf of employers. (Typically, there are no fees charged to the job seeker, but be sure you are clear on the cost structure of any agency you work with).

# Attend Virtual Career Fairs/Info Sessions

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If you attended CECE's last career fair in March, consider reaching out to recruiters you spoke with to express your continued interest in their companies. If you missed the fair, there are still opportunities to connect with employers virtually. Check [Handshake](#) for upcoming employer virtual information sessions. There are also virtual job fairs sponsored by private organizations open to all students.

Click below for additional resources:

- **[JobFairsIn](#)** - upcoming open virtual job fairs
- **[LiveCareer](#)** - tips on how to succeed in virtual job fairs
- **[The Balance Careers](#)** - answers to common questions about virtual job fairs.



# Consider Remote Work Opportunities

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With physical distancing requirements and travel restrictions in place, many companies will likely embrace remote work in the near future.

Several remote opportunities have recently been posted on [Handshake](#) and [LinkedIn](#). There are also numerous online job boards devoted to remote opportunities. Listed below are a sample few:

- [Weworkremotely.com](#)
- [Jobspresso.co](#)
- [Remote.co](#)
- [Powertofly.com](#)  
(women in tech)
- [Justremote.co](#)
- [Angel.co](#)
- [Remoteok.io](#)

Note: These links have been provided for convenience. The university and CECE does not endorse or recommend any particular website, and explicitly makes no representations or guarantees about job listings or the trustworthiness of the site. As always, be prudent and cautious when utilizing outside sources and protect personal information.

# Stay Actively Engaged

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While searching for career opportunities, consider keeping your skills sharp and enhancing your experience through volunteer work or independent projects.

There are several volunteer opportunities listed in [Handshake](#). You can also access a list of virtual volunteer opportunities from non-profit organizations across the nation, seeking a wide range of talents, here:

- [Volunteer Match](#)

Have a great idea and an entrepreneurial spirit? You can find advice and assistance for starting your own business here:

- [CSU Bakersfield Small Business Development Center](#)



# Round-out Your Skill Set

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Many educational companies and universities are currently offering their content for free. Take advantage of this opportunity to enhance your skills and knowledge.

- **Harvard University** - Free online classes
- **EdX** - Free Online Courses
- **Open Culture** - more than 1,500 free online courses
- Yale's most popular course, **The Science of Well-Being**
- **Linked In Learning** - Free resources to help you navigate the challenges of today's job market

# Stay Patient and Positive

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We are all still adapting to this new reality. Keep it mind that it may take more time for you to hear back from an employer or to find a position. Be patient with others and be patient with yourself!

This situation is far from ideal, but it will pass. You may not have any control over the COVID-19 virus or the economy, but you can control how you respond. Be adaptable, action-oriented, persistent and creative as you navigate a changing market. Become comfortable with the unknown. You will find power and confidence in your ability to tackle these unprecedented times. Ultimately, these newfound strengths and skills will increase your marketability and success in the workforce! Don't be afraid to reach out and ask for help when you need it. And most importantly, stay healthy and safe!





# We're Here to Help!

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CECE will continue to monitor the ever-changing employment landscape as a result of COVID-19, and do our utmost to keep you well-informed regarding new opportunities and job search tips. Please continue to log in to your Handshake account for up-to-the-minute job postings, employer information sessions, and a host of job search resources available to you as students and alumni. Resume reviews and virtual appointments are available for the remainder of the spring semester (with limited availability during summer). Follow us on social media for additional updates and alerts.

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 **Handshake**

