

# 3 Things That Could Get You a Job During the Pandemic

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## SPEAKERS

Hannah Mahan, Roxanne Farkas, Nadia Mei, Ian Daly, Jenelle Dean, Thuy Hong Phan

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### **Ian Daly** 00:08

Hello, and welcome to Triton Tools and Tidbits. My name is Ian Daly and today we're going to talk about how to get a job during COVID. We'll be talking to the Career Center here on campus. And I'm gonna try and showcase some less intuitive tips. Some things that you might not have thought of, or that might not come up in your search for how to get a job during COVID.

### **Nadia Mei** 00:36

Temp agencies really tend to be underrated.

### **Roxanne Farkas** 00:39

For the shy person who doesn't want to get themselves out there and doesn't want to do Zoom, I'm suggesting informational interview.

### **Jenelle Dean** 00:48

So, our alumni have really stepped up over the past few months.

### **Ian Daly** 00:54

I'm going to assume that you've seen some career advice already. It is hard to avoid it. No matter what, a counseling session with the Career Center is a good first step. They are doing sessions via Zoom, and you can sign up in Handshake. But if you've heard a lot of different advice, I think these three tips might be something new.

### **Ian Daly** 01:22

A little background on me. I am a staff member at UC San Diego. I work for the Student Life Business Office and I'm a Financial Analyst. I am also a UCSD alum - I graduated in 2017. But I arrived first in 2008. In between there I took some time off. But it gave me a bit of clarity when I came back in 2015. Some of this episode is informed by personal experience, but usually through the lens of advice from

the Career Center. That's especially true for the first piece of advice, where you heard Nadia talking about temp agencies.

**Nadia Mei** 02:06

Hi, my name is Nadia Mei, I'm an Associate Director in the Career Center and my specialty area is health professions, but I also do general career advising as well.

**Ian Daly** 02:14

There's a chance you haven't heard of a temp agency. So, a temp agency collects a pool of workers, who they then hire out to various businesses who need help during periods of high-volume accounting, or HR hiring processes. And you might think that that makes them an incredibly competitive place to be, but...

**Nadia Mei** 02:37

From what I've heard, temp agencies really do kind of thrive during recessions because - yeah, a lot of companies or places are looking to maybe temporarily hire employees, on a case-by-case basis, and if they get more funding or if things turn around, then maybe the position could become permanent.

**Ian Daly** 02:54

Here's why I think temp agencies could be useful. They don't have, anecdotally, the highest reputation. People assume if you have a temp job, it's because you, quote-unquote, failed somewhere, and that you should be looking for real job with health benefits and career potential and blah, blah, blah. Because it's a recession, you are going to benefit from being somewhere that a lot of other people aren't. One of the most annoying things about job search techniques is that it's kind of a zero-sum game. We can give you advice on how to do your mental health the best or how to exercise the best. And we can give the same advice to every single person that listens. But job hunting, you need to be the place that other people aren't. And I'm sure there will be more people going to a temp agency now. But there's still going to be people who are turned off by the lack of respectability. And that is where you can thrive. Finding spaces where people aren't is going to be a bit of a theme this episode.

**Nadia Mei** 04:06

It's also a great way, I tell students, to test drive a company and really see - is this the industry you want to work in? Is this the job you want? I know of a company that had a really great reputation and then the experience somebody had inside the company was completely different.

**Ian Daly** 04:23

The thing I like about temp agencies is the way it takes some of the pressure off. If you've ever looked for a job, it is a full-time job. It takes energy, and intensity, and intentionality. And it can be so exhausting that by the end of the day, you just think you don't want to apply for anything anymore. But when there's a temp agency, when you have recruiters out there looking for a job for you, it makes it easier. Stuff comes your way. Things work out a little bit more. And the job might not be perfect, but it's a job. It pays you money. It builds your resume. It gets you contacts. It gets you people you can add to your LinkedIn and gets you people you can list as references on your next job. And like Nadia said, you get to test drive a company.

**Nadia Mei** 05:13

I would also even recommend registering with multiple temp agencies. Maybe different kinds, talking to recruiters. You know, most recruiters are great. There may be some that are not as helpful, but trying to find a fit with a recruiter who's really - or a temp agency recruiter who's going to see what areas you're interested in, they'll probably have you do a typing test and you know, make an analysis of what skills you have; hard skills and soft skills - but they really could be an advocate for you and give you some ideas of what - their colleagues too - of what other agencies they know that may be hiring or, you know, jobs that are coming about.

**Ian Daly** 05:44

When I was new to San Diego, I had four different temp agencies who were looking for positions for me. And I got to structure my work schedule around the time I needed to be at school, going to work until two and then coming to school for my night classes. It was incredibly helpful. I didn't like every temp job I worked. But when I had a really bad experience, my temp agency helped me get out of it.

**Nadia Mei** 06:09

Absolutely. And, you know, all of us have had jobs that may not be great, but, you know, it pays the bills. And you always get new skills, no matter how terrible the job could be, you are going to pick up skills, you are going to make connections and you'll take that with you in the future.

**Ian Daly** 06:23

Sometimes even reaching out and applying at a temp agency can be a little daunting. They do expect you to have a resume, they do expect you to have references. And if you aren't really ready to do that, well, I'm gonna go ahead and recommend the Career Center again.

**Hannah Mahan** 06:39

Students would come to me if they have any questions regarding building a resume, building a cover letter. If they're looking at an application and just kind of want somebody else's eyes - set of eyes to go over, it. If somebody wanted any interview tips or anything like that. We can also help with applications and getting into grad school, answering any questions revolving around that.

**Ian Daly** 07:02

That's Hannah.

**Hannah Mahan** 07:03

Hello, my name is Hannah Mahan, and I am a Career Peer Educator at the Career Center. But I work as a liaison through OASIS.

**Ian Daly** 07:10

And as you can hear, the purview of the Career Center is quite large. Anything that you might want to work on or think about related to your career, they can help you with. And you can schedule an interview through Handshake. Now, temp agencies can be useful, but they don't really showcase every angle of every career path. And if you're someone who's struggled with knowing what you want to do in your life, you heard Roxy Farkas a little earlier talk about an informational interview.

**Roxanne Farkas** 07:42

It's about who you know, it's your network.

**Ian Daly** 07:44

And informational interviews can be a pretty effective way to build that.

**Roxanne Farkas** 07:48

My name is Roxy Farkas, I'm the Associate Director at the Career Center and I oversee working with students. I engage with students on campus as well as employers locally and globally. And I work closely with engaging with alumni through advancement.

**Ian Daly** 08:07

So, what am I talking about when I say an informational interview?

**Roxanne Farkas** 08:11

So instead of you being interviewed, you interview someone else, so it's not so scary. And all you have to do is find that person and email, or send them a quick DM message, ask them three questions about themselves and what you want to know about them.

**Ian Daly** 08:30

Now, this is certainly still doable via Zoom if you feel comfortable doing that. But the idea of just sending them a message- a message that's all text - kind of takes the pressure off. And you can send them all sorts of questions. What did you do yesterday at your job? What is a traditional entry level title? Do you hire interns? What does the future look like in your job field? It's just important that you not ask them for a job.

**Roxanne Farkas** 09:05

It's about having a conversation and not asking for anything.

**Ian Daly** 09:09

Which might seem especially hard at a time when you feel like you're drowning. I have never actually used the informational interview technique. But the thing that I like about it is that it puts the onus of answering on the other person. You're going to hear a lot of advice over the next couple of months about how to be an ideal candidate.

**Hannah Mahan** 09:34

So, I recommend that students pretty much have a completely different resume for most jobs...

**Roxanne Farkas** 09:40

...because it tells the employer and the reader that you care.

**Nadia Mei** 09:45

I would say like if there's certain companies, you're targeting read news about what's going on with them.

**Thuy Hong Phan** 09:49

One of the biggest mistakes that I see is students not necessarily tailoring their resume to, you know, the specific job they're applying to.

**Ian Daly** 10:04

The last voice you heard was Hong.

**Thuy Hong Phan** 10:07

So, my name is Hong, I am currently working as a Career Peer Educator at the Career Center.

**Ian Daly** 10:13

Now, none of that advice is bad advice. Just exhausting. And the dirty little secret about me is that I've never tailored a resume, for any job. I have submitted basically the generic same resume that I've had. I'm not saying don't do it. I'm saying I couldn't do it. And I'm not sure I really recognized how much anxiety it gave me to try when I was an undergrad. And that anxiety and impostor syndrome goes hand in hand with another piece of advice that Hong has.

**Thuy Hong Phan** 10:50

But I also see a lot of students not being confident in what they've done.

**Ian Daly** 10:56

She sees students who put paid work over classwork, or volunteer work, or lab work, which might be more applicable, just because the paid work has a stamp of approval that comes with a salary. And here I'm talking about paid work, like hourly time at a grocery store when you're applying for a job at a bioengineering firm. Doesn't make a lot of sense to have that on there. But sometimes it takes someone giving you the right advice for you to know how to do that. And that can be the Career Center. But that can also be UC San Diego alumni.

**Jenelle Dean** 11:33

You know, 200,000-plus folks out there in the world have graduated from UC San Diego. And despite whatever experience they had, they know that there are current students, not only going through the tough college experience, but going through it at a very tough time.

**Ian Daly** 11:52

That's Jenelle.

**Jenelle Dean** 11:53

Hi, my name is Jenelle Dean, and I am class of 2005, and currently the Director of Student and Alumni Engagement at UC San Diego.

**Ian Daly** 12:02

UCSD doesn't have the strongest reputation when it comes to alumni engagement. You think USC, you think Harvard, maybe you even think UCLA. And, who knows what the reason is. Who knows if it would be solved by a football team. But not having an anecdotally strong alumni network means that a lot of students don't tap into it at all. And like with temp agencies, being somewhere that other people overlook, is an especially useful place to be during a recession.

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**Jenelle Dean** 12:36

Alumni have offered to mentor current students through our Tritons Connect digital platform.

**Ian Daly** 12:44

You might not know what Tritons Connect is.

**Jenelle Dean** 12:46

Tritons Connect is very similar to LinkedIn, but it is specifically for the UC San Diego community. And so, alumni can sign in, register and sign in. And then they have an online directory of other alumni and folks who are in the platform. They can raise their hand to mentor current students or even other alumni who want to be mentored. There's a job portal within the platform, as well as groups and subgroups based off of affinity.

**Ian Daly** 13:22

So, if you wanted to marry tip number two, and tip number three - a informational interview request with a UCSD alumnus - would have a pretty high response rate on Tritons Connect.

**Ian Daly** 13:43

COVID is weird. And I don't always have the words to describe it. At the end of the day, I think it's just a really, really hard time.

**Roxanne Farkas** 13:54

64% of employers are revoking offers to full time recruitment and interns.

**Ian Daly** 14:01

The stats are grim. There was a report published in April 2019 by the Stanford Institute for Economic and Policy Research, which says that people who graduate into a recession will earn less money for 10 to 15 years.

**Roxanne Farkas** 14:20

Will it affect him? Yes, I think right now my son is affected.

**Ian Daly** 14:24

You're going to have to fight a little harder. You're going to have to ask for that raise, to push for that promotion. You're going to have to refine your skill set. This isn't fair. And it shouldn't be based on luck. But right now, that's a factor. It's healthy to complain about it. And the staff here will listen. But you've got to start looking for solutions. Campus wants to support you And the staff wants to help. We won't always know how. Maybe some of us got lucky in the game of economic roulette. You can take the disadvantages that were given and let your situation improve you.

**Ian Daly** 15:26

I hope you enjoyed this episode. For Triton Tools and Tidbits, I've been Ian Daly. Thank you