

A RESOURCE FOR **CORONAVIRUS ECONOMIC IMPACT**

30-Point Game Plan to Find Your Next Job



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For many people, the job search process is stressful and full of dread - throw a pandemic in the mix and it can be outright paralyzing. But with an intentional plan in place, your job transition can be a season of personal and spiritual growth that realigns you with God's next steps for your life. Yes, there are limited options right now, but if you're committed to finding something, even if temporary and completely out of your wheelhouse, have hope.

This 30-point plan explains everything you need to do to find a new job. Each point supports the system as a whole, so take each step seriously.



1.

Begin with Prayer.

As you begin your job search, take a day of prayer (or longer if time allows). Spend this time in scripture, prayer, journaling and listening. What does God want to do in and through you during this next season of your life? Is there anything He wants to correct or change or refocus in your life? How did your past job glorify Him? Surrender yourself completely to His plans and purposes for your life and commit to daily seek Him first, in addition to seeking where He is leading you. *“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you”* Matthew 6:33.

2.


Create a Daily Schedule — And Stick with It.

When you're unemployed, your job is to find a job. You won't find the right opportunity if you search lazily. Rise at your usual work time, prepare for the day as you would any other, and commit yourself to six or eight hours of prospecting, networking, and preparing for interviews. Don't call it a day when you run out of opportunities to chase. Instead, network on social media or write blog posts to enhance your professional appearance. At quitting time, devote the evening to relaxation and family like you normally would. This schedule will keep you moving forward and stress-free.

3.

Have a Discussion with Your Family About the Future.

Whatever you do, do not hide your lack of work and your job search from your family. They deserve your honesty and they can provide immense support. Have an honest discussion with them about your situation and how you plan to fix it. Assure them that the family will be fine. God is your provider and you are trusting Him to lead you through this season. Be clear that your unemployment doesn't mean you are available at all hours. Your priority is finding work and you're committed to doing so.



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4.

Determine Your Career Goals.

Unemployment is the perfect time to think about your long-term career goals. Ask yourself some hard questions: Is your career path right for you? Can you see yourself doing it for the rest of your life? Is there anything else you'd rather do or that God has put on your heart regarding your career path? You may need to find something short term right now, but these are good things to consider. Is there a temporary opportunity that would enable you to gain transferable skills to a long term position that fits your goals? This may or may not be the case, but completing the mental and heart work here can equip you for a stronger job search.

5.

Organize Your Personal Finances.

A period without income can wreak havoc on your finances, so get them in order as soon as possible. It's smart to prepare yourself to live for six months without income. Use your stimulus and unemployment benefits wisely by living below your means. Save as much as you can. Organize a budget if you don't have one already and tighten any unnecessary spending.

6.

Determine Your Compensation Requirements.

How much do you need to be paid to maintain your lifestyle? What benefits do you require (health insurance, vacation time, travel reimbursement, etc.)? Determine how much you'll request, how much you expect to get, and the absolute lowest you'll accept. Knowing this information before you negotiate will give you leverage. During this season, be prepared that employers may be offering lower compensation. Negotiate with them that you'll take a lower starting salary with the promise of a salary conversation in 3-6 months.

7.

List Your Achievements.

Employers are more concerned about your achievements at previous jobs than your duties. Brainstorm things you achieved, conquered, or improved. For instance, “Reduced customer support tickets by 30% over six months” sounds far more enticing to a potential employer than “Managed the customer support ticket process.” Use your achievements as résumé bullets and talking points during interviews and phone calls.

8.

Create an Adaptable Cover Letter.

It's smart to craft a unique cover letter for each job, but that doesn't mean you should start from scratch every time. Create a template document that hits all of the important points of your professional career, including everything that might be relevant. When it's time to send a letter for a particular job, just duplicate your template and customize.

9.

Refresh Your Resumé.

The last time you looked at your resumé was probably during your last job search. That might have been years ago. Employers are especially concerned with what you've done recently, so update this document with current information. The resumé should communicate your objective (even if that's temporary work for this season), qualifications, experience and accomplishments clearly and accurately. This is your first impression with a potential employer, so spend some time on this and consult a resumé writing service if you struggle.



Your resumé should communicate your objective, qualifications, experience and accomplishments clearly and accurately.

10.

Gather Any Addendum Documents.

Depending on your career or previous jobs, you may have additional documents that will support your search and interviews. This may include references, a portfolio, awards, association memberships, diplomas, certifications, etc. Gather these materials so you don't scramble for them when you target job opportunities.

11.

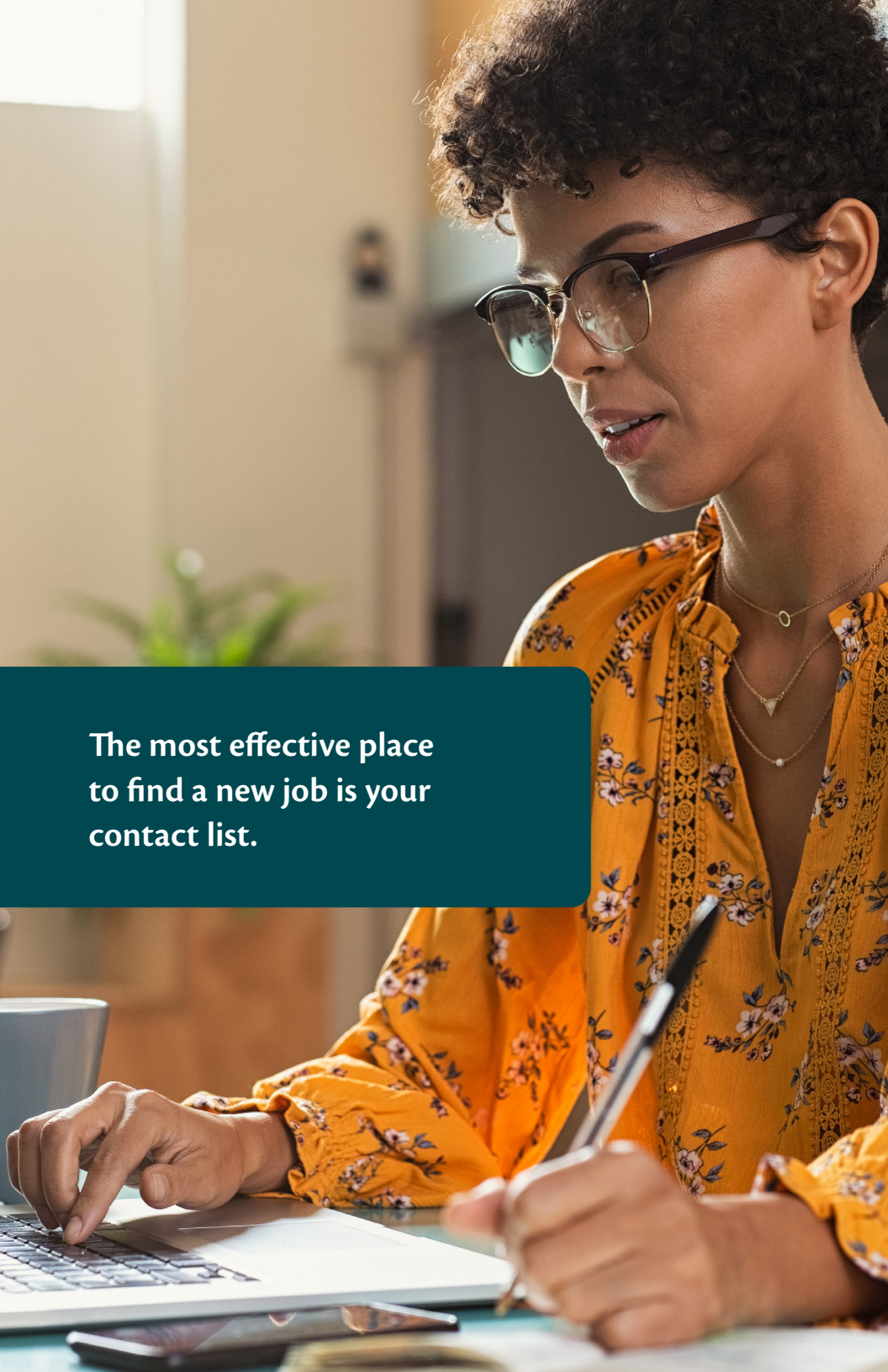
Update Your LinkedIn Profile.

70% of job searchers find positions through networking, and LinkedIn is fantastic for it. Polish your LinkedIn profile. Update your experience and edit your summary to highlight anything new. Make sure to state your availability. Engage with your connections and relevant community groups to showcase your interest and meet new people.

12.

Refine Your Elevator Pitch.

An elevator pitch is a two or three sentence mini-speech that introduces yourself, explains what you do, and tactfully mentions that you're looking for work. Here's an example: "Hi, I'm Mike Smith. I'm an IT security specialist with 15 years of experience creating disaster plans. I used to work for IBM, but now I'm looking for a new opportunity." Eliminate any industry jargon, format your pitch so it sounds smart when you say it outloud, and practice it a few times so it feels natural.



The most effective place
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13.

Reach Out to Your Network.

The most effective place to find a new job is your contact list. Not only do your contacts know what type of job would suit you, they'll also push to get you an interview. Hiring managers usually prefer to hire a recommended candidate, anyway. Speak to your old coworkers, your family, friends, and even friends-of friends. Ask for leads about job opportunities or introductions to people hiring. Be completely honest with your network about your need for work and what you're looking for in a job. And don't limit your network to colleagues. Be sure to reach out to your church or small group so they can be praying with you through this process.



14.

Call a Recruiter or Employment Agency (optional).

Recruiters (whether a single person or an agency) are excellent sources of opportunity. They get paid by the employer when an applicant is placed, so working with one will cost you nothing. It's like having someone search for a job on your behalf. The recruiter will require your resumé and a brief phone meeting, so start this process early. Find a recruiter by Googling "recruiter [your industry]" to find one that specializes in your field. (Do not rely solely on the recruiter. Conduct your own job search alongside.)

15.

Take a Personality Assessment.

Unemployment is a perfect opportunity to evaluate yourself. A personality assessment will help you identify how God designed you and what He has planned for your life. Remember Ephesians 2:10, *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”* A quality test will evaluate your personality, skills, interests and values. Use this information to determine the type of role that’s best for you. Many people find these assessments enlightening.



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16.

Clean Up Your Social Media Profiles.

Employers know most of us are on social media. To get an honest look at a candidate, they often visit our social media profiles. Go through yours and remove or hide anything you think an employer might object to. Even if everything has an innocent explanation, some might seem objectionable without context. Look at each post through the eyes of someone who doesn't know you well. For best results, make all of your profiles private (except LinkedIn).

17.

Google Your Own Name.

Someone may have complained about you on an obscure forum, left a poor review, or mistakenly accused you of committing harm or a crime. Or maybe there's mention of one of your accomplishments or an award you won. In either case, you can be sure a hiring manager will Google your name, so you should too in order to be prepared.

18.

Call Your Old Competitors.

The competitors of your previous employer may consider you for a position since they know you can perform your role in a similar environment. Even if they don't have positions advertised, it's worth your time to give them a call. When you speak to someone, make it clear that you have significant applicable experience.

19.

Prepare Your Interview Clothes.

Don't wait until interview day to try on your old suit or look for a nice pair of shoes. Select the right outfit for an interview and place it somewhere safe. When your first interview comes along, the last thing you want to be worried about is your clothing.

20.

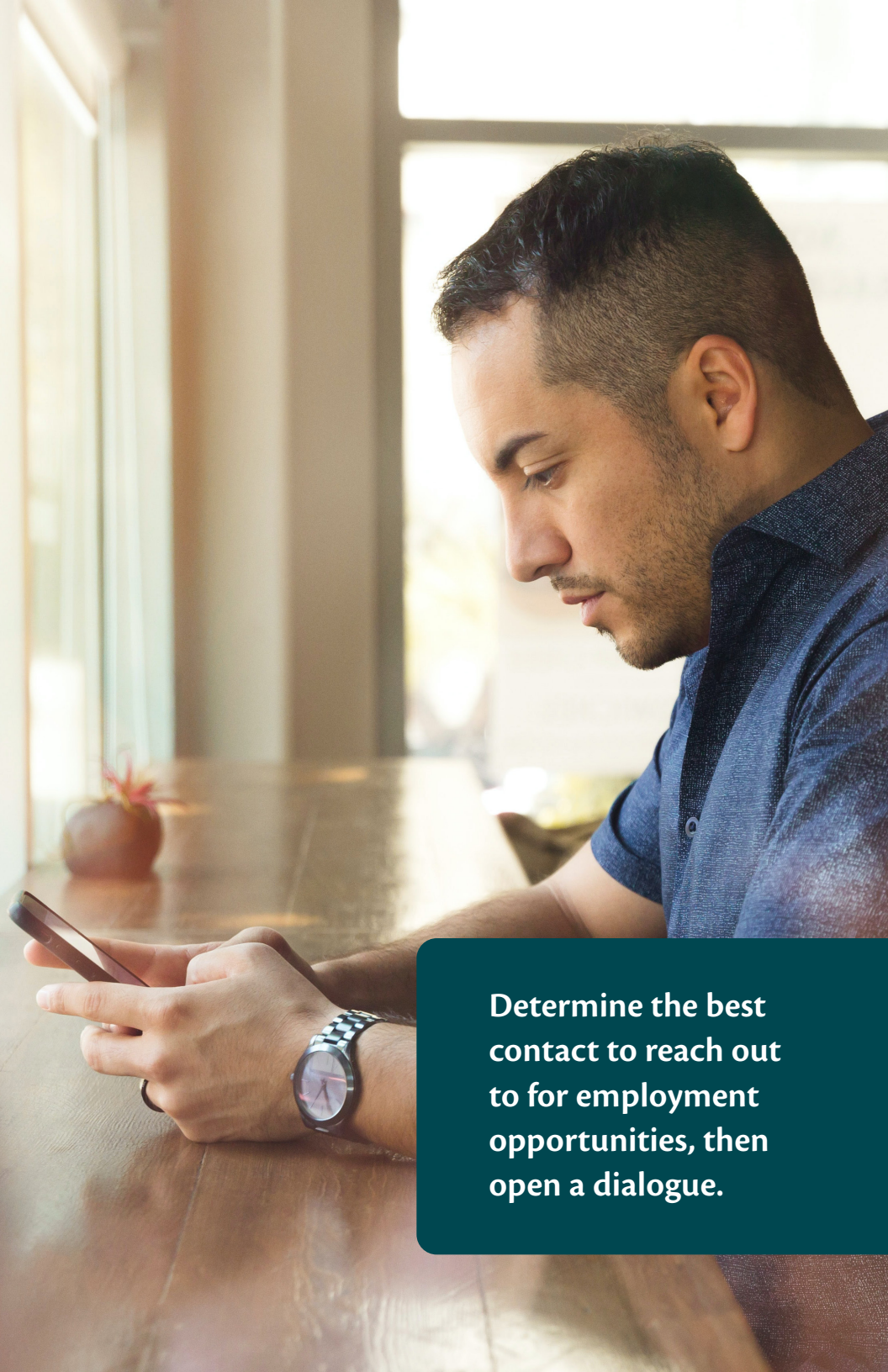
Request References.

Compile a list of people who know about your work, habits, and experience. They should be comfortable talking about you should a hiring manager call. You need at least one reference who will speak about your character (like a friend), one who will speak about your job performance (like an ex-boss), and one person who will speak about your expertise (clients or competitors). Then contact each person and request their permission to use them as a reference.

21.

List Websites You'll Check Regularly for Job Postings.

Not all job search platforms are equal. Some might be more suitable for your purposes than others. For instance, Monster.com has jobs for everyone, but JrDevJobs.com is a niche website for junior software developers. There's likely a job search platform for your field or industry. Make a list of websites you'll search daily and terms you'll search for. Commit to checking them every morning. If any of your sites offer automatic notifications by email, sign up.



Determine the best contact to reach out to for employment opportunities, then open a dialogue.

22.

Identify Companies You'd Like to Work For.

In many cases, it's easier to identify the type of company you'd like to work for to narrow your search. You may even know specific companies you would consider. If this is the case, list these targets and create a plan of attack. Determine the best contact to reach out to for employment opportunities, then open a dialogue. Even though these companies may not be hiring right now, it'll be good to have that list for the future.

23.

Create an Application Plan.

While most positions are placed through a person's network, filling out applications is better than sitting around waiting for an opportunity. Completing these applications, however, can be grueling, especially when they each ask for the same 20-30 fields.

Compile a document with answers to each of these questions so you can copy/paste and adjust accordingly to make it slightly easier. Commit to completing five or six applications a day, spread throughout the day, if you find the task especially monotonous. For each application, set a reminder to follow up seven days later.

24.

Look Into Resources from Your Old Employer.

If you were laid off from your previous position, your employer may offer resources (through the human resources office or a transition company) to help you find a new job. For instance, they might give you access to resumé writing services, job placement services, a specialty recruiter, or interviewing lessons. Take advantage of any help you can get.

25.

Consider Consulting/ Contracting.

Consulting during your job search has a number of benefits:

- It brings in income when money is tight.
- It keeps your skills fresh.
- It keeps you part of your industry so others see that you're still active.
- It opens the door to new contacts who may hire you.

Most importantly, consulting shows future employers that you aren't lazy because you didn't use your unemployment period as a minivacation.

**Consulting or contracting
during your job search
keeps your skills fresh.**



25.

Consider Consulting/ Contracting.

You may decide that self-employment is the perfect job for you. To get started, reach out to your network. Inform them you've begun consulting and request they forward you any work they know of. This can be especially useful right now as employers may not be hiring full or even part time positions, but just need some temporary or project-specific work. It may be easier for you to get hired for this than a full time position.

26.

Look Into Temporary Employment.

If you aren't able to consult or work as a contractor, consider joining a temp agency for sporadic, part-time work. These opportunities are great ways to bring some income home, stay busy, and meet new people. Once you find a permanent job, you can easily part ways with the temp agency without burning any bridges.

27.

Chat with a Mentor.

A mentor is someone you admire who gives sound, biblical, reasonable life and career advice. It may be a parent, grandparent or relative. It could be an old employer or manager. Or it might be someone you met through an association or online group. Open a conversation with a mentor and ask for their guidance about finding a new opportunity. They may have a unique perspective or advice that applies to your field.

28.

Ask for Feedback from Ex-Coworkers.

Self-awareness is important, which means you need objective, outside feedback from people who know you professionally. Call some ex-coworkers and ask them for their thoughts on your performance and work behavior. Insist they offer advice or identify areas for improvement. Use this information to improve how you sell yourself (through your resumé, cover letter, applications and interviews) and to improve your performance at your next job.

29.

Identify Potential Interview Questions.

Brainstorm a list of questions an interviewer would likely ask. Consider general topics and questions specific to your career, experience and accomplishments. It may help to speak with someone (perhaps an ex-coworker) who recently interviewed for a similar position to find out what questions they were asked. Then, generate and rehearse answers to those questions.

30.

Practice Interviewing.

If you haven't interviewed in awhile, you're probably rusty. Have someone you know conduct a mock interview to roleplay the entire experience. Treat the mock interview like a real one: Dress appropriately and come prepared with talking points and questions. If interviewing causes you anxiety, this experience will help you become comfortable with the meeting.

If you were laid off or furloughed, remember you are not alone. There are a lot of people facing similar situations during this challenging economic season. For most, it is a reflection of the times in which we find ourselves, not your performance, value or worth. The enemy will try to feed you lies to keep you discouraged. Commit yourself to daily replacing those lies with the truth that you are a child of God, He is your provider and He is always working for your good and His glory. As you move through this transition with your eyes on Him, He will lead you right where He wants you.

Find a Coach, Change Your Life

Crown's Career Direct
Coaching Package will help you
find clarity, chart your course,
and ignite your passion.

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Advancing God's Principles of Stewardship and Life.