

Job & Internship Search Strategies

Top 5 TIPS

Current State: Strategies and Tactics

First things first - while the Chase Career Center understands that the world remains uncertain during these times, be assured that searching for a job or internship is normal and happens every year. Depending on your major, desired industry, market demand, and other factors, many students are busy seeking job and internship opportunities throughout the academic year. If all of you had jobs lined up by Thanksgiving, our office could close for vacation every spring semester! That said, what *isn't* typical is seeking positions during a pandemic when there is increased competition for available job and internship opportunities. We will share some specific tactics that will help you best position yourself as an attractive candidate for employment. See [6 Tips to Stand Out and Land a New Role in a Post-Pandemic Job Market](#).

#1 Research hiring trends - follow your curiosity

Research Hiring Trends – Industries and companies have been impacted by the pandemic in unique ways; while some are struggling, others are absolutely thriving. Take some time to research which industries/companies are succeeding, and even growing, and consider how you might think out of the box and redirect your search efforts accordingly. Many recruiting platforms, such as CareerBuilder, LinkedIn and Indeed offer analytics on current hiring trends – see **ICconnect** and the following articles for the inside scoop.

- [Jobs and Industries in Demand - and Job Search Trends for 2021](#) (CareerBuilder)
- [15 Kinds of Jobs That Are in Demand - and Growing - Heading into 2021](#) (The Muse)
- [Top Covid-19 Hiring Surge Companies in US](#) (Glassdoor)
- [What Jobs Are Employers Hiring for Right Now?](#) (CareerOneStop)
- [The Most In-Demand Jobs Right Now](#) (LinkedIn)
- [These Fortune 1000 Companies Are Hiring Right Now](#) (The Muse)

Gather Intel & Perspectives – Has a new industry or job function piqued your interest, but you're not sure it's right for you? Review the **VAULT CAREER GUIDES** accessible in the [UMass Amherst Libraries Business Collection](#) (click on "Business Collection A-Z," select "Career Insider," and log in with your UMass Net ID and password). Your next move might be to research the **LinkedIn** profiles and **Connect UMass** of Isenberg/UMass alumni who are currently engaging in this type of work and perhaps request one or two informational interviews. Participate in virtual employer events (listed on **ICconnect** and **Handshake** event calendars!) like info sessions and alumni panels, then take advantage of the opportunity to follow-up 1:1 with presenters for additional info gathering. Follow influencers in your industry of interest on social media and in online publications; ask questions and engage in online discussions with the goal of learning as much as possible.

Engage in Clubs – Don't underestimate the insights you can gain from your peers here at Isenberg! Club members possess a great deal of insider knowledge about their industry/profession of choice. Participating in club meetings and events can yield a variety of benefits, including enhancing your career insights, strengthening your interview skills, and increasing your access to networking opportunities with recruiters and alumni. Click [here](#) to access a list of Isenberg student clubs.

You may also find it helpful to expand your knowledge of careers, skills and professional organizations by major by checking out the below *Career Insights* on **ICconnect** website:

[Accounting](#)

[Finance](#)

[HTM](#)

[Management](#)

[Marketing](#)

[Operations & Information Management](#)

[Sport Management](#)

#2 Explore creative alternatives

Pursue Micro-Internships or Remote-Externships – There are a variety of ways to engage with a company and build your skills beyond participating in a formal, on-site internship or job. Micro-Internships are short-term, remote, paid, professional work experiences that consist of 5 to 40 hours of work with a legitimate company. **Parker-Dewey**, the firm that originated the concept of micro-internships and facilitates them for companies and students today, has its own [landing page for UMass students](#) interested in pursuing one of these opportunities. **Paragon One** allows students to apply for remote externships in finance and venture capital, business development, market research, and social media/SEO.

Engage in a Simulated Work Experience – Forage and **Bright Networks** gives students the chance to learn career skills from Fortune 500 companies. Its company-endorsed Virtual Work Experience Programs contain a series of resources and tasks designed to simulate the real-world experience of starting a career, and there is no cost to participating students. Click [here](#) to access a program sponsored by Accenture.

Consider Temp or Temp-to-Hire Jobs – There are multiple advantages to working with a staffing firm to acquire temporary or temp-to-hire opportunities, including flexibility, continuity of employment, skill development, networking opportunities, career/company insights, and of course, the possibility that a favorable temporary opportunity becomes a permanent one. Some staffing firms even specialize in specific industries. Visit the [American Staffing Association's online directory](#) to identify reputable staffing firms in your area.

Create Your Own Experience – Students can take initiative to create their own personal experiences/projects, or even proactively offer their talents to companies on a temporary or project basis. For example, a student may decide to start their own blog, investment portfolio (real or simulated), [digital portfolio](#), or personal website that directly demonstrates their skills to employers. They may freelance their skills on a website like **Fiverr**; writers and social media marketers are among those who promote their services to customers on this site. Or, in an effort to get a foot in the door with a company that is not currently in a position to hire them, a student might research specific ways in which their skills can add value in the form of a temporary project (e.g., developing a proposal for increasing their current social media following). Offering their services on a temporary project like this can go a long way toward impressing a potential employer with a student's initiative, enthusiasm, and persistence.

Revamp Your Education Plan – Students have been getting creative about using this remote learning opportunity to forge new or unanticipated educational paths. For example, some have decided to take on an additional degree, major or minor, or extend their schooling by enrolling in a +1 master's program. Perhaps now is a good time to dedicate a semester to participating in a full-time, six-month cooperative work experience with a company; it may delay your graduation, but it will help you build your skills and could result in a permanent job offer. If you are considering one of these options, be sure to speak with an Academic Advisor and/or Career Coach to make an informed decision.

Don't Let Your Dream Job Upstage a Real Job – You may have had your heart set on a Hotel Food & Beverage rotational leadership program or an account manager position at a major league ticket office, but that doesn't mean all is lost. While your industry of choice may take time to recover, you can still apply your customer relationship and sales skills to related or new industries. Although the context may be different, core skills and technology know-how are transferrable and marketable if and when you're-enter the job search in your dream industry.

#3 Relationships matter

It is a widely known fact among career services professionals that **70-75% of jobs are never posted**. So how do you gain access to these opportunities? **NETWORK**. You simply cannot put all of your "eggs" in the online job board "basket."

Strengthen your existing LinkedIn connections and build new ones – Set up time to speak with family, friends, mentors, previous employers, etc. about your current career ambitions. Join and participate in **specialty Groups** on **LinkedIn** that align with your career interests (e.g., Travel, Tourism & Hospitality Group; Business Intelligence & Analytics Professionals). Be sure to leverage your **second-degree contacts** - an introduction by a common connection will increase the likelihood of your receiving a response. Also, always follow up with your initial contact letting them know the outcome and expressing your gratitude. **Below are some helpful networking tools:**

- [How to Ask for Help in Your Job Search \(Email Templates Included!\)](#)

- [The.Networking.&LinkedIn.Guide](#)
- [Questions to Ask in an Informational Interview](#)
- [Deliberate LinkedIn Networking Worksheet](#)

Engage with alumni via [CONNECT UMASS](#) – Connect UMass links our powerful community of 278,000 alumni with one another and with current students. On this platform designed exclusively for UMass Amherst, you can get advice from experienced professionals and connect with alumni based on your interests, geographic location, or other affiliations. Cultivating lasting, supportive professional relationship with a varied group of alumni, professionals and students will position you to connect with the right people when you seek to have your job application stand out from the crowd.

Participate in Employer and Club Events – While we understand that many of you may be suffering from post-pandemic "Zoom fatigue," try to participate in as many employer- and club-sponsored events as possible to ask questions, learn, and take advantage of valuable networking opportunities. Showing genuine interest and curiosity, especially on a repeat basis, will help you expand your network and have connections in place when you need them. It's also a plus when you can weave these interactions into your cover letters and interviews. Employer events can be viewed on the **IConnect** and **Handshake** event calendars.

Participate in Industry Social Media – Following contacts, companies, thought leaders, and professional organizations related to your desired career field will populate your feed with relevant content, making it easy to react to or comment on articles. Take the initiative to join industry and alumni groups, where job opportunities and networks are more established. Your demonstrated engagement, coupled with the knowledge you will gain, will enhance your professional brand. Visit [Professional Organizations](#) under **Majors/Program** tab on **IConnect** for more suggestions.

#4 Upskill to out-skill

Identify In-Demand Skills – It's all about supply and demand. Understanding which skills are going to give you a competitive edge in a specific career path - *and then actually acquiring those skills* - is a strategic move to address the hiring needs within a company or industry. You can begin determining which skills will make you most valuable by reading the qualifications section of relevant job postings, reviewing LinkedIn profiles, speaking with recruiters, and exploring membership in industry-specific organizations.

Take full advantage of the goodwill companies are lending during this time to earn digital badges, complete certificates, and engage in other tangible learning opportunities to enhance your marketability at reduced cost or even for free. Some examples are below:

- [LinkedIn Learning](#), with over 15,000 courses taught by industry experts, is now available to members of the UMass community at no cost. Simply log in with your NetID and password.
- [Grow with Google](#) offers [resources for job seekers](#), [free virtual events and trainings](#), and [career certificate](#) options.
- [Coursera](#) offers free online courses, guided projects, and certifications offered online by top universities and companies; sample topics include machine learning, social media marketing, financial markets, innovation management, programming languages, and Excel skills.
- [DataCamp](#) is an online learning and certificate platform for data science, with an emphasis on increasing technical proficiency in Python, SQL, R, Git, etc.
- [HubSpot Academy](#) provides quick, practical courses to comprehensive certifications in topics such as social media, email marketing, SEO, and inbound sales.
- [Project Management Institute \(PMI\)](#) offers multiple online certifications, and online training and development activities, related to project management.
- [Udacity](#) allows students to advance themselves through online courses in programming, data science, artificial intelligence, digital marketing, and more.
- [Wall Street Prep](#) offers online courses and instructor-led boot camps that prepare students for the demands of investment banking and corporate finance.

#5 There's no substitute for fundamentals

Leverage Multiple Online Resources to Maximize Your Results - In addition to networking and accessing **ICconnect**, be sure to take advantage of these key online resources:

- **Handshake** - The UMass Handshake platform provides students with access to thousands of job/internship postings and company events. Access our [Handshake Student Quick Start Guide](#) for tips.
- **Company Websites** - Directly access company websites to view and apply to employment opportunities that may not be listed anywhere else.
- **Specialty Online Job Boards** - In addition to consulting popular, broad-based job boards like [Indeed.com](#), [LinkedIn Jobs](#), [Glassdoor.com](#), [Internships.com](#), and [Idealist.org](#), consider the following specialty job boards:
- **BuiltInBoston.com** - This site is the hub for start-up and tech jobs in Boston; there are also "Built in" sites for other metro areas like NYC and Chicago. This site will help you identify smaller companies, or those whose brands you are not yet familiar with, to target.
- **Industry-Specific Job Boards** - Many industries have their own customized job boards. For example, visit [OneWire.com](#) to search for finance-related jobs, [TalentZoo.com](#) for marketing-related jobs, [JobsInLogistics.com](#) for logistics and supply chain-related jobs, or the [National Sports Marketing Network](#) for sport jobs.
- **Chamber of Commerce websites** - Google the Chamber of Commerce website for the city where you'd like to relocate in order to discover potential company targets you may not be aware of. For example, [Boston's Chamber of Commerce site](#) allows you search a company directory organized by industry.

Strengthen Your Resume – How "SMART" are your resume bullets? Do they show impact, achievements and results? Will an employer see what **value add** you bring to the table? Do you quantify or use metrics where possible? Writing your resume with the mindset of "how can I help this company succeed?" is essential in gaining an employer's interest. Start by accessing the [ISENBERG RESUME GUIDE](#). Once you've nailed the basics, meet with a Career Coach to help you refine your content. And don't forget to include your demonstrated remote work skills, which are being sought more frequently now in job descriptions! Prove that you are able to work independently and are proficient with online collaboration platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Webex, etc.

Customize Your Application Materials by Job Posting – It is essential that you effectively align your qualifications and experiences to the position to make a compelling case on your resume, in your cover letter, and in your interview responses. Ensuring you have a firm grasp on the skills, type of work and culture of the company provides you a strategic advantage in planning your stories, bullets and professional brand. It is no longer adequate to have one "master" resume or cover letter; you must customize all of your application materials by company to ensure maximum impact.

Write an Effective Cover Letter – A particularly persuasive or well-written cover letter can help you distinguish yourself among a pool of qualified candidates. Make a virtual appointment with [Isenberg's Business Communication Center](#) for 1:1 consultation.

Build Your STAR Stories – Once you have a firm grasp on the position, it is critical to identify the most relevant stories to share in an interview that best align your strengths with the company's needs. How to tell those stories in an effective manner is where the **STAR Method** comes in. Understanding what key messages you need to convey within the framework and then practicing them in advance will help you have a successful interview.

Practice Your Virtual Interview Skills – Given that most, if not all, interviews will take place virtually in the near future, excelling in this area is a great way to help positively distinguish yourself among other candidates. Utilize [Big Interview](#) to view a multitude of instructional, interview-related videos, as well as to record industry- and skill-based mock interviews and email them to a Career Coach for feedback and review.

Retool & Track Your Search Process – Approach your job search efforts in an organized and strategic way. Plan and track your progress using an **Excel spreadsheet** like [this one](#).