The Job Search During COVID-19.

What are college students looking for now?
KEY FINDINGS: APRIL 2020

● How are students prioritizing their career search amidst all the change and stress?
  ○ **Students are still finding time to engage**, but they are balancing the job search with other concerns like family, physical health and mental health.

● Are candidates changing their career priorities and plans? What’s changing in the talent pools, and what’s not?
  ○ **Students want personalized proactive outreach from employers**. Regardless of how confident students are about the future, they want to stay connected.

● How are candidates navigating the virtual world, in terms of both searching for roles and the nature of those roles being virtual (at least for now)?
  ○ **Applicant volumes are in flux across sectors** with increased interest in non-profit, pharma, and healthcare
  ○ **Students location preferences have remained the same** but they are more open to gig work

● What are effective ways to reach students and build authentic brand / relationships with them virtually?
  ○ **Students are quickly switching to digital recruiting** and are looking for support from their universities and connection with employers.
METHODOLOGY

- **Handshake platform data** Handshake has the largest early talent network with over 5,000,000 active students. We leveraged our platform to supplement survey data to uniquely pair what students and employers are saying with how they’re behaving.

- **Students survey** (N=1,002) We ran a student survey connecting with 1,000 current students about how COVID-19 has impacted their education, their lives, and how they view the future.

- **Employer survey** (N=192) We also ran an employer survey that connected with those active on the Handshake platform specifically recruiting and specialized in early talent.
I know school should be my biggest concern, but my biggest concern right now is maintaining relationships with people that I'm not gonna be able to see for a while. And trying to utilize technology to be able to video chat them.”

—Sophomore, April 2020
How are students prioritizing their career search amidst all the change and stress?
Job search has been eclipsed by family & health concerns, but is still on student’s minds

Finding a job is lower priority in comparison to health and family.

77%

Of students said getting a good job quickly is one of their top three concerns

N = 1002 student respondents to a survey.

---

Student rankings of importance

- Family: 4.2
- Physical health: 4.2
- Mental health: 3.9
- Job search: 3.4
- Social life: 3.3
- School: 3.1

Items ranked on a 5-point scale. 5 is most important; 1 is least important.
N = 40 student respondents to a diary study.
Students are split about their job prospects

Employers still hiring can win hearts and minds with simple outreach to students not confident in their future work opportunities

48%

Of students not confident they’ll find a job or internship in the next 12 months

52%

Of students are confident they’ll find a job or internship in the next 12 months
Reach out: Students *not confident* about the future want *proactive engagement* from employers about open roles

66%

Of students who are not confident about job prospects want to know which jobs and internships are *still available*

57%

Of students who are not confident about job prospects want to be contacted with a *personalized message* regarding internships and full-time roles

Source: Handshake student COVID-19 survey, March 2020
Whether confident or not about the future, students want the same thing: more contact from employers.

- Make it clear which jobs and internships are still available: 66% (Unconfident), 63% (Confident)
- Send personalized messages with updates on internships and job opportunities: 57% (Unconfident), 51% (Confident)
- Offer virtual informational sessions: 45% (Unconfident), 41% (Confident)
- Offer virtual coaching for interviews with their company: 38% (Unconfident), 35% (Confident)
- Help connect me with alumni: 30% (Unconfident), 25% (Confident)
- Arrange virtual office treks: 29% (Unconfident), 22% (Confident)

Source: Handshake student COVID-19 survey, March 2020
Students are still applying to jobs and engaging with employers across the ecosystem

59%
Of students view jobs on the Handshake platform

53%
Increase in students attending virtual events since February
Students are still active online and engaging with outreach from employers

Over half

Of messages sent about jobs in the past four weeks were opened by students

2 in 3

Students are looking for a job

7 in 10

Students are currently conducting an online career search

45%

Of seniors still looking for a job, plan to network online
Are candidates changing their career priorities and plans? What’s changing in the talent pool, and what’s not?
Amidst the crisis, certain industries are posting fewer jobs but students are still engaging with employers.

The most active majors in the past four weeks are:

1. Business
2. Social Sciences
3. Engineering
4. Computer Science
5. Civics & Government
No slowdown: Business and STEM students are applying to jobs in the same sectors as before the pandemic.
Overall industry preferences have shifted very little but there are some roles that have seen an increase interest:

- **19%**: Increase in students interested in Respiratory Therapy
- **15%**: Increase in students interested in Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics
- **32%**: Increase in students interested in postal services work
- **17%**: Increase in students interested in volunteering
Students are applying to jobs in the same regions as before the pandemic. They’re still willing to relocate for a job.

Applications by role location

Before COVID-19 Outbreak: 61% Yes, 39% No

After COVID-19 Outbreak: 58% Yes, 42% No
And they’re now more open to gig work to generate cash

Of **seniors** would consider a job in the gig economy

Of **underclassmen** would consider a job in the gig economy

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before COVID-19 Outbreak</th>
<th>After COVID-19 Outbreak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How are candidates navigating the virtual world, in terms of both searching for roles and the nature of those roles being virtual (at least for now)?
The road ahead: Students need significant help getting started in their job searches

99% of students said they wanted their university career services help at this time.

Starting a career search for the first time is daunting. Students want help from career services to ramp up online job searches.

They also want to meet employers - especially those still hiring from their school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schedule virtual career advising sessions</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show me what employers are still hiring at my school</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide feedback on my online profile</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate virtual events with employers</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate virtual alumni engagement</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The new campus visit: Seniors want help polishing their profiles and connecting to employers virtually

69% Of all students wants their career center to help facilitate interactions and communications with employers

74% Of seniors wants their career center to help facilitate interactions and communications with employers
Without access to on-campus resources and processes, students are focusing on their digital presence.

**Seniors**

- **44%** Plan to network online in the coming weeks

**All students**

- **59%** Plan to update their online profiles in the coming weeks
- **20%** Plan to attend a virtual recruiting event

---

Source: Handshake student COVID-19 survey, March 2020
Ready and willing: Students are interested and able to work remotely

84% of students would consider a remote job/internship

75% of students are set up and able to do a remote job/internship from home
What are effective ways to reach students and build authentic brand / relationships with them virtually?
Employers are shifting to digital approaches to connect with students about available roles.

- **237%** Increase in virtual events*
- **2,500%** Increase in virtual interviews*
- **257%** Increase in messages sent**
- **825%** Increase in virtual career fairs*

*Source: Handshake platform data, March 30, 2020-April 13, 2020 (planned events) as compared to April 1, 2019-April 27, 2019

**Source: Handshake platform data, March 9, 2020-April 13, 2020 (planned events) as compared to March 11, 2019-April 8, 2019