

# Returning to the Workforce

## A GUIDE TO THE JOB SEARCH TOOLKIT

FULL GUIDE  
AVAILABLE FREE AT  
FIRSTFIND.ORG

Start

### Write it down

Use a structure to keep track of your search. Finding a job is a job; establish a job search routine to reach your goal. [Chapter 1](#)

### Where to now?

Create skills and experience inventories to identify target jobs. Use a mind map format and resources you will find in [Chapter 1](#). You may also like the Clifton Strengths Assessment; [gallupstrengthcenter.com](#). [Chapter 2](#)

### Check your social media

Make your online image work-ready. Pictures of your children, the successful school fundraiser and your last vacation are lovely but don't help make you look work-ready. Change the focus to posting news and articles about the industry/type of job you are targeting; that becomes the information employers see first. [Chapter 2](#)



### You need a resume

Skip the objective and include no more than 10 or 15 years of experience. Volunteer responsibility, particularly with leadership experience, can fill in gaps. This is a document you must be able to talk about. [Chapter 5](#)

### Tell people your story

The #1-way people get jobs is through referrals. Tell everyone you know about your plans.

When you meet new people, tell them too. Write down names and contact information to follow up.

Update or create a LinkedIn profile and grow your virtual business network. [Chapter 6](#)

### Check your email

Create a work-friendly, professional email address just for your job search. Soccercoach5@yahoo.com is not recommended. Keep job search emails separate so they won't get lost or buried in your inbox. [Chapters 2 & 5](#)

worked and volunteered. [Chapter 9](#)



Submit

### Apply for jobs online

Online applications take as long as an hour. The Personal Data Form makes it easier. Read everything and answer all questions. Don't check every box 'yes' for additional information about jobs, education or training. Check yes and you get tons of emails you don't need. Keep track of applications including logins and passwords. [Chapter 8](#)

### Customize cover letters

Generic cover letters won't get noticed. Customized cover letters that include specifics and keywords will. [Chapter 5](#)



### Broaden volunteer work

Take on leadership roles, add new experiences. Volunteer work adds to a resume or application and provides networking opportunities and references when people see the quality of what you do. You never know, volunteering can turn into a paid job. [Chapter 3](#)



Success!

### Interview

Describe your talent. Take your time answering questions. Have responses for gaps in your work history. Get names and contact information from interviewers so you can send a thank you note. You may be nervous but you won't be unprepared. [Chapter 11](#)

### Prepare for interviews

Be prepared for every step in the process including interviews by phone, video, and face to face. For both virtual and in-person interviews, dress to impress, but don't overdress. Find out what the organization's dress code is. [Chapter 10](#)

