



CONTACT

Colleen Madden Blumenfeld, Director of Public Relations

Mobile: 314-807-1568

colleenmadden@challengergray.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

High-Level Job Searchers Grind to a Halt

SEVEN TIPS FOR SEEKING C-SUITE POSITIONS DURING QUARANTINE

CHICAGO, May 12, 2020 – Quarantine due to the COVID-19 pandemic thrust millions of people into an unwelcome, frightening employment situation. Those who found themselves instantly unemployed never could have guessed that this is what they would face in spring 2020. Still others were anticipating a promotion that has now been put on hold indefinitely.

Candidates for some top positions have found conversations suddenly halted. Without that in-person interview with the Board, offers are not being finalized. Entering the C-suite has been complicated further, as many top business leaders have stopped taking paychecks during the pandemic.

Instead of waiting for a “new normal” to emerge that may lead to a re-entry into the working world – and into that C-suite position – high-level job seekers can take advantage of this time to be proactive in securing their next career move, according to one workplace authority.

“Being proactive is essential for C-suite-level job seekers. This is not a moment to take time off from the search,” said Andrew Challenger, Senior VP of global outplacement and executive and business coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc. “Using this time to build strategic relationships will help job seekers stay active and keep them in control of a challenging situation.”

Job search website Glassdoor currently reports 1,441 C-suite job posts, including 260 CEO positions. During Q1 of 2020, the median length of a job search for C-suite clients was reported to be 6.43 months, according to a Challenger poll of about 3,000 job seekers. Although we have entered uncharted territory with this pandemic, more and more companies are realizing they cannot postpone filling critical roles. As companies prepare their post-quarantine plans, some virtual conversations and interviews are still taking place with candidates for key positions.

Challenger suggests the following tips for conducting a productive, high-level job search during quarantine:

- Network – Reach out to colleagues, friends, and family to let them know your status and interest. Provide a copy of your resume so they have background on you, which may spark ideas for introductions they can make on your behalf.
- Of course, make sure your resume and LinkedIn profiles are updated and ready to go, should they be requested.
- Research job descriptions that were posted pre-quarantine and contact the appropriate person to express your interest/suitability, acknowledging the challenging times we are all facing.
- Research companies that seem like a good fit for your interests and skills – read annual reports, financials, news clips, industry articles, quarterly press releases, and senior management profiles. Be knowledgeable and prepared if the opportunity of a conversation presents itself.
- Follow up with past contacts and provide them with an updated resume. Express your continued interest in their company and encourage the opportunity to discuss what value you could offer to the team.
- Even if a company has put all hiring on hold, offer to be a consultant to add input to the company’s strategic planning for the near, post-quarantine future to demonstrate the value you can add to the team.
- If a videoconference is scheduled, prepare for a professional interview by choosing appropriate clothing, a neutral background, good lighting, and noise control (make sure the barking dog or conversing family members are out of range of your microphone).

“Job seekers should be investing more effort than ever on video chats and phone calls,” said Challenger. “They should set daily tasks and maintain a positive demeanor so they can hit the ground running when opportunities arise.”

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