

Upskilling Vital for Jobseekers During Pandemic

Express' Job Genius Program Provides Pivotal Career Guidance and Workforce Prep

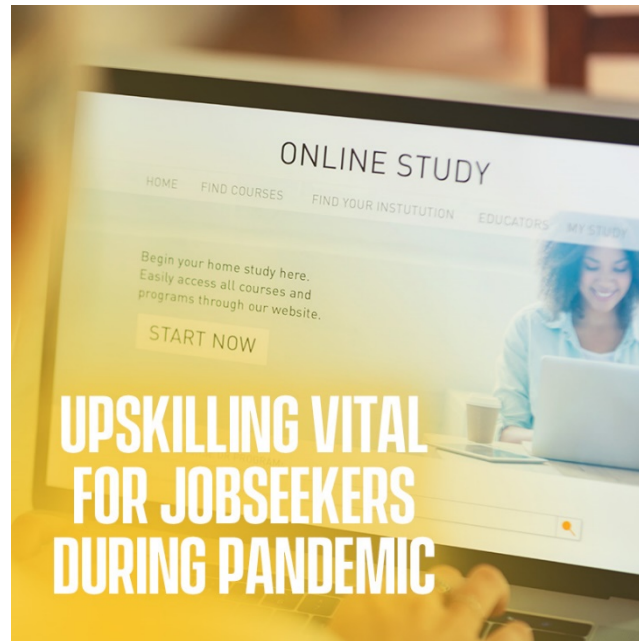
“Do anything you can to make yourself better than the competition.”

OKLAHOMA CITY, April 8, 2020 – With millions of workers sidelined by COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders, many are spending the time doing home improvement projects, cooking, working out or binge-watching shows. But business owners say to remain competitive in the job market once guidelines are lifted, job seekers should take advantage of opportunities to learn or improve skills during the next few months.

Express Employment Professionals franchise owner Daniel Morgan in Birmingham, Alabama, says job seekers should do anything and everything they can to gain skills or training right now.

“Make professional connections online, update your resume and research companies that will have the most hiring opportunities,” he added. “Nobody knows how long this will last, so use this time wisely. Ninety-nine percent of people will not use this time in a productive way. Be the 1% and separate yourself from the pack.”

Several institutions and universities currently offer free online courses on everything from programming and graphic design to writing and communication. A simple Google search for “free online courses” reveals hundreds of options.



Krista DiGiacomo, Express franchise owner in Vancouver, Washington, says she is a big fan of podcasts for continued education, but also recommends e-learning courses or online certification programs. Whatever the method, DiGiacomo says one of the most valuable traits in a worker is the dedication to lifelong learning.

“The old adage, ‘If we’re not growing, we’re dying,’ is so true,” she said.

Using practical examples of upskilling, Morgan suggests administrative assistants should work to improve their words per minute typing score. Salespeople could dig into books on tactics and knowledge.

“There could be several applicants applying to the same job,” he said. “Do anything you can to make yourself better than the competition for the job you want.”

Doing anything to beat the competition could mean pivoting your career and gaining experience in an industry deemed essential during this pandemic.

“I think the same companies that are busy now will be essential after COVID-19,” DiGiacomo said. “This is a good time to look at who really is essential to our livelihood.”

This could mean looking for employment in warehouses, grocery stores, healthcare, sanitation and manufacturing.

Express Employment Professionals offers the free [Job Genius educational video series](#) to help students and job seekers navigate through a career change or career pathing, writing a resume, interview tips, money management advice, job forecasting and more.

For those still on the job, reliability and flexibility are needed to help guide companies through these unprecedented times.

“Very few businesses have job descriptions that anticipated working during a pandemic with so many unknowns to deal with,” said Reid Bates, Express franchise owner in Aberdeen and Olympia, Washington. “Employers will have extra appreciation for an employee’s ability to be flexible in a fast-evolving environment and reliable when their peers may be absent.”

Bates suggested that all companies and employees should brush up on problem-solving since everyone is working without a playbook in this crisis.

“Only a small fraction of organizations had contingency plans that anticipated a shutdown of this scale and unknown duration,” he said. “So, I suggest we all become better at problem-solving to work through the kind of challenges our generation has never seen before.”

When the country does emerge on the other side of the pandemic, Express experts predict hot industries will be sales, digital marketing, basic consumer goods manufacturing, accounting, warehouse, distribution, engineering, cleaning and online customer service.

“While it may be tempting to view the time at home as an extended vacation, job seekers who take advantage of the hundreds of learning resources available right now will prove invaluable to businesses,” said Bill Stoller, Express CEO. “Keep networking, stay positive and be prepared for when things bounce back.”

If you would like to arrange for an interview with Bill Stoller to discuss this topic, please contact Sheena Karami, Director of Corporate Communications and PR, at (405) 717-5966.

About Bill Stoller

William H. "Bill" Stoller is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, the international staffing company has more than 825 franchises in the U.S., Canada and South Africa, and beginning in 2020 will expand to Australia and New Zealand. Since its inception, Express has put more than 8 million people to work worldwide.

About Express Employment Professionals

At Express Employment Professionals, we’re in the business of people. From job seekers to client companies, Express helps people thrive and businesses grow. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, OK, our international network of franchises offer localized staffing solutions to the communities they serve, employing 552,000 people across North America in 2019. For more information, visit www.ExpressPros.com.