How Technology has Changed Job Search over the Last Decade

By: Robyn Dizes, Manager of Career Development Services for Peirce College in Philadelphia

Robyn has been in academic advising, career counseling and business development for nearly 10 years. She takes great joy in sharing a student or alum's success in securing a job or internship, as well as providing interactive workshops and events to our students and alumni.

Here is her take on how technology has changed job search over the past decade:

In the last ten years many job search websites (like Indeed.com and SimplyHired.com) have become available and employers have increasingly relied on their websites, job boards like CareerBuilder, and online application systems to hire employees. These sites have made it easier for employers to reach applicants because they connect companies directly to websites where they can house someone's dream job description and the company's own application process without paying for a posting in the newspaper or job board. While job search websites have reduced cost and made it easier for hiring companies, they have also posed a challenge to job seekers. Due to job postings virtually unlimited availability on the web the number of people responding to job postings has increased significantly, resulting in steeper competition.

In addition, social networking sites like LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook have become a source of job hunting and posting for both employers and job seekers. In this job market it has become essential for employers and job seekers to use company websites and social media in order to find employees and job opportunities. Just like in the past, the best way to find or fill a position is still through connecting to your network and knowing someone who can refer you to the position or potential candidate. With the help of social networking sites, job seekers and hiring managers now have easy access to locate people from your past and present who might be able to help you in your search.

The words you use on your resume have become much more important due to online application systems that will sort through resumes based on a bank of words related to the job posting. For example, if the company is looking to hire someone with IT Management experience it will be important to have this phrase or words somewhere on your resume. Additionally, resumes with the most keywords pertaining to the job description will appear at the beginning of a sorted list of resumes, which increases your odds of being chosen for an interview. Some job seekers have found it helpful to add a section to their resume called "Core Competencies" where they list the important keywords related to the job description as a way of getting their resume noticed in the applicant tracking system.
For the Class of 2013, the summer may have meant an internship to find a job or perhaps a return home to live with parents to save money. For those that used student loans to pay for college, the end of summer is the half way mark in 6-month “grace period” in which students are not obligated to pay their student loans yet. Usually graduates have 3-6 months of a grace period, and it can be the perfect time to prepare for your financial lifestyle with student loans.

Not only do you have to choose where to work and live, but you also have to start making financial decisions that will have implications on your future wellbeing. On average, students graduate with an average amount of debt of $26,000. Whether you can tackle this debt will determine if you can buy a car or a home in the next decade. Thus, don’t let the scary figure of your student debt deter you from facing it head on and accomplishing your financial goals. There is no doubt that managing student loan debt is a challenge but it is not impossible.

So that you are not left wondering where your money went once those payments kick in, NerdScholar talked to various experts from financial aid offices across the country and other student loan experts to learn the five most important things a recent graduate should do before their student loan grace period ends:

1. Understand the big picture: Take your college’s exit loan counseling and pay attention!
2. Do your research: Know who your loan servicers are, how many you have, and at what interest rate your loans currently stand.

3. Gather all your information: Calculate the total amount of loans you owe and estimate how long it will take you to pay off.

4. Learn your repayment options.

5. Make a budget that fits in with your new job and the city that you will live in.

1. Understand the big picture: Student Loan Exit Counseling

It is true that student loan exit counseling is not the most exciting activity but you should pay careful attention. Some colleges offer it on a very frequent basis and others just right before you graduate. Regardless of when it is offered, your school should have some sort of programming to educate you on what’s coming next with your student loans. Make it a point to seek it out and participate.

At Berkeley College seniors are required to take exit loan counseling every quarter before they graduate but also have the option to attend exit workshops in person or online that teach them about student loans, budgeting, credit cards, and bank accounts on a more frequent basis. Similarly, many schools are required to do this and some provide it on a frequent basis to make sure students are prepared to take full responsibility of their student loans. Contact your financial aid office and inquire about such workshops or if they have an online course you can take to learn more and understand how student loans work.

2. Do your research: Who are your loan servicers, how many are there, and what are you interest rates?

Students often times have more than one loan servicer depending upon whether they have federal loans, private loans or both. The first step to take is to figure out who are the companies you owe money to—that may be a private bank, the federal government, or even your school. It can be a quagmire of a task but getting organized on the front end will yield you a much easier and stress-free experience down the line.

Search the National Student Loan Data System, which is the Department of Education’s central database for student aid to complete this action step. They compile data from schools, guaranty agencies, the Direct Loan program, and other ED programs that will have information about your student loan servicers.

It might be helpful to also use online tools like Tuition.io, which help students get organized and aims to help students understand their entire student loan history. Co-founder Brendon McQueen said, “I graduated from Columbia in 2009, and I had 12 separate student loans. I couldn’t even figure out who I owed cash to, or how much I owed them, or if I had any options at all...” Many students face this problem as well and online tools like this one can help make your organizing task much easier. If you are not comfortable using online tools you can also track all your loans in an excel spreadsheet.
Once you have a grasp of which loan servicers you have, make sure you also know what the interest rate for each loan is. This will help guide your student loan repayment plan.

3. Gather all your information: Calculate the total amount of loans you owe and estimate how long it will take to pay off

The next step is to calculate the total amount that you owe and what your monthly payments will be. Usually you can access this information online after you make an account with each loan servicer. If the information is not apparent do not be afraid to place a phone call to each loan servicer. It is better to be safe and accurate than sorry and left in the dark.

Placing a phone call can also help you double check that you have the correct information and can even force you to double check whether you will be able to afford a monthly payment. Should this be the case, you can negotiate with your loan servicer to lower that payment. All it takes is asking.

Tom Kokis, Director of Student Financial Literacy at Berkeley College told us that students have to, “find out what their monthly payment will be. If it’s too high, speak to the servicer about changing their repayment plan.” The important takeaway here is that you have control of how you pay down your debt and can take steps to make the process feasible. You have to figure out a plan that works for you and that is sustainable for the long run.

4. Learn your repayment options

After you have all your loans in front of you, it is time to craft your student loan repayment plan! A lot of your repayment plan will depend on whether you have federal, private, or both types of loans. Regardless, you should decide whether loan consolidation is something you want to do.

Chanel Greene, manager of the financial aid office at Peirce College in Philadelphia told us, “It is incredibly important that students (and their parents) fully understand the loans they have taken to help cover the cost of a college education. Borrowers (students) should request an “income-based” repayment plan from their lenders. With that, students can ensure that their payments are capped at 15 percent of their income, after factoring in living expenses. Many students and parents are unaware that they can ask for this, and miss out on a financially beneficial opportunity to set up their repayments in a manner that works for their personal financial situation. Not every student will qualify, but there are other repayment options as well. You can visit www.studentloans.gov to see other repayment opportunities.”

There are also other repayment options like loan consolidation, which will combine all your payments into one and ideally lower your interest rate. However, if you want to go back to school or for whatever reason might need to defer payments in the future, consolidation will not allow you to do this. You can choose to consolidate at a credit union, which will often times offer lower interest rates than private banks. All in all, it is important to be extra careful when choosing consolidation as a repayment option.

Or you can also explore whether you qualify for other federal loan repayment options like pay as you earn (PAYE). Mitchell D. Weiss, Professor of Finance and Economics at University of Hartford, described
the pay as you earn program by telling us, “it’s better than anything else out there, and government student loan borrowers who are experiencing financial problems should move to take advantage of it.” Students with private loans do not qualify for this program but if you have private student loans, you should contact your servicer to see if there are any similar repayment options.

You also have to keep other options in mind. If you do not have a job and are unable to get one, you need to explore deferment and forbearance options as a back-up plan. Chad Dion Lassiter, co-founder and President of the Black Men at Penn School of Social Work, Inc told us that, “Students should prepare themselves with the real world of balancing their new found career along with the demands of real world pressures like a still faltering economy, adult like bills specifically rent or mortgage and the emergence of a student loan.” So if you can’t make your student loan payments it is best to not ignore them. You would put yourself at danger of default and wage garnishment.

5. Make a budget that factors in your new job, your living expenses, and your student loan payments

Creating your plan before your grace period begins will reduce stress for you and will help you overcome your student debt. Even more important, it will help you assess what your lifestyle needs to be so you afford to pay your student loans.

Chanel Greene, Financial Aid Manager at Peirce College, put it this way “, When you monitor what is coming in and going out of your account you have a better sense of your finances and know what you can and cannot afford. Students can easily recognize where their money is going by keeping a financial journal. This provides students with the opportunity to recognize what they can cut back on.”

Make sure that you calculate how much money you will be bringing in and list out all your expenses including your student loans. It will be helpful for you to use a cost of living calculator to make sure that all your living expenses are factored in. People recommend pretending like you are living without a college degree when you have student loans meaning that you live frugally and way below your means. Once you have crafted an overall budget that factors in what you can afford in student loan payments, all you have to do is stick to it!

**Important Resources:**

- [Federal Loan Consolidation](#)
- [Pay As You Earn Plan](#)
How to Handle the Fashion Offender in the Workplace

BY Kathryn Tuggle | 08/28/13 - 07:00 AM EDT

"Ask them, 'Can I give you feedback about ways I think you can move up faster?'" she says. "Incorporate attire, but add something else, too. 'Sue, you have a great smile and I encourage you to use that in your interactions so people see your friendlier side. And what we wear influences the perceptions that people have about us. Have you considered altering your work attire slightly to send the message that you want to move up?'"

No matter how you approach the initial conversation, John Greene, president of CSB Training and chief operating officer of Collaborative Consulting, says that it's best to deal with the situation swiftly.

"Make sure you tell them what the consequences are if they don't do what you're asking," Greene says. "Stick to it. If you tell them they will be fired if they don't clean up their act, and then they don't clean up their act -- fire them. This may sound harsh, but you will lose credibility if you back down and let them get their way."

Greene says it's best to err on the side of caution when managers are addressing employees of a different sex.

"It's better to have women confront women or men confront men on issues of skimpy or revealing clothing, not just because they relate better on dress but also from an HR perspective -- it helps keep the company out of potential legal hot water," Greene says.

No matter if the employee in question is male or female, Greene says it's important to be honest.

"Explain to them why it's inappropriate, makes people feel uncomfortable and hurts performance," he says. "It's never fun but, as a manager in these situations, you are not your employee's friend -- you are looking out for the performance of the company and for the other workers who are affected."

Keep in mind that not all employees with attire issues are trying to be relaxed or fashionable, says Robyn Dizes, manager of career development services at Peirce College in Philadelphia.
"In some cases, there may be certain issues that need to be addressed. These could include financial constraints that are withholding the employee from dressing the way they should or may wish they could," Dizes says.

Also, keep in mind that some employees have religious beliefs that may require they dress a certain way. Because of this, conversations about attire should be never be conducted in a group setting, Dizes says, and in some cases, visual examples may need to be shared about what is and isn't appropriate.

"Emphasize to the employee that the recommended attire is in line with the company's mission statement and culture," she says. "These methods will allow you to illustrate the importance of perception and what is expected and necessary to convey the right level of professionalism in a given workplace."
NEW YORK (MainStreet) — You may strive to be the perfect employee, but sometimes even the most competent workers can screw up an assignment or make a bad career move. While some mistakes can be easily smoothed over, others might require more drastic measures to redeem yourself. The important thing is to take responsibility for your mistake, learn from it and move on. In fact, the mistakes you make now could even help your career in the long term.

"Making a mistake can absolutely have positive effect on the future by showing you that something does not work," says Robyn Dizes, manager of career development Services at Peirce College in Philadelphia. "By recognizing your mistakes, you give yourself the opportunity to learn from — and not repeat — the same mistake."

From oversharing personal information on social media to misspending millions of dollars by ordering too much paper, here are seven true-life career blunders that offer some pretty valuable lessons.
Mistake: Kissing a Consultant

Name: Richie Frieman  Occupation: Author, illustrator and columnist www.richiefrieman.com

"I was maybe three years out of college and went with my boss to meet a consultant we hired. My boss, a female, and the consultant, also a female, had met many times before, but I had only met the consultant twice. When we got to her office, my boss went in first to greet her and did so with a kiss on the cheek. They were so happy to see each other, it was like they were old friends. I got caught up in the excitement I guess. So, then it was my turn and well, I went in for the kiss on the cheek too, without hesitation. This is only having met this person – who was a business contact – a couple times before. Hardly enough for a kiss hello on the cheek. Nothing was said of this at all, and I don’t think she thought it was weird, but to this day, I can’t recall anything that happened in that meeting after that kiss hello. I felt like it was a total rookie mistake.

"After this, I realized that a handshake can say a lot more and is always the safest way to go. Now, I always give a nice handshake and let my smile and words express how happy I am to see them."

Mistake: Taking Criticism Personally

Name: Terry Lin  Occupation: Equity salesperson for UBS Investment Bank

"At first I had trouble adapting to the culture at an investment bank, particularly on the sales and trading side where pressure is high during trading hours. Many movies have tried to capture the energy of a trading floor, but most miss the mark. Oftentimes, it can be a feast or famine situation with regards to the pressure. Colleagues may email you and ring you up 30 seconds later to see if you've read it. Traders may yell at their colleagues one minute, then be very cordial on the phone with clients with the snap of a finger.

"I almost quit two months into the job, thinking it was too much for me. But then I realized that in a hyper-competitive industry where perfection and client presentability is important, one cannot take criticism personally. Once I got the mindset that it wasn't about me, it made things a lot easier. It's like when you meet someone in a bad mood at a grocery store — are they really a bad person, or did they just have a terrible day at work? I changed my mindset to solutions-oriented thinking, which is what your line manager cares about the most. If you can demonstrate that you've processed what went wrong, not take it personally and know how to avoid it the next time, you are well on your way to becoming a valued member of the team."

Mistake: Messing Up Important Orders
Name: Steve Belanger Occupation: Writer, actor and author

"Back in 1988, at the age of 22 and in my first big job in Manhattan, I accidentally almost put a huge company into bankruptcy. I had just gotten a job in the production department of Penthouse Magazine, and I was responsible for ordering all of the paper used to print not only Penthouse, but the dozen or so other titles that General Media Inc. produced. I somehow screwed up the initial order and repeated it for months, doubling and tripling the amount of paper I was ordering. Nobody noticed it until the resultant bills and storage charges finally almost drove the company broke.

"I was very nearly fired, but instead everyone further up the chain of command was afraid of being drawn into my blunder, so they just hid the problem and made me figure out a way out of it. We eventually used up all of the paper and I went on to have an extremely successful career in publishing. I was a vice president/general manager at Time Inc. when I left the executive side of the biz to be a writer.

"The 'big picture-ness' of that event didn't really hit until further on in my career. In later years, when I'd run into big problems, I would think back to how I recovered from that massive error and know that no matter how huge the problem, there was always some type of solution. I include the story of my paper debacle in my memoir *My Penthouse Past: Failing My Way Up the Corporate Ladder of an Empire Built on Skin.*"

Mistake: Putting Up With Verbal Abuse

Name: Heather Taylor Occupation: Social media manager, MyCorporation.com

"I think the biggest mistake I made in my career happened really early on, and that was staying in a place for too long where you get verbally abused constantly. When I graduated from college three years ago, I worked as a copywriter in a small advertising agency where getting talked down to every day was the norm. There was a ton of micromanagement on everything you did and how you did it. No Facebook or email checking, no text messaging, and you had to keep a log every day of what you did and how long it took you to do it. Any kind of talking — from just regular chitchat to even asking a work-related question — was off-limits, which is literally insane to do in an advertising environment.

"I was there for nine months and job searched constantly to get out and finally did in the ninth month. Once I did get out, and was made a social media manager at my current job over a small team of two additional people in my department, I knew from day one that I wanted to be the kind of manager who would never go on a power trip. Lots of open communication is key to how I work as a manager. I sign off on almost all of my emails to my team with a little note saying that if they ever have any questions or comments, to let me know. And I definitely don't yell at them or make them feel incompetent. Nobody should be sitting in their room or their cars before starting the work day crying, because they dread it that much."

Mistake: Not Paying Attention to Detail
Name: Carly Fauth Occupation: Director of marketing and outreach, MoneyCrashers.com

"When I was younger, I worked for an independent retail company and every item in inventory for sale had a 12-digit bar code associated with it. One day when I was working on an inventory audit, my supervisor asked me to transfer a few item numbers to the home office to clean up the in-store inventory on the computer system. The computer system had options to transfer selected items or to transfer all of the items. I had done plenty of audits in the past and knew full well that you should never click on the ‘transfer all’ button, but I wasn't paying attention and that's the one I pressed, which resulted in my major mistake.

"It happened on a Saturday and there was no one at the home office who could fix it. We had to write down the item numbers for all sales for that day and could only take cash payments. After we got the problem fixed the following Monday, we had to enter in all of the sales from the previous Saturday. It was quite embarrassing.

"I learned that no matter what you're doing at work, whether you think the work is mundane or not and whether or not you've done it many times before, it's still important to pay attention to detail. It did make me a better worker in the long run."

Mistake: Oversharing on Social Media

Name: Joel Ehrlich Occupation: President, The Harmony Group, LLC

"One of my biggest mistakes was going overboard with social media postings that didn't truly represent the personal brand I wanted. I posted silly photos on Facebook and even made some political comments on Twitter. My way out was saying that as a big-time marketer, I had to live the life as one of my client's targeted consumers and without that knowledge I couldn't plan a proper marketing roadmap/strategy. I learned that social media can be very dangerous."

Mistake: Not Planning for the Future

Name: Ian Aronovich Occupation: President and co-founder, GovernmentAuctions.org

"When the recession first set in, we thought our business would hold up and that there was no way we would be affected. However, the recession eventually caught up with us.

"Back in 2003 when we first launched our business, the membership fee for subscribing to our website was $39.95 per year without any free trials to start or automatic rebilling at the end of the membership term. Each customer whose membership expired would have to go back, put in payment information and start a new subscription. And we did not even send them a reminder. When the recession hit, the rate which we acquired new members and retained old ones put us in a position where our business reached a growth plateau. In fact, we actually began to decline to a level we could not be comfortable with given our monthly expenses."
"If we couldn't come up with any redeeming ideas, the business would end in failure. My business partner and I had meetings to deal with the crisis. During the process, we realized the key to our problems was that our initial revenue model was not as focused as it should be on the future.

"After tossing a few ideas around, we decided to adjust our revenue model by providing every new customer with a free trial upon membership activation along with a monthly rebilling system, all while simultaneously collecting payment information to bill them monthly until they cancelled. We tested dozens of monthly billing price points and eventually came up with a three-day free trial to go with a recurring $18.95 monthly subscription fee after the trial period is over. Had we not come up with a creative plan to change the way we handle our customer memberships, our company may not be around today."

--Written by Kristin Colella for MainStreet
Colleges offer deals to combat growing costs

Posted: Friday, August 30, 2013 12:00 am | Updated: 6:06 am, Fri Aug 30, 2013.

BY SUSAN SNYDER THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER | 1 comment

PHILADELPHIA -- Tony Hall tells his five daughters they must go on to college and get their degrees, but he doesn't have one himself.

"It's kind of like a hypocrite. I say a degree is important, but they don't see mine hanging there," said the 35-year-old insurance agent from Wyncote, Pa.

In July, Hall set out to change that by enrolling at Strayer University, a for-profit institution that offers a primarily business curriculum and caters to working adults. His decision was largely influenced by a new offer at Strayer: tuition breaks.

For every three courses he completes, he will get one tuition-free. No minimum grade-point average is required, just completion. That benefit, however, can be cashed in only during his last year at Strayer.

Strayer's approach is one way colleges are trying to mitigate the rising cost of tuition as pressure mounts from students facing crushing debts. Last Thursday, President Barack Obama said he planned to create a college rating system and policies that award federal financial aid based on factors such as tuition, graduation rates, and student debt.

Karl McDonnell, chief executive officer of Strayer Education, in Herndon, Va., says the program will address rising tuition costs while boosting graduation rates.

Students who start as freshmen could earn their entire senior year tuition-free, saving nearly $18,000 -- but only if they finish their education. Only 2 percent of Strayer's students, however, come in as freshmen.

Though the university might lose money from students who earn free tuition, it will do better in the long term if larger numbers stay in school and finish, McDonnell said.

"We consider that a favorable trade-off," he said.

About 35 percent of undergraduates who come in as freshmen complete their studies in six years, the university said. Of those who come in with the equivalent of an associate degree, 69 percent complete in six years.

Around the country, colleges are trying different approaches to cut tuition costs.
Cabrini College, a Catholic school in Radnor, cut its tuition by 12.5 percent to $29,000 for the 2012-13 school year. It then froze tuition for 2013-14, as well as most room-and-board rates.

Rowan University, a state school in Glassboro, also froze tuition this year.

Peirce College in Philadelphia will give a 10 percent discount on summer tuition to students who attend the previous fall and spring semesters.

Some colleges have created online degree programs and accelerated degrees so students can graduate earlier and avoid more debt. States that include Florida, Texas, Wisconsin and California have seen a push for a $10,000 four-year degree.

Nationally, for-profit universities have been more likely than their nonprofit counterparts to offer rate cuts, said Richard Vedder, a professor of economics at Ohio University who heads the Center for College Affordability and Productivity.

He called Strayer's initiative "an intriguing idea."

"Students who stay in school should face some rewards," he said. "It's a marketing device for Strayer, but it also serves a useful social function."

But Laura Perna, a University of Pennsylvania professor who specializes in higher education, questioned how effective Strayer's approach will be. Many adult students, who are juggling family life and a job, could run into trouble before senior year. The plan doesn't help students in the first year, she said.

"I'm not sure if this is really tinkering at the margins," she said, "rather than addressing the underlying issues."

Two-thirds of Strayer students are female, and the average age is 35. Most work during the day and attend school at night. Strayer offers both online and on-campus classes, as well as graduate degrees.

About half of Strayer's students have had some college before entering one of the system's 100 campuses across the nation, McDonnell said. Strayer has 27,000 undergraduates nationwide.

Hall, the insurance agent, is one of Strayer's re-entry students. After graduating from Germantown Friends, he attended Widener University and was a small forward on the basketball team but suffered a severe head injury during practice when he was a freshman.

The recovery was long - he spent six weeks in a coma - and although he eventually returned to the team, he never fully got back into the academic swing, he said. He dropped out, vowing to return.

"Here I am 14 years later," Hall said. He attends the campus in Philadelphia's Center City to inspire his daughters, ages 11, 10, 6, and 4-year-old twins.

He needs 19 courses to earn his bachelor's in finance from Strayer, and can earn up to five courses free, saving about $8,800.
With the goal of becoming a financial planner, Hall said he was focused like never before. He's on campus three days a week. And he spends about 15 hours a week in class or studying.

"For the first time since fifth or sixth grade, I'm a student first, as opposed to an athlete first who was going to school just so I can play," Hall said. "Now my focus is on maintaining A's, which is what I have so far."
College is expensive beyond just the tuition price as the costs of textbooks, extracurricular activities and lodging can add up to a hefty amount, and force some college students to take on a part-time job.

Not only can taking on a job help make ends meet, but it can also teach valuable time and money management skills.

“It’s very tempting to live in the now but those college years are so important to set yourself up right for the future,” says Molly Merez, executive director of Ticket Summit. “If a student is able to
accommodate it in their schedule, even something as little as five or 10 hours a week, it’s something I always encourage.”

A recent survey by Citibank and Seventeen Magazine found nearly four out of five U.S. students—including those in high school, community college, online college, or traditional college or university—work while in school, with the average working student putting in 19 hours a week during the academic year.

While students should assess their financial needs and academic schedule when seeking out employment options, finding paid internship opportunities and temporary positions in their field can boost their resume in the long run, says Robyn Dizes, manager of career development services at Peirce College.

“If you choose employment that meets your needs, you will be more likely to continue to work there long-term, and long-term employment is attractive to employers, builds your resume and allows you to have stability in your career,” she says.

Here’s what experts say to look for in part-time employment opportunities that are student-friendly and will help build valuable experience.

**Job-Searching Tip No.1: Look for Jobs on Campus**

Student should look for on-campus jobs through the campus career center, college job boards and by word of mouth to find a position that offers relevant skills in close proximity to their academics, suggests Dizes.

“Campus positions are available for students to add to their experience and gain knowledge in their field and finding a permanent position is possible if you have a positive work ethic and build relationships with people you meet along the way,” she says. “If they give student workers hiring priority, this can be a valuable investment of your time and effort.”

Students can oftentimes find unlisted or unofficial internship and part-time opportunities by connecting and networking with professors and department heads, Merez explains.

“Be proactive and ask a professor, ask a mentor, ask a dean because oftentimes there are opportunities that never make the job posting board,” she says. “Sometimes there’s a professor who just wants an intern for the summer to analyze data and maybe he or she didn’t realize it until a month or two before and they’re just advertising it by word of mouth.”

**Job-Searching Tip No.2: Take on Freelance Opportunities**

For students balancing a full course load, cramming in study hours and finding time for extracurricular activities, freelance work opportunities can give them the flexibility and financial support to fit their busy schedule.
Freelance work can also demonstrate to employers that students are comfortable working in their field outside of the classroom, says Merez.

“It shows that they are navigating outside of those waters, and seeking opportunities outside of school while they’re in school is definitely regarded favorably,” she says. “Freelancing sends a lot of messages regarding how serious they are about a field--it shows I’m not just doing this to get a degree, I’m doing this outside of my comfort zone because it’s what I want to do and what I want my career to be.”

Students can find freelance opportunities at sites like Elance.com* and Guru.com* and by reaching out to local businesses that may need help on the side, recommends Dizes.

“Oftentimes companies don’t have the budget for a full time employee but do have the money to pay on a project by project basis.”

**Job-Searching Tip No.3: Consider Retail/Sales Positions**

While finding a part-time job that is financially supportive and a resume booster is the ideal scenario, students may need to take on positions that may or may not be totally relevant to their field to keep up with expenses, says Kim Whiteside, manager of the Career Services Center at Bellevue University*.

“I hear ‘I just need a job, any job . . . now’ far more often than I hear ‘I’m looking for a position that will give me experience in my chosen field,’” she says.

Students can find lucrative part-time work openings in customer service, retail, and hospitality and potentially longer-term opportunities in seasonal sales, non-profit agencies, and staffing agencies, recommends Whiteside.

Although it may be tempting for students to default to temporary retail and sales positions for a steady paycheck requiring little or no experience, seeking positions that will help them build more quantifiable workplace skills and will ultimately be a better fit on their resume can be an invaluable investment of students’ time and energy, says Merez.

“If you see yourself in the retail industry in five or 10 years from now, then absolutely go for that but if you don’t, definitely seek opportunities in your area of study that really shows, this is what I’m interested in not just for a degree but it’s what I want to do five, 10 years from now which is why I’m seeking experience,” she says. “That is indefinitely seen more favorably from employers than simply retail jobs with a higher turnover rate.”