

# Job Searching, Post-Pandemic

Many alumni are currently searching for a job, whether by necessity or choice. In either instance, the pandemic has allowed for a period of reflection for those seeking a new opportunity. Following are three current hiring trends and the resources available from the Alumni Association to help you more effectively navigate your career path.

1

## Agility

Due to the pandemic — and subsequent acceleration of technology in the last 18 months — organizations have had to become increasingly nimble to react to change. For that reason, they are looking for employees who possess the adaptability quotient — the ability to adapt to change and innovate quickly. This means highlighting your agility when it comes to switching careers, changing industries, and rebranding your skills.

The Alumni Career Program provides resources for you to build this new agility muscle. A three-pronged approach sets you up for a successful career change: clarify your goals, analyze the market, and remarket your transferable skills. Working with an Alumni Career coach allows you to reflect on and better understand your skills, interests, motivations, and goals. Attending career sessions — such as Industry Projections for Your Job Search: Landing a Job in the COVID-19 Market — and using the Alumni Career Program's self-assessment tool and resume guide should help ensure that your skills match the current market demands.

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2

## Lifelong Learning

Another emerging trend is for job seekers to demonstrate a willingness to build new skills and strengthen existing ones through online learning. Beyond a four-year degree, candidates with credentials in non-degree courses are now piquing employers' interest. Enrolling in skill-

based online career development courses is particularly beneficial right now for those workers most affected by job losses and reductions during the pandemic: specifically, millennials, Generation Z, minorities, and women.

The Alumni Education Gateway ([alumni.umich.edu/education-gateway](http://alumni.umich.edu/education-gateway)) provides an important portal to connect alumni with a plethora of online educational content provided by the various schools, colleges, and units across the University. In addition, Michigan Online ([online.umich.edu](http://online.umich.edu)) provides an excellent platform populated with everything from teach-outs and courses to lectures and podcasts. Taking extra online courses illustrates a commitment to your career and rebranding direction while also providing an easy conversation point during interviews.

3

## Soft Skills

Career professionals have long looked at an applicant's emotional intelligence (EQ) as a key predictor of long-term career success. EQ is the ability to understand, use, and manage your own emotions in positive ways in the workplace. With the pandemic transforming the in-person work world into one of virtual interactions, these softer skills (empathy, listening, critical thinking, and clear communication) are now more important than ever. Employers are now looking to hire those who embody these characteristics, given that managers now also must function as coaches to their teams while supervising from a distance.

Though sometimes seen as the softer and, thus, less important side of career development over a lifespan, EQ will continue to be the bedrock of sustained careers, particularly as technological advances like artificial intelligence become more commonplace. For resources on how alumni might grow in this regard, visit the Alumni Career Program website and check out the many past and upcoming alumni career programs on virtual work, fatigue, and collaboration, such as *Using Zoom Styles to Be More Effective (and Happier)* and *Managing Virtually*.

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