

Getting a job in 2021: More tips for college graduates on job searches, remote work, and more

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Future of Work

Networking and making alumni connections are crucial.



Lynne Sladky / AP

by Christine Johnson-Hall, For The Inquirer

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How do you job search with confidence in a virtual/hybrid hiring environment?

Experts agreed: Networking and making alumni connections are crucial. And while networking now is far different from the in-person job fairs, meet-and-greets, and alumni gatherings pre-pandemic, all say it's important for students and grads to double down on building relationships by attending virtual events, connecting on LinkedIn, and following up on introductions.

What are other top tips for online job searches?

To build trust, look at the camera to make direct eye contact.

Dress professionally from head to toe.

Test your lighting and camera eye contact by Zooming with a friend or family member. So that the interviewer can see your face, make sure the window and lights are not behind you.

Check your background to make sure it's clean and neat.

Prequalify your space to acknowledge potential interruptions: "I apologize, you might hear my dog ..."

Make sure you're seated in the chair, not sitting up or laying in a bed — yes, a hiring manager reported this happened.

— *Francesca Zambagione, president of Dressed Smart™, a virtual online course series.*
<https://dressedsmart.com>

Research the company in advance.

Dress up and look professional. No yoga pants ☺

— *Barbara Hewitt, executive director of career services at the University of Pennsylvania*

Find ways to stand out, like creating an online portfolio that demonstrates your excellence (grades, special projects, medical lab work, and experiences).

Build a plan A and plan B for your job search fields.

— *Nick Schaefer, Gwynedd Mercy University director of career development*

Create a polished LinkedIn profile optimized with key words, current headshot, as well as a crisp resume.

— *Lynne Williams, executive director Philadelphia Area Great Careers Group, a nonprofit offering professional development, training, and resources for job seekers.*
<https://greatcareersphl.org>

Get to know your alumni, ask questions, and learn about their careers.

Use LinkedIn to connect and talk with people in your field, and take LinkedIn Learning courses.

— *Robert Bullard, director of career advancement at Rowan University*