

# Increase Your Chances of Getting Noticed in Today's Job Market

In the words of Charles Dickens, “it was the best of times, it was the worst of times” when I found myself without employment at the end of 2020 in the middle of a pandemic. What made it the best of times were the programs available for support (postponing mortgage or car payments), increased unemployment benefits and affordable healthcare (Covered California). The worst of times was that there were more people applying for the same jobs, specific industries directly affected (entertainment, hospitality, food) and companies hesitant to hire or putting projects/expansions on hold due to overall economic uncertainty.

Since “we are all in this together”, I'd like to share what I've discovered so far in the job-hunting journey.

1. Rediscover/reinvent yourself – now is a great time to explore what you want to do or never thought of doing. Start with taking the MBTI (Myers Briggs Type Indicator) at [www.16personalities.com](http://www.16personalities.com) – this will provide insight to your overall personality, what are your strengths and weaknesses. The library has a book called “Do What You Are” or it can be found at Barnes and Noble. Helps in understanding what we do best naturally or look at other ways to use your superpowers.
2. Resume – 95% of companies use ATS (applicant tracking systems) or “bots” to filter applications based on given criteria such as keywords or skills to determine if the applicant will get their foot in the door or be tossed – basically an algorithm. There are resume assessment and builder tools available but not all are created equal. Avoid the ones that want to charge a lot of money (\$300/hour?? – did I mention I was unemployed?!) or look autogenerated. Look for ones that will provide a free first assessment (such as Top Resume); sometimes they will package cover letter, LinkedIn, resume for a reduced price.
3. Network/Connections – they say it's all who you know and it's especially true now. Reach out to people you know (previous bosses or co-workers, your neighbor, your daughter's boyfriend's dad) and let them know you are looking and what you are looking for. Ask them to pass your resume along or recommend you to the company's recruiters. What about any organizations you belong to whether professional or personal based? What other ways can you talk to others who could lead you to a job?
4. LinkedIn – there is good and bad about LinkedIn but overall use it as a tool.
  - a. Premium membership has many advantages for job hunters – allows messaging anyone, feedback on how your application measures against others. The first month is free and you can always cancel once you have a job.
  - b. Profile – this is where recruiters and potential employers look first. A quick summary on your page of what you do best and filling out the sections (like from your resume) will also get you noticed. Refresh it every other week or so to get noticed (yes, another algorithm).
  - c. Connect – look at others in your industry, or people you've worked with before or met. Reach out and start that conversation.
  - d. Jobs/Companies – many post here and it's a good resource for seeing if a company is growing (overall), is it a good place to work, etc. Many will list their corporate recruiter so you can reach out to them directly.
  - e. Support – LinkedIn offers free education (from job hunting to specific software/tools) and even has a #GETHIRED meeting every Friday for tips and tricks.
5. Recruiters – are NOT created equal.
  - a. Robocall ones – have generic job descriptions and not many details.
  - b. Staffing companies – industry specific, each company has multiple recruiters. If you are working with one and see another opportunity, ask which recruiter has that job.
  - c. Company specific recruiters – they are listed in LinkedIn under the company. Reach out and ask if you can talk to them about opportunities.

In summary, take this time to figure out what you want to do, increase your odds of getting noticed (and eventually hired) through ATS friendly resumes, networking, working your recruiters.

Remember this: “The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word 'crisis.'. One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger--but recognize the opportunity.”