

# Advancing Your Career and Social Distancing



Life as we know it has changed quickly in the last couple of weeks. Your normal routine of going to the office Monday through Friday has been halted. With good reason. The need to socially distance ourselves from others in this time of crisis is real. With all the unknowns, there's no denying that the economic impact is going to be significant.

In a time of fear and not knowing, there's good news. As people are spending more and more time at home, that means they're spending increased time online. Virtual happy hours, shopping, and yes, networking are becoming the new norm. Just because it's more or less impossible to meet in person, doesn't mean that you still can't network and keep progressing in your career.

## Catch Up

Reality as we knew it was abruptly stopped in its tracks in the last week or two. We're being asked to slow down. Sure, it's a tough adjustment. Fortunately, this time is a great opportunity to catch up with friends and former colleagues. Reach out to that old boss you haven't talked to in years. Ask them how they're doing and what they've been up to. Pick their brain about what's going on with their company and industry wide.

## Increase Your Online Presence

This one is a no-brainer. With the sudden influx of people working remotely,

there's no time like the present to make yourself relevant on the Internet. How does your LinkedIn profile look? Have you updated your resume and professional summary? What about that profile picture from 10 years ago?

There's no time like the present to make your personal brand known. What are your strengths? How about passions? Do you have any unique skill sets that companies are looking for?

If you're not sure what the process of rebranding looks like, see what people you look up to are doing. What do their professional profiles look like? If you want to take it a step further, reach out to these people and ask for their advice. You'll likely find yourself surprised with how willing others are to help.

## **Keep Learning**

With extra time on your hands, now's the perfect opportunity to learn and advance your existing skills. There's no shortage of accredited online sources to help you learn, earn a certification, and beef up your resume.

If you're not sure how to go about it, contact a professional recruiter. They're experts in not only helping employers attract top job candidates. They're also well versed in advising job seekers on how they can become qualified for the jobs they seek.

## **Become a Resource**

Most of us haven't seen anything like this in our lifetime. No question, it feels weird to be asked to help by doing nothing. While that might be the case for public health, it's not for businesses. At a time where businesses are tightening their purse strings, there's an increasing demand for specialized skill sets to keep business going.

Now is a great time to consider offering your skills on a consultative basis. Consulting is a great way to not only offset lost income, but make a positive, meaningful difference in a time of need.

No one is going to argue that our realities have become vastly different than they were only a short time ago. Yes, times ahead remain uncertain. Yes, the economy

has, and will continue to slow. That doesn't mean that your career has to though. In fact, there's no reason you can't accelerate the progression toward your professional goals. With a little creativity and productive use of your time, you can come out of these difficult times more primed for success than you were before.