



Seeking Remote Employment

“Don’t wait for the stars to align. Whatever it is you want to do, start it now.”

—Leslie Truex, founder, WorkAtHomeSuccess.com

The steps to finding remote employment, though few, are by no means simple. The good news is that if you’re really determined, that very determination will get you where you want to go.

To start off: if you have the luxury of addressing the biggest-picture concerns, TAKE THE TIME TO FIGURE OUT EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT TO DO so you can build the career around what you really want. But even if you don’t have that luxury, at the very minimum figure out exactly why you want to work *remotely*. That realization will inform both your job search and the application process, since employers need to know that you know who you are, how well you’ll perform, and, especially, that you know what you’re getting into.

LEARN WHAT EMPLOYERS SEEK IN A REMOTE EMPLOYEE—and develop yourself into that employee. Fortunately, this tall order comes with a full instruction guide: both the “Hiring Strategy” and “Interviewing” sections of Chapter 6: Hiring Remote Workers and Teams. There you’ll find that the number-one trait sought is experience working remotely, for two reasons: employers need people who, one, can work remotely effectively and, two, actually *like* working remotely. The trick is getting that experience; for more see the following sidebar.

How to Get Experience Working Remotely

It’s a classic Catch-22 situation: you need remote experience to get a remote job, but you can’t get the job without the experience. Here are a few tips for addressing that conundrum.

- Get savvy with the remote-working tools and apps most widely used on a regular or daily basis by scores of remote-friendly companies. According to Remote.co, those apps are (listed in order of popularity): for instant messaging—Slack, Skype, Google Chat; for project management—Trello, Pivotal Tracker, Basecamp; for team collaboration—Slack, Yammer, HipChat. (“17 Non-Tech Fully Remote Jobs,” Remote.co, 24 March 2017, updated 6 February 2018, <https://remote.co/non-tech-fully-remote-jobs>.) For practice with the inter-team aspects of such tools—especially the chat tools—enlist some friends to help you gain that experience—preferably those who’d also benefit from the practice.
- Connect with other remote workers. Check out Virtual Team Talk (<https://virtualteamtalk.com>). Rent a spot at the budget table at a local coworking center. Ask for advice.
- Doggedly pursue short-term remote work, perhaps via online sites such as Upwork.com, Freelancer.com, or Fiverr.com.

Know intimately why employers seek that remote experience (again, see both the “Hiring Strategy” and “Interviewing” sections of chapter 6), confess upfront that you don’t have the appropriate résumé entry, and explain why you’re *still* the perfect person for the job. How are you perfect? Because of your self-awareness regarding how you work, and because of all the preparation you’ve done on your own—added to your absolute dedication to making it work.

WORK UP YOUR BRAND. Next, capture what you offer in words. That means crafting the pitch you'll use to advertise your value in various lengths: three paragraphs, one paragraph, one sentence, and just a few words.

BUILD YOUR ONLINE BRAND. Your online presence is important, so get active on your social media channels, especially LinkedIn, to demonstrate the value you offer. Build a personal website if such feels appropriate, especially if you'd have sufficient content to maintain a blog. Or, at minimum you could post articles on your LinkedIn page.

“Typically, when you leave a company, the first thing that human resources does is delete your mailbox with the gigs and gigs of data, connections, and knowledge that you've accumulated over the years. But if you use a social network, your legacy will remain regardless: all your contacts and conversations remain available to others.”

—Luis Suarez, digital transformation and data analytics adviser, panagenda

REACH OUT. Get in touch with your network to let them know you're looking for work. As product manager Fernando Garrido Vaz shares, “Word of mouth is the best way to find work. You don't need a large audience; you just need the right audience.”

MINE VARIOUS JOB-SEEKING RESOURCES—DAILY. Apply to everything that appeals to you that you can demonstrate you're qualified for. Start at the “How to Find a Remote Job” page on my Collaboration Superpowers website (<https://www.collaborationsuperpowers.com/114-how-to-find-a-remote-job>).

WATCH OUT FOR WORK-FROM-HOME SCAMS. The old adage applies: if it seems too good to be true, it probably is. You should never have to pay anything in order to apply for a job. Don't give out passwords. And listen to your intuition.