

Job Search Options during COVID-19 Pandemic

With the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-2019), many of us are feeling stresses and strains in several aspects of our lives. This is especially the case with our professional lives. There have been drastic changes to the ways in which we work and learn, the economy is unstable and hiring in many sectors is on hold.

We have questions. Who is hiring? Are there opportunities in my field of expertise/study? What should I do next?

You may need to find a survival job to get through the epidemic, or you may choose to continue focussing on your long-term career goals. Below are some options to help you to make the most out of these complicated times.

Assess your options

In order to create a plan for what to do moving forward, you must first review your current circumstances, assess your options and take action. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What is my current situation?
- What are my priorities?
- Will your current finances sustain me for the next few months?
- What is more important: short-term goals or long-term goals?
- Is finding a temporary job worth the health risk if it is a frontline job?

Based on your answers, this will give you an idea for whether or not searching for a temporary job is in your best interest.

From there, make a pros & cons list of your choices to further see what benefits you may receive. Refer to this interactive [Decisional Balance Worksheet](#) where you can input your answers.

If finances are part of the issue, below are some resources to help:

- [Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#)
- [How to Budget When You're in Crisis Mode](#)
- [Tips for Stretching Your Food Budget](#)

It is difficult to predict when the COVID-19 pandemic will end and as such, it is best to make up your mind and take action as soon as possible. Whatever decision you make, commit to it.

The Decision to Job Search

Finding a job outside your field of study may not be the most ideal situation, however, it may be necessary. It is important to keep your mind open to different options and to understand that this is only temporary. Think of this as an unexpected opportunity to try something different, add new “tools” to your toolbox, expand your network, and share your skills.

Consider the following steps to prepare for finding a “survival job”:

1. Research which industries are looking to hire immediately
 - a. The BC Provincial government has listed which businesses are considered essential services and that can be a good start to finding what is operating: <https://bc.ctvnews.ca/essential-services-in-b-c-find-out-if-your-job-is-on-the-list-1.4871278>
 - b. Specific industries like Healthcare are in need of extra help, not only patient facing roles but also administrative and back office process positions. Consider looking into the health authorities listed in the link below: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/partners/health-authorities/regional-health-authorities>
2. Once you have decided where you would like to apply, review your resume and cover letter, and tailor it to the position
 - a. [BCITSA Career Specialists](#) are available to help you!

Below are other industries and employers that are looking to hire during the current pandemic. Grocery, retail, and delivery companies are hiring to meet the Covid-19-related demand¹.

- [Amazon](#) – Hiring 1000 workers at its fulfillment centers and delivery networks
- [Dollarama](#) – Hiring 25,000 workers
- [Goodfood](#) – Hiring 500 positions in accounting, technology, and warehouse operations
- [Instacart](#) – aiming to hire 300,000 contract workers
- [Loblaws & Save-On-Foods](#) – Hiring temporary positions across their grocery stores
- [Pepsico Beverages Canada](#) – Hiring 500 positions (delivery drivers, warehouse workers and manufacturing employees)
- [Spud.ca](#) – Grocery delivery company looking to hire people laid off by restaurants
- [Umano Medical \(Hospital bed manufacturer\)](#) – Hiring production staff
- [Walmart Canada](#) – Hiring 10,000 employees

¹ <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/news/whos-hiring-in-canada-4531435/>

Shirley Andriesh and Erin Girard at [SpareLabs](#), as well as Preett Jassal of the [Vehicle Sales Authority of BC](#) have put together a list of companies that are currently hiring². The list is mainly composed of tech related companies and potential employers may join the already growing list:

- <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1I3FOoUIG466iowicWaRC - H3tEWTL2kBXNkLwXgDOIA/htmlview?usp=gmail>

The positions that are open are not limited to tech related roles. They also include administration, accounting & finance, customer service, marketing, and various other functions.

- [WorkBC](#) – The B.C. Provincial Government also has a job board available

The Decision to Personally Develop

If working a temporary job during the COVID-19 pandemic is not in your best interest, this is a good time to be productive developing your skills. Time you spend now on your personal development is a great investment for your professional future.

Take this opportunity to reflect on your career goals and re-evaluate your future career targets. It is entirely possible that the recent pandemic has provided you with some insight into your own industry, how it operates during times of emergency, and whether its still the right fit for you. Below are some recommended things to do to continually grow during these tough times:

- [Career Planning](#) – Have a look at BCITSA Career Services' guide to assist you.
- **Networking** – Take advantage of virtual communication and connect with people in your industry to set up a quick chat. People will likely be more accessible and open to virtual meetings during these remote working times.
 - [Setting up an Informational interview](#)
 - [Tips for Informational Interview](#)
 - [At-Home Networking Strategies](#)
- **Update your resume and cover letter** – Find time to work on you resume and cover letter or better yet, schedule an appointment with one of our [Career Specialists](#), or sign up for a BCITSA online [resume or cover letter workshop](#).
- **Research jobs** – Look up jobs in your field and do an analysis on the skills you need to meet the requirements
- **Take an online course** – Upgrade any skills or certifications that are useful in your field of study. A lot of universities are offering free courses during this time.
- **Get Entrepreneurial** - Have you thought of starting your own business but never had the time? You now have the gift of time and [BCITSA Entrepreneurship Services](#) have several online services to help you to build your start-up.

² <https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/90-companies-currently-hiring-canada-coronavirus>

Stay Positive and Healthy

BCITSA has set up an [Info Hub](#) that contains a wealth of resources to assist you with navigating any concerns you may have. There is a Q&A section with common questions that have been asked by students and if you have any questions yourself, you can submit it through the Info Hub.

These are unprecedented times and it is important that we stay positive and active to get through this rough period. Don't be afraid to ask for help, isolation can bring about negative feelings, so do your best to connect virtually with friends and family, as well as accessing resources readily available online.

Sources

1. Faraut, Juliette (2020). Who's hiring in Canada?.
<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/news/whos-hiring-in-canada-4531435/>
2. Bjornson, Leah (2020). 90+ companies that are currently hiring in Canada amid coronavirus pandemic. <https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/90-companies-currently-hiring-canada-coronavirus>