

**GET OUT OF YOUR PAJAMAS,  
TAKE A SHOWER,  
AND TALK TO SOMEONE**



*Job Searching During A  
**Pandemic,**  
**ECONOMIC DOWNTURN,**  
*Recession,*  
or Other Crisis*



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## **A Few Things Before We Get Started**

*But NO ONE is hiring right now. There's a crisis going on. It's impossible to find work in this environment.*

Sound familiar? It should. That's one of the messages we're seeing over and over again, day in and day out. Everything is terrible and nothing can be done about it.

That's simply not true.

Regardless of what you've heard on the news or seen online, organizations are hiring right now. Not all organizations, but that's always been the case. There are good years and bad years. Ups and downs. Cyclical changes and other short-term events that can change staffing needs.

Organizations still need to hire people, even during a crisis. They are using different approaches, processes, and technologies, but hiring is happening.

You may need to get creative to migrate your skill set if your particular industry is not hiring or is contracting in the short term. For example, you may need to pivot from a food & beverage service role to something that can be done online, like a customer service role, which would leverage the same core skills around relating well to people. There are ways to put your existing skills to use without spending tons of time and money on classes.

Let's agree to move beyond excuses to talk about what you really need to know for a successful job search if you, like so many others, find yourself in this position right now.

One other item of note. Engaging in a job search is NOT easy. It's mentally, emotionally, and physically draining. Anyone who has looked for a job will tell you that it's filled with rejections, dead ends, and missed opportunities which can be enough to make even the most confident person question their abilities. And that's in a good economy.

The stress of a major global crisis won't make the job search any easier and we often forget the basics that are most helpful to us when we get lost in the internet black hole of finding the mythical perfect resume format or some other equally unimportant distraction. This book will focus entirely on the most critical basics of the job search so you can find a new role as quickly as possible!

## 1. Activate Your Network

Activating your network (aka reaching out to people you know) has always been great career advice that you've probably heard so many times you likely are mid-eyeroll by now. I get it! Most people are looking for the simple, secret, magic potion they can take to wake up working at the job of their dreams. The reality is that nearly all of the time, you will need people to help you get where you want to go.

Activating your network is even more important now than during pre-pandemic times, partly because we are all staying home. And without bumping into people daily, you won't stay top of mind for them. Different research and experts cite different numbers, but I've heard anywhere between 50-80% of jobs are gotten based on who you know. That means a majority of jobs are filled by someone who has leveraged their relationships. This doesn't mean they weren't qualified for the job. It simply means that when a hiring manager is presented with two similar candidates, they are more likely to select the one they know vs. the one they don't. Use this knowledge to your advantage!

You may be wondering if you really need to activate your network or if you can simply rely on your great work speaking for itself. The short answer is that your work doesn't speak for itself, even if you do the best work in the company. You will need to speak on your own behalf and it becomes a lot easier to do this if you have others advocating for you and your great work. So yes, you really need to activate your network.

How? Reach out to people in all the ways that it makes sense. Use LinkedIn, email, virtual meetings, text, phone, in person where safely possible, and any other means you have to contact people.

This includes former co-workers, of course, but don't limit yourself to people you've worked with in the past. You should reach out to family, friends, neighbors, and people you know through any community organizations. Sometimes, jobs don't even make it on to a job board because organizations are able to find a great candidate simply by having employees recommend someone they know.

What should you tell people when you reach out? Be specific. Let them know what type of work you are looking for. Most people want to help others, so the more people you can have on the lookout for job opportunities, the better. You can offer to share a summary of your experience or a copy of your resume if they ask for it. More importantly, see if there's anything that they need help with. If you don't have a job, you may have more free time where you could offer to help them with something (maybe introducing them to someone you know, suggesting a great book they might like, etc.). Most relationships are made better when they are a reciprocal relationship, rather than one person asking for help after not talking to them for 20 years. So if it's your first time talking to someone in a while, work to re-establish your relationship before you ask them to help you get a job.

You seem like a fun, likable person, so I probably don't even need to mention this but... Don't blast your resume everywhere on the internet and spam everyone you know with it. It's far less effective to publicly proclaim your need for a job in hopes that someone will see it. As humans we usually assume in a group setting that someone else will take care of it, whereas if you ask a person directly and personally for help, they are far more likely to take action. Think about it – when was the last time you saw a resume online that someone blasted out and you took a copy straight to your HR department to get them a job? Exactly.

Here's one recent story that has happened during the pandemic that highlights the surprising way activating your network can help. I have a friend that talked with his neighbor about his job search. The

neighbor happened to work at a company with several postings for the same job title, all of which would be a great fit for my friend. The neighbor offered to find out the hiring managers for the postings and shared 3 email addresses with my friend.

My friend then had to make a choice. Should he take action? There are lots of excuses as to why he might not. *What if he was bothering the hiring managers by emailing them? What if no one responded? What if he looked desperate? What if they flagged him in the system to never hire him for any job ever again (they can do that, right?!?!?)?*

On the flip side, what's the worst that could happen? If no one responds to his inquiry, he continues his job search. Pretty low risk in the scheme of things. So he took action. Two out of the three people completely ignored his email messages. However, the third person was thrilled he reached out and made sure to include him in the interview process. For 5 minutes of his time (not counting any time spent agonizing over this decision, which I'm sure you won't do!), this was totally worth the effort.

You may be surprised to discover how your network will want to help you. Be open to their offers and take the initiative if they give you any leads.

It can be challenging to reach out to people, especially if you aren't able to talk with them in person. If you're struggling with finding the right words to contact the people you know, visit [WorkAuthentically.com](http://WorkAuthentically.com) where you can [download suggested language](#) for FREE!

## 2. Refresh Your Resume and LinkedIn Profile

I know this is something that most people dread, but it's one of the keys to a successful job search.

Writing a great resume is as much an art as a science. I do it for a living, so I completely understand why people freak out about it. Here's a fun secret of the career coaching business: Almost everyone sucks at telling their own story at first, myself included. It takes practice and several drafts to make sure that you are sharing your best career story AND that you're telling your story in a way that the hiring manager can hear.

What goes into telling your best career story? I'm so glad you asked! You can spend a ton of time simply researching how to create a great resume. The advice on the internet is pretty endless. In fact, I could talk about this all day and be nowhere close to done!

But I know you're busy, so here's the TLDR version for you.

Your resume needs to do two things. 1. Show you are qualified for the job and 2. Be interesting enough for the person reading it to want to schedule an interview with you. It's easy to get preoccupied with a whole bunch of unimportant things (like formatting!) instead of these two critically important details. I can't stress enough that the most basic text-only resume that communicates these two things clearly is going to be far more valuable to you than days spent on the perfect font and alignment.

To show you're qualified (#1 above) your experience will tell some of the story. However, you will want to highlight your applicable experience in a way that helps the hiring manager or recruiter quickly make the determination that your resume belongs on the keep pile, rather than the toss. How do you know what they're looking for? They tell you very clearly in the job description. It might be specific education or certifications. It could be a long list of technical skills or software. It could be hard-won leadership skills honed over the course of a career. Whatever it is, they have called it out specifically in the job description, so use that as a starting point for highlighting your experience.

You seem like a decent, honest person, so I probably don't even need to mention this, but... Do NOT lie about your experience or say you have skills that you do not actually possess. It will be much harder to explain why you got fired from your last job for lying on your job application than to explain a gap in your resume as you conduct a job search to find a role that is a great match for your skillset.

To be interesting enough (#2 above), your resume should be authentically you and include your unique approach, style, and way of being. Think about your current or most recent job. Now think about all the other people you've worked with that have the same title as yours. Although you may have the same title and possibly the same job description, you will definitely approach your work differently than anyone else based on your strengths, skills, work and life experiences, and a whole host of other factors. Highlight your authentic self and you will easily stand out from a sea of blandness where other candidates have chosen to use the same tired business clichés (any highly-motivated, results-driven professionals out there?).

Once the content on your resume is solid, you will want to update your career story on LinkedIn. Entire books have been written on how to best use this tool in the job search, but at a minimum, you need to ensure that your LinkedIn profile aligns with your resume. You don't want a hiring manager to review your resume, be impressed, and then get a completely different impression from your LinkedIn profile.

One of the positives about LinkedIn is that you're not constrained in the same way you would be on your resume. It doesn't have to fit neatly on 2 pages, so you have an opportunity to tell a more detailed story on this platform. Take advantage, since many people choose to do the minimums or a straight copy/paste from their resume. You can (and should!) share specialized skills, detailed accountabilities by role, leadership experience gained in a volunteer capacity, even feedback from managers and co-workers. You can also include links to websites, videos, supplementary documents, and anything else that helps tell a more robust story of why you're the best candidate for a particular job. LinkedIn also includes social capabilities, so you can share content that establishes you as an authority or thought leader on a topic.

You seem like a savvy and strategic person, so I probably don't even need to mention this, but... DO NOT give up this amazing opportunity to let your personal brand shine through! Your LinkedIn profile should support your resume and provide additional detail that may not fit on your resume due to space constraints. Spending extra time on this will absolutely help you differentiate yourself from other candidates that have only done the bare minimum.

### 3. Interview Prep

Preparing for the interview becomes crucial in the age of video interviews replacing the in-person interview. You absolutely **MUST** approach this as seriously as an in-person interview. Shower. Brush your teeth. And most importantly, practice in advance of the interview!

First, prepare your answers to possible questions ahead of time. Jot down notes on examples of your past work, including times when you've overcome challenges as well as what you learned if a challenge ended in an epic failure. It's good to have both types of experiences - anyone who has worked for more than a day has examples of times when something didn't go as planned. A simple internet search will help you find commonly asked interview questions. Make sure you've reviewed these in advance.

Once you have a few examples jotted down, practice saying your answers out loud. You don't need to memorize your answers, but you do want to make sure it sounds smooth and that you're comfortable with the story you're telling. When people get nervous, they have a tendency to ramble and by practicing ahead of time, you will sound far more articulate and calm, even if your nerves kick in.

You seem like a stylish, professional person, so I probably don't even need to mention this, but... Give consideration to your attire. Pajamas send a message to your brain that it's time to relax and fall asleep, which makes them a poor choice for an interview (even if no one can see your PJ pants on a call). You don't need to put on a 3-piece-suit for the occasion, but try to look professional and research dress guidelines for the organization ahead of time to get a sense for how the folks interviewing you will be dressed. You can check the organization's website or talk to people that work there (remember – you will have activated your network already, so this will be easy!). You don't want to be sporting a hoodie if everyone else is wearing button down shirts.

## 4. Starting a New Job

Yes, you can do onboarding and training during a pandemic or any other crisis. It might be different than the “old way” the organization used to do onboarding, but that doesn’t really affect you since you’ve never experienced the old way! Embrace that fact and whatever process and tools your new organization are using will be fine. If they ask for feedback and you have ideas, by all means share them! You can help improve the “new process” for your future co-workers.

I’ve talked to several people that have started new jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic and they’ve shared that some aspects of onboarding are actually made easier through technology. First, it’s a whole lot easier to remember all your teammates’ names when you can see them on your screen as you video chat or talk on the phone. That takes away the stress of remembering every single person you meet on your first day or week. Plus, in a world where your brain is working overtime to learn new people, processes, departments, tools, and acronyms, doing so from the comfort of your own space absolutely reduces the amount of overwhelm your brain experiences. There is a lot to be said for taking in that new information on your own turf.

I know people who have joined new teams and led new teams during the crisis. It’s a different way to meet and interact with people if you are all virtual, but it can still be very effective for team building. The most important thing to do is bring a genuine interest in the people on your team. If you treat everyone with kindness and respect, regardless of the physical distance between you, you will become close.

The second consideration (after treating everyone you meet with kindness and respect) is your personal brand. How do you want to be perceived by your new co-workers? What experience do you want them to have when working with you? Make sure you know the answer to these questions and then consistently show up that way while working. If you want to be perceived as efficient, approach your work efficiently. If you want to be perceived as a go-getter, take some initiative to go out and get. Whatever your personal brand, make sure you’re controlling it by deciding how you will share your authentic self and strengths with your team.

You seem really smart and great at what you do, especially if you’ve made it all the way to the point of starting a new job, so I almost feel like I don’t need to mention this, but... Don’t use a work at home role to slack off and spend it catching up on all those 80’s movies you missed the first time around! Starting a new job at any time, under any condition or circumstance, puts you in the position of needing to demonstrate the value you bring to an organization. Your employer is hoping they made the best choice among the sea of candidates they waded through to find you, so make it easy for them to see that it’s true.

## 5. Communication

You may be wondering, *“But what about my dog/cat/fish/child/parent/step-child/in-law/illness/circumstance/situation/other unnamed person, animal, or challenge that is making it more difficult to do my best work during this time?”* My best advice is this:

Communicate. Communicate. Communicate.

Communicate and clarify expectations for yourself and others. Communicate your availability if you have specific times when you have other commitments (caring for children, pets, or parents, for example). Communicate how your work is going. Communicate any obstacles preventing you from doing your work. Communicate to your team on how they are doing and ask that they do the same for you.

A misunderstanding never starts with too much communication.

You seem like you’ve got a great handle on stress management and mental health, so I probably don’t even need to mention this, but... During any sort of crisis, (but also just in general!) don’t try to do it all! The stress will consume you in short order. Be clear and realistic about what you are able and willing to do. Know that in times of uncertainty, communication can help lessen the fear, even if it doesn’t change the amount of ambiguity you’re facing. Your new co-workers will appreciate your honesty and authenticity and it will likely create or enhance an environment where they feel comfortable sharing in the same way.

## Final Thoughts

Job searching is not easy. If you've been doing it for any length of time, you're likely frustrated, disappointed, and disillusioned. Even if you are just getting started, you may be struggling with how to begin or with ignoring the negative voices on the media telling you it's impossible. Let me be the first to tell you it's possible to find a job. Surround yourself with others who support you and believe in you. When facing any challenge, it always helps to have a few people who have your back.

The basics we've covered in this e-book are the absolute best starting point. If you only take one piece of advice, it should be to reach out to everyone you know to share with them what you need and how they can help you in your job search. Even if you do nothing or very little to your resume and LinkedIn profile, activating your network will go a long way towards streamlining your job search. As the old adage says, "It's not what you know. It's who you know." Lean on who you know to help shine a light on what you know and why you'd be a great fit for the open position at their organization!

If you're still struggling after reading this and trying out the strategies outlined, you may want to consider working with a career coach. You can learn more, dive into our collection of resources, and schedule a FREE 30-minute call with a coach at [WorkAuthentically.com](https://www.WorkAuthentically.com).

## Thank You

Thank you for reading! I hope you found this helpful and took positive action by incorporating the strategies discussed into your job search. If you enjoyed this book, please consider leaving a five-star review. You can use this link:

[WorkAuthentically.com/ReviewGetOutOfYourPajamas](https://WorkAuthentically.com/ReviewGetOutOfYourPajamas)

I know you're busy and I genuinely appreciate your time. Your review can help others find this book, in addition to supporting me.

With gratitude,

Ally

## About the Author

Ally Bubb combines fun, honesty, and authenticity into her work as a career coach and speaker, teaching people to tell compelling career stories and take positive action because when people genuinely love what they do, our workplaces, homes, and world are transformed.

[Work Authentically](#) is reinventing the world of work by teaching people to leverage their unique style, approach, and way of being through presentations, workshops, and individual and group coaching. Sign up for our free weekly newsletter [here to receive exclusive career insights and inspiration](#).

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