

# Don't Stop Your Job Search in December

The job market isn't slowing down - there's good news!

There has been a myth in the Australian job market that recruitment practically stops from mid-December until after Australia Day. This hasn't been true for a number of years, and even though 2020 has been a cracker, there are also opportunities.

Expert Recruiter and Project Displaced volunteer Dana Sarkissian explains why.

Q It's the time of year when things normally slow down and traditionally this has meant the number of jobs drops off. What's different this year?

This year we've found a lot of companies want to proceed with recruitment because they want to start the new year with their teams lined up and ready to go.

Also the travel restrictions mean that the C-Suite and other senior decision makers will be more available, so recruitment will keep moving.

Previously no one at that decision making level would be around but with no one going overseas, people will still be contactable, so decisions will be made more quickly than before. Many people will keep working through festive season because their businesses are flat chat or they're playing catch-up on the year that was lost.

So this means, if there's no slow down from companies – keep looking, keep applying, keep reaching out.

Q What industries are particularly strong?

In Australia, businesses that might have outsourced specific roles or have a global presence are starting to bring many of those jobs back. This is because other countries – for example India and the United States – are struggling with managing COVID outbreaks and getting back on track, and this has affected their ability to deliver the service they've promised clients and customers.

However in Australia, companies are very keen to get back to normal. This means more job opportunities for us. Be ready for them.

The other thing to consider is that, due to COVID, a lot of businesses that have previously sponsored candidates are now not in a position to do so. This means many are hiring locally, so there are definitely more opportunities.

Q Let's say I'm looking for a job. What will make me stand out, what will give me an advantage?

The best advice I can give is this: Treat your job search like a job – make sure your day is structured. Invest time in being proactive. Reach out to your networks – don't just rely on seek or other providers. Managers will be looking for staff and will be invested in a good outcome.

Be as available as possible to secure your start date. Don't put up any barriers. Consider different hours, part-time hours, different industries – whatever it takes to get your foot in the door.

Embrace whatever the opportunity and arrangement is.

Q What if I can't find a job in my own industry?

If 2020 has taught us anything, it's that life can change very quickly. This can be very difficult – but it can also be a great opportunity.

So be flexible. Look for any opportunity. It might be just a short term solution, and it may be outside the industry you trained in, or a hobby, or even volunteer work.

While you're waiting, create your own opportunity. Start a side hustle or small business, tap into your hobbies to see if there are any income-generating possibilities, join Facebook job groups, offer to do volunteer work.

This won't just make you feel good. Because when your industry re-emerges, a hiring manager will see this: You showed resilience, flexibility and strength – fantastic qualities that all good companies are looking for.

Any recruiter knows there's been nothing normal about 2020, and there'll be lots of people with an anomaly in their resume. What will make you stand out are the qualities that drove you to keep going – a recruiter will recognise and appreciate this.

And of course, you might unlock a completely different career path for yourself. Who knows?

Q What are the key things people should be actively doing?

1. Stay positive – it's a very attractive quality. Stay focused. Stay open to opportunities. Recruiters look for positive attitudes, people with a can-do approach. Lift yourself up, believe in yourself and promote yourself. If you are having trouble with these things, reach out to people who can help, like us!

2. Structure your day like it's a business day. Get up at a decent time, shower, put on clothes that make you feel great. Put on makeup, make sure you smell good, and you'll feel good.

Structure in your day by making appointments in your diary. For example:

9am-10am – Take a look at LinkedIn.

10am-11am – Look at jobs on Seek.

11am-12midday – Walk/exercise/swim.

12midday-1pm – Lunch.

1pm-2pm – Reach out to contacts and call people.

2pm-3pm – Read an industry magazine, or learn something new through an online learning platform like Coursera.

Importantly, don't stay housebound. You can do some of these things at a café or a local park – it doesn't have to be expensive.

Q What's one thing you want people to remember at this time?

This will pass. For some, it might take a little longer but there'll be something new for you, whether that's a new job, a new career, or a new pathway. It'll happen for you.

Project Displaced's team of recruiters and coaches like Dana are here to help you prepare for 2021. Join one of our free group classes or book a free one-on-one session to talk about your personal career strategy and let us help you. Project Displaced is a volunteer-run charity staffed by highly qualified recruiters, career coaches and mental health experts located across Australia. Set up in March to help people who had been stood down or lost their jobs because of COVID-19, it is Australia's first independent response to the pandemic crisis on the job market and is available to anyone in Australia, 7 days a week.

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