

# The Pandemically Challenged Job Hunt #2: "How to Get Hired" - Advice from Leading Entertainment Industry Recruiters

## • Panelists:

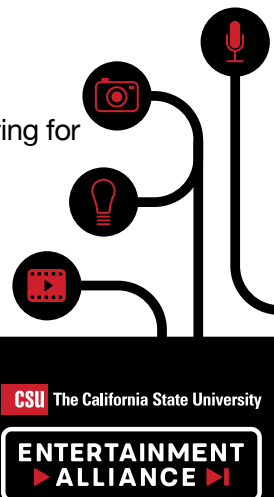
- [Karla Melara](#) - Campus to Career Manager at [ViacomCBS](#)
- [Amy Sanchez](#) - Campus Senior Recruiter at [The Walt Disney Company](#)
- [Samantha Stormo](#) - Head of Production at [NCompass International](#)
- [Heidi Espejo](#) - Associate Director of Talent at [Saatchi & Saatchi](#)

## • [The CSU Entertainment Alliance](#) Intro

## • [Pipelines Mobile](#) Intro

## • Resumes and Cover Letters

- How important is a resume to a recruiter and what is the first thing you're looking for?
  - Maximum readability
  - Spelling / grammar
  - Clean font
  - Beyond a word template
  - Shows personality and experience
  - Name and essential info right off the top
- Wild and crazy? Color? Photo? What is too much and what is not enough?
  - It's a fine line and delicate balance
  - Never want to see a headshot on a resume
  - Logo or your initials
  - A little pop of color
  - Mostly black and white
  - Use an icon and logo for linkedin, etc
  - Don't go overboard
  - Make it aesthetically pleasing for the reader
  - For graphic design you can show a little more
  - Make sure your contact info is visible and easy to find - also that they work and are active (email and phone)
- What should be the normal order of the resume?
  - It depends on what you're applying for
  - Earlier in the career - put the education first but depends on level in your career
  - Skills that are applicable to what you are applying for
- Objective Statements?
  - It doesn't really matter - they seem to read all the same
  - Looking more at where you found traction / what makes you special and different
  - What your hobbies and personal activities are and how they apply to the job etc.
  - If it is just to take up space it doesn't need to be there
  - Maybe put that into your LinkedIn instead?
  - More interested in the meat and potatoes than the objective statement
- Quality over Quantity - what info should be included? How many? What format for those bullet points?
  - Relevancy is the most important - whatever is most related to what you are applying for
  - Looking at the most relatable experience for that job
  - Also, chronological order is best
  - Focus on the document as a story
  - What story are you trying to tell to get the job?
  - Resumes should always be one page! Especially early on in your career.
  - Use bullet points, paragraphs are hard to read
  - Use Data wherever possible - gives the impression of taking your job seriously and your role in benefiting the company



## • Resumes and Cover Letters (CONT'D)

- How do you show a good resume if you don't have a lot of experience in that field?
  - If you don't have industry/internship experience - Look back on your projects you've done or things you've worked on in school
  - Think about where you have been a part of a team and what your role was in that
  - Sometimes you don't think you've accomplished as much as you actually have but when you look back and pull out those projects or things you have worked on
  - You are more than your work experience - you are not only defined by your jobs
  - Community experience / church / events / volunteering / etc all matter
- Transferable Skills - what are they and how do you highlight those on your resume?
  - Make sure that you are well versed in tech
    - Microsoft office and google suite, etc.
    - There is always necessity to look at information and be able to present it well through the tech
  - Jobs like Forever 21 - customer service - doesn't translate to the entertainment industry on the surface but the daily goals, the team building experiences, managing things, daily goals, increasing revenue, etc.
  - Those kinds of metrics and experiences are highly transferable skills
  - Take a look at the job description, focus on the buzz words of what that description is highlight and then back in from what you've done and how it applies
  - Use that to inform how you build your resume
  - Resumes require a lot of TLC - it gets you the interview - it's you're calling card
  - There are skills in everything you do - so shift your perspective
- One format DO & One format DON'T
  - Do: Use a font that is professional (not comic sans, etc.)
  - Don't: Don't send it as a word doc - make sure it is a PDF
  - Do: Customize so that it is not generic
  - Don't: Don't go to two pages
  - Do: Make sure that your resume includes info that the job listing is asking for
  - Don't: Don't send without testing what it looks like (check it and make sure that it opens up well and looks clean)
  - Don't: Don't reach out and ask who you should send the letter to
  - Do: make your addressing generic in your cover letter (e.g. Dear Internship Coordinator,)
  - Don't: mass send the same resume to different companies
  - Do: make sure your resume includes what each company is looking for based on their ad
- Do you need a cover letter? What should it emphasize?
  - Cover letter is now the email
  - Customize it - tell us who you are and why the job you are responding to / or the company you are responding to excites you and why you have the passion for that job
  - Should be short
  - Always send a cover letter unless the company asks you not to
  - Tell us about who you are
  - Make sure it is not a standard one that doesn't talk about who you are
  - Especially if you don't have a lot of work experience - cover letters are a way to let your personality shine
  - Cover letters are opps to let your personality shine



## • The Interview - Prepping / Preparation

- Recruiters can tell when you have not prepared
- Know the company
- Disney example: whatever you are applying to, know it. Many different divisions, different teams, etc. do your research on that.
  - Movies anywhere
  - Know what it is - what they focus on, etc.
  - How you would fit into that
- Know the shows that the company works on, what is currently on, what has been greenlit, what is the most recent buzz about
- Easy way to do that is to read the trades: Deadline, Variety, Hollywood Reporter, etc.
- Have a point of view - if you hate a show, tell why, express brand knowledge and how you might do it differently.
- You don't need to know all of the info but it is so easy these days to find it by googling
- There is no excuse to not know the minimum about the company
- Take notes - write down interesting highlights

## • Zoom Etiquette - What should people be doing? What's distracting? etc

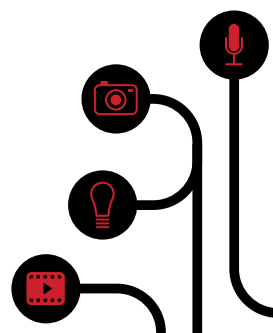
- Prepare and test out the day/night before
- Tech check before the meeting
- Appropriate backdrop
- Check your lighting
- Don't be in the shadows
- Show up how you want to be represented
- Be there a minute or two before
- Try as best you can to get into a quiet place - if things happen that are out of your control, acknowledge it and take care of it.
- What employers are looking for is how you handle it
- Be as honest as possible
- Do a second test 20 min before your meeting

## • Zoom Etiquette - What should people be doing? What's distracting? etc (CONT'D)

- If things go wrong, send an email to who you know you are meeting with and let them know you are experiencing issues.
- "I am having some WiFi issues, would you be willing to do a phone call instead? Here is the best number to reach me."
- Also be aware of your body language - sitting up - not crossed arms - give the impression of WANTING to be engaged with the person you are speaking to.
- Communication is key

## • What kind of questions should the interviewee be asking about the company?

- What does success look like?
- Anything you are curious about with the company and the work that they do
- Authentic and organic convos happen from good questions
- Think about what you genuinely want to know and what is important to you
  - Work/life balance
  - Culture
  - Dress code
- You should walk away from the interview knowing exactly what the offer includes, etc.
- You can ask general and pointed questions: "What has been your favorite project you have worked on there?" or "How did you land on J. Balvin for the SpongeBob song?"
- Curiosity questions are always the most valuable
- Speaks to brand awareness etc.
- Highly recommend sending thank you notes
- ALWAYS come prepared with a list of questions
  - Cross of the ones that get answered naturally



- **Dress Etiquette? How should folks be dressing?**

- Presentable - put your best foot forward
- Don't just roll out of bed
- More flexibility with zoom but make sure you FEEL good because that is what is most seen
- For an in person interview: still important to come in business dress
- How would you show up if you show up at a client meeting?
  - Not traditional? Can still be really polished
  - Be your brand but make it polished
- Even if you know the company has a casual work aesthetic, applicants should still put their best foot forward.
  - Full time employees have already earned the right to show up more casually
  - Heir on the side of caution

- **Interviewer Questions - "Tell me about yourself" - how to efficiently and concisely answer that question?**

- Think of it as your elevator pitch
- Very focused and short statements about you and what you are learning and what you want - close it out with your passions and strengths etc.
- Don't stumble on this - make it a great and thought out answer that you can deliver with confidence
- Don't give a biography
- Stay relevant
- 30 seconds

- **Behavioral Questions: "Tell me about a time you handled..." What is the purpose and how do you answer them effectively?**

- They are ways of getting to know how you would react or how you would handle a certain situation
- Opportunity to showcase your transferable skills - dealt with a hard situation and problem solved it like this...
- Also where you want to highlight data points - something that you made better in the company, etc.
- You can google these types of questions and you can go through that list and come up with personal anecdotes beforehand
- Strengths and weaknesses
  - Opportunity to be transparent
  - Speaks to self-awareness
  - State the weakness and how you are working to better it
  - E.g. Have a hard time remembering people's names but I have skills in remembering faces and facts and am constantly working on improving the name part
- PRACTICE!
  - Practice being slightly uncomfortable
  - Roll play
  - Try things out
- Take a breath and think about your answer
- Interviews are not interrogation - it is just a professional convo - remind yourself of that
- Everyone is human
- Ask for a moment if you need to think about something
- STAR Method
  - For behavioral questions—> S.T.A.R. Method!
  - Situation, Task, Action, Result
  - State the Situation
  - State the Task
  - State the Action you took
  - And then state the Result!
- Keep a document with headers like "Conflict" and put some notes about your experience
  - Have the experiences thought out beforehand



• **Authenticity vs. preparedness? What are you really looking for when people are applying for a role?**

- Definitely don't be a robot and tell people what you think they want to hear
- Be yourself
- They want to find people who will succeed in these jobs
- It takes a lot of different skills
- Want you to be able to do the job justice and succeed within the culture of the company
- Be curious and open and engaging
- Your personality matters!
- How you show up is as important as your experience
- If you have a passion for the brand and the content you are applying for - share that! Don't hide the passion for it. Don't downplay that.
- Companies want people that are passionate about their brand

• **Non-verbal communications - Is that important in an interview?**

- Yes, non-verbals are super important
- Speaks to how you feel about the interview and the company
- Look at the camera instead of other things on the screen
- Posture is important
- It speaks to the kind of person you are and how you would interact with the team
- If you haven't done a virtual or phone interview, PRACTICE with a friend or someone else so
- Keep it simple:
  - Eye contact
  - Smile
  - In non-covid times, practice your handshake

• **Thank you's & Follow ups - Are they necessary? How important are they?**

- Not a requirement but can help make you stand out
- Send a small thank you note - one or two lines - specific to the company and the interview
- Thank the person for their time
  - Everyone is so busy and it is important to acknowledge that
  - Their and your time is a gift
- Don't go crazy with it but personalize whenever possible
- Use anecdotes or stories or info that you learned from the person you were talking to.
- In this time, best to do an email note rather than a normal mailing
- BUT when things return to normal, do a handwritten note
- Do both if you can
- Email within 24 hours
- Thank folks for their time
  - Hiring manager + Recruiter + Scheduler
  - Pay attention to who is helping out
- Set an alarm to send the thank you note for a few hours after your interview so you can be reminded about sending it



- **When is it okay to follow up without being a pest? What should people say and how often should they follow up?**
  - Ask during the interview - When is a good time to follow up? Who should I follow up with?
  - Wait a week or so
  - If they tell you it should be longer, LISTEN to what they say, and then mark your calendar for a follow up
  - Each company has their own timeline and process
  - Don't be deterred by companies taking a long time
  
- **LinkedIn: Should everyone have one?**
  - YES!
  - It is the largest professional network
  - You should have a presence there
  - Have a nice professional photo (can definitely be taken on a phone, etc.)
  - FILL IT OUT!
  - Invest time into making it a professional snapshot of yourself
  
- **Do employers look at social media?**
  - That is definitely a thing recruiters do
  - Anytime you are interviewing - think about what is on your accounts - if you are worried, make your profile private.
  - If you provide a social link, that is fair game for a recruiter to follow.
  - It can be a great way to show your skills but be aware of what is on there
  - If your page is public, clean it up before you apply
  
- **How important is networking or connections on linkedin for getting your resume approved?**
  - Connecting and networking is good but doesn't necessarily guarantee someone looking at your info
  
- **Advice for older college grads? CSU vs. UC etc.**
  - Networking and joining organizations can really help with that!
  - School doesn't matter as much as you think
  - They are really looking at your whole picture and your whole story
  - The school you went to is a small picture
  
- **Does LinkedIn Premium give you an advantage in your job search?**
  - It does let you look at who has been on your profile and then you can reach out to them!
  
- **Is it bad to apply to a job you have applied to before with a new and updated resume?**
  - Unclear - craft your resume for what you want it to look like now and apply to new opps
  - Many work with applicant tracking systems and those will add to your existing application and create a duplicate and they don't know which is which
  
- **References on your resume?**
  - You don't have to include them but sometimes they will ask in the interview so have 3 ready and make sure you GET PERMISSION from the people ahead of time.

