



O'NEILL
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Patient and Persistent Communication Strategies

As we adjust to an ever-changing environment, we have to be conscious that some things (like our actions and reactions) are still within our control. We acknowledge the fears and uncertainty that come with unfamiliar times and being pushed out of our comfort zones. It is also tough to think that our plans we worked so hard to make, may or may not come to fruition.

One thing students need to keep in mind is that many employers are also adjusting to new realities, and people outside of their organization are not their #1 priority right now. We've heard from a number of our partners and we know that hiring for internships and full-time jobs is still happening, but the processes are much slower than normal. Communication with hiring managers will be delayed and the apply-to-hire turnaround time will be lengthier without a doubt. As applicants, it is important to strike a balance of patience and persistence while you interact with recruiters and HR professionals who are all dealing with a great deal of added stress at this time. Keep the following things in mind as you communicate during these unprecedented times.

Ask for a Timeline - When you do hear from employers who are interested in your application, make sure to ask for their hiring timeline, but understand this will still probably be an optimistic best guess. In addition to asking the hiring timeline, you can ask when they expect to get back with applicants on next steps. This way, you'll know if they say give them "X" amount of time, you should not contact them during this period. If you still haven't heard anything after that window of time, graciously reach out and remind them of your interest in the role, remind them of the timeline they gave, and politely ask for any updates they may have.

Be Proactive - Many employers are in the process of transitioning their teams and services online and others are still trying to figure out how. Adding a new employee or intern could seem like more of a hindrance than a help, so the more you can do to show your value add, the better off you will be. One thing you can do is come up with a list of potential projects you could work on for the organization in a virtual setting. Think about your own personal skills and strengths and try to anticipate some of the needs of the employer to be part of the solution.

Have a Strong Online Presence - Hiring managers will have little to no face time with candidates; therefore, they will rely on your application materials, including your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn now more so than ever. Make sure you have a strong profile but also that you are contributing content and actively participating in the professional online community. Share articles, recognize others' success, and promote your potential contributions in new and innovative ways.

Be Patient and Persistent - Give people a lot of grace, especially now, and always come from a place of understanding. You have no idea what others are going through; so, being patient is extremely important. You also don't want anyone to forget about you, so showing the right amount of persistence and perseverance is equally as important.

O'Neill Career Hub (SPEA 200A)
careerhb@indiana.edu, (812) 855-9639