



# CAREER COMPASS

GET HELP FINDING A JOB OR INTERNSHIP DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it harder to find a job or internship. That's why Polytechnique Montréal's Internships & Jobs Department developed **Career Compass**, a 5-step tool to help you find your next opportunity. It lets you see which job-hunting tasks you've already completed and which ones still need work. Count on this personalized tool to guide you every step of the way!

1

Keep up with labour market changes and adjust your plans accordingly

2

Try different strategies to increase your chances of being hired

3

Tweak your resume and cover letter to get noticed

4

Send applications proactively

5

Prepare for remote interviews

HOW MANY STEPS HAVE YOU COMPLETED?

## KEEP UP WITH LABOUR MARKET CHANGES AND ADJUST YOUR PLANS ACCORDINGLY



The first step in a job or internship hunt is to assess the labour market, especially in your field of interest. With so many things currently in flux, normal business activities have been affected, including hiring. Fewer permanent and intern positions are available right now. To maximize your chances of getting hired, take the time to scope out the market and adjust your plans accordingly.

### WHERE TO FIND HELPFUL INFORMATION

#### ► Check these sites regularly:

- [Gradual resumption of activities](#)
- [Essential services](#)
- Keep up with job market news by checking local media, LinkedIn and websites specializing in business, the economy or specific industries.

#### ► Watch these testimonials (available in French only):

- [Sector status reports](#) prepared by business development coordinators
- Two employers discuss their current challenges and action plans:



# KEEP UP WITH LABOUR MARKET CHANGES AND ADJUST YOUR PLANS ACCORDINGLY

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## NEED TO CHANGE YOUR INTERNSHIP OR EMPLOYMENT PLANS?

What if your dream internship at that top-choice company doesn't materialize? If there's no hope of making it happen, you'll need to think of a Plan B. Good thing engineers are known for their creativity and innovative thinking! It's time to apply these essential qualities to your career planning. Ask yourself the following:

### ► What are my priorities and what am I willing to compromise on?

- Think of new tasks, alternate positions and businesses that have more potential right now.
- Consider rearranging your academic schedule and postponing your internship.
  - › Ask your academic management coordinator for assistance.
  - › Refer to the [relaxed rules surrounding internships during the pandemic](#) (available in French only)
- Taking a non-engineering job this summer. Here's [what one student had to say about it](#) (available in French only)

### ► Which high-demand fields might need someone with my education and skills?

- Example 1: Apply my knowledge of aerospace engineering to mechanical part manufacturing.
- Example 2: Leverage my past experience to help businesses offering essential services. Here's what the [Quebec Order of Engineers](#) (Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec) had to say about this possibility (available in French only).

### ► Can I do an equivalent mandatory internship?

- This is a **terrific idea** for undergraduate students who want to complete a co-op term this year. You could do an internship right here in Quebec, either through humanitarian, technical, academic or entrepreneurial work. Additional information, examples and testimonials are available on the French-language webpage at:

[polymtl.ca/stages-et-emplois/pour-votre-recherche-de-stage-avez-vous-pense-aux-stge](http://polymtl.ca/stages-et-emplois/pour-votre-recherche-de-stage-avez-vous-pense-aux-stge)

[polymtl.ca/stages-et-emplois/etudiants-stages/caracteristiques-des-stages](http://polymtl.ca/stages-et-emplois/etudiants-stages/caracteristiques-des-stages)



Any work experience, even not related to engineering, can be an opportunity for professional development : leadership, communication, teamwork, etc.

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## TRY DIFFERENT STRATEGIES TO INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF BEING HIRED

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It's important to look beyond [La Ruche](#), our job and internship bulletin board. There are many more opportunities out there that simply aren't advertised. It's called the **hidden job market**. After you've completed **Step 1**, you'll be ready to jump into action!



Tapping into the hidden market now offers more potential than ever. You'll have access to more companies, with less competition for the positions. Plus, a lot of businesses have reoriented their operations to respond to immediate needs related to the pandemic. You never know what might happen!

### Strategy 1: Target companies that need people with your skills

- Check the business directories at: [icriq.com/en/](http://icriq.com/en/) and [imt.emploiquebec.gouv.qc.ca](http://imt.emploiquebec.gouv.qc.ca). You can search by sector and business size.
- Another way to find companies is to enter keywords—industry, product type, service type, job title—in search engines.
- Look for old job postings and apply for similar jobs on:
  - › Job websites
  - › La Ruche, under *Mandats historiques*
- You can also find a number of resources and directories on the [Internships & Jobs](#) (Service des stages et emplois) section of the Polytechnique website (in French only)



Recommended roadmap: Create a list of potential employers. Don't just focus on big companies. Since small and mid-size firms tend to receive fewer applications, you have a better chance of getting noticed.

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# TRY DIFFERENT STRATEGIES TO INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF BEING HIRED

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## Strategy 2: Start networking actively

- Word of mouth is more effective than you think! Contact your classmates, colleagues, friends, parents and former supervisors to see if they know of any opportunities. Putting yourself out there could pay off.
- At the same time, make sure your profile is up-to-date on LinkedIn and other professional sites. Having an active presence is essential, especially with the pandemic. It's an effective way to connect with others while maintaining a safe social distance.
  - › [LinkedIn 101 checklist](#) (available in English via the French webpage)
  - › Virtual information sessions: Contact a Polytechnique graduate or other professional with an interesting career and ask them if they could provide you with insights on a specific sector, company, job type, etc.

## Strategy 3: Watch for online recruitment campaigns

- Check the [Polytechnique calendar](#) and follow prospective employers on LinkedIn and Facebook. That way you'll know if and when they decide to hold online recruitment events.

## Strategy 4: Envision being an entrepreneur

- Ever dreamed of being your own boss? Do you have a product or service idea that could be useful in today's changing world? By developing it on your own or with others, you could create an opportunity that's profitable in more ways than one.
  - › More information on entrepreneurship (in French only): [polymtl.ca/entrepreneuriat](http://polymtl.ca/entrepreneuriat)

## Strategy 5: Look into economic assistance programs

- Special wage subsidies or economic assistance programs could help a company that's struggling offer you an internship. [polymtl.ca/stages-et-emplois/employeurs/aides-financieres-lembauche-de-stagiaires](http://polymtl.ca/stages-et-emplois/employeurs/aides-financieres-lembauche-de-stagiaires)



Now that so many businesses are letting their teams work from home, geographic constraints aren't what they used to be. This might make it easier for you to complete an internship for a business that operates in a remote area or even in another province or country.

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## TWEAK YOUR RESUME AND COVER LETTER TO GET NOTICED

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You can't expect recruiters to get excited about a generic application that was obviously intended for several different employers. Take the time to personalize your message and make a clear link between your education, experience and goals and their needs. Regardless of the type of position you're looking for, the employer will be able to see that you're the type of person they should hire!

- ▶ [\*Application self-evaluation: How to put your best foot forward to catch employers' attention\*](#)
- ▶ [\*Resume checklist\*](#) (available in English via the French webpage)
- ▶ [\*Cover letter checklist\*](#) (available in English via the French webpage)
- ▶ [\*LinkedIn 101 checklist\*](#) (available in English via the French webpage)



For help finding the right words to describe what you learned during your engineering studies, check out our: [\*Skill summary sheets by discipline\*](#) (available in French only).



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## SEND APPLICATIONS PROACTIVELY

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Now you're ready to contact the prospective employers identified in Step 2. The best way to do it is to send spontaneous applications. Don't wait for companies to post a job or internship opportunity. Instead, show some initiative by offering your services. For example:

*"I'd like to work for your company this summer. I'm able to do X, Y and Z. I'm particularly interested in X and I'm confident that I have the right skills for the job."*

That's a lot more convincing than "I need to complete an internship," isn't it?

### How do you apply for jobs spontaneously?

There are several ways you can apply spontaneously for a permanent job or co-op term. Try sending emails, cold calling and contacting people via LinkedIn. You can also opt for a combined approach, like the one described in [this article](#).

When making your pitch, focus on your personal qualities or potential work arrangements could help you work effectively in the current context, now that social distancing and strict health and safety measures are required. For example:

- Creative, independent, adaptable, reliable, etc.
- Knowledge of OHS measures
- Available to work remotely
- Eligible for wage subsidies or other assistance programs



Follow up 2 weeks later, but be patient with employers. Remember that many are facing unfamiliar territory right now and have urgent needs to address. Even if your application is strong, it might not be their top priority right now.

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## PREPARE FOR REMOTE INTERVIEWS



Since the beginning of the pandemic, companies have had to adjust their recruitment strategies. Since in-person interviews are now much less common, you can expect to do interviews by phone, video or through an app. As with any interview, you need to prepare in advance. Here are some helpful reminders:

- ▶ [Interview checklist](#)
- ▶ [Tips for acing online interviews](#)

### What next?

After an encouraging interview, send a short thank-you message to the people you spoke to. It's a classy move that shows how professional you are.

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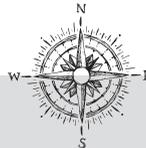
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[MAIN MENU](#)

## A FINAL WORD



The current situation is challenging for everyone. But keep in mind that there are lots of tools available to help you with your search. Your studies have taught you to think critically, resolve complex problems, be creative and never give up. If you apply these qualities to your job or internship search and adjust your strategies along the way, you'll increase your chances of success.

Finally, if you want to talk to someone about your situation, reach out to the Internships & Jobs team. We're here for you all summer. [Write to us](#) to set up a remote meeting with a career counsellor.

### INTERNSHIPS AND JOBS DEPARTMENT

[www.polymtl.ca/stages-et-emplois/etudiants-de-polytechnique](http://www.polymtl.ca/stages-et-emplois/etudiants-de-polytechnique)

[stages.emplois@polymtl.ca](mailto:stages.emplois@polymtl.ca)

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