

Unemployed? Learn from this 24-year old who went to coffee with 110 people



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Published Monday, May 25, 2015 6:30AM EDT

Think the only way to get a job is to send your resume to positions posted online? Not even close.

Instead of sending your resume into the black abyss of the Internet, you're far more likely to get a job by spending your energies creating and cultivating a network.

Take Justin Krieger.

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Unlike most other millennials, he didn't bother sitting in a coffee shop emailing out dozens of "Dear Hiring Manager" cover letters. Rather, he used coffee shops to facilitate a much more direct and targeted approach to job hunting.

Over six months, he drank coffee with some 110 people in his industry, eventually landing his dream job as a product and investment management analyst.

"I got a job through networking. I knew one person who connected me with someone else, who connected me with someone else," he says. "I love it. I couldn't be happier where I'm at."

But to get there, like most millennials, he took a few detours.

"To be very honest I didn't know what I wanted to do when I graduated undergrad. I had a degree in sociology. And with a degree in sociology I said, 'I can get a Masters in Sociology or go to law school.' So I decided to go to law school," he says. "And I did that and I really hated law."

But, taking that path had at least one good outcome: It led him to his passion for finance.

"The reason I got into finance is because I got an OSAP grant and I didn't really, necessarily, really need the money, so I decided to invest my OSAP. But I didn't really know anything about investments, so I just learned as much as I possibly could and I just invested it," he says. "I really just liked about everything about it and learning about it."

But it's a big leap from taking an interest in something to getting paid to do it. Krieger wasn't sure where to start, so he started asking around, and meeting with some of his friends' parents who were in the industry.

"Eventually I met one person at an investment firm and he basically told me exactly what to do," he says. "And what he told me to do, was to speak to one person and at the end of the conversation, not specifically ask for a



Justin Krieger, 24, took a different approach to finding a job - he had coffee with over 100 people hoping to grow his network instead of simply sending out resumes.

job, but ask them if you can connect with them on LinkedIn. And from there, go through their LinkedIn account and pick one to three people. And with those one to three people, hopefully that person that you're connecting with will be able to connect you with someone else and so on and so forth."

Krieger followed his advice. It didn't matter that at the end of the meetings no one offered him a job, because they all at least offered him a few tidbits of advice and information, along with, most importantly, the opportunity to grow his network.

"It's the law of large numbers," he says. "The more people you meet, the more hopeful you'll meet someone who knows someone.

Krieger would first research the person along with the company. Then he would send them an email explaining who he was, and what he was interested in, which was less about specifically getting a job, but more about learning what people do.

"I'm interested in learning more about the individual people," he says. "What interests me is them — how they got to where they are; everyone has a different story."

Each coffee date would range from 15 minutes to an hour, and Krieger would just try to listen. Because he had no formal background in the industry, it was especially important to him that he soak up as much information as possible.

"People don't really want to hear about other people," he says. "A lot of people want to talk about themselves, and it's good for someone like me who is learning and wants to know what they did. Basically, you're creating your own community of people."

Justin's networking tips:

- Applying online is a waste of time: "It doesn't really work to go on the websites and apply for jobs endlessly. Because it's such a tight job market, there's always someone who has way more experience, way more credentials than you, that it's hard to get a job that way and it's way more stressful."
- Use LinkedIn as a first source: "I find it to be more advantageous to go on LinkedIn, find someone, and learn about other people. And through that process you'll learn so much more about yourself."
- Don't get discouraged: "I had a couple people tell me that I wasn't going to amount to anything in finance because I have a law degree. I had a couple people tell me that because I didn't study finance in undergrad that I would never get into to the small-knit community that it is. At the end of it, you're looking for a job and everyone is going to get discouraged because that's what it's about. Learn from the discouragement and learn from the challenge."
- Always offer to pay: "I always offer. I think I paid for maybe one coffee."
- Always attach a specific cover letter and resume to an introduction email: "If someone does have a job they might throw it into the mix, but if they don't, then they know a little bit about you" and might hold on to it for a future opportunity, he says.
- "Nos" are no big deal: I got tons of 'Nos.' Most people say 'No.' That's okay though. Even if someone says 'No,' you're kind of reading between the lines and you might be able to see some information there."

Hello dkubes (Logout)

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Bob Rae

3 days ago

He invested an OSAP grant he didn't need? How about returning the grant so someone who really needed it got it??

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Finist Yasnysokol

3 days ago

Well, at least somebody has got the message: do not sit on your butt, keep on trying. You're entitled for nothing, you will get what you earn, not what you deserve. It's a very competitive world out there, where losers are not welcome.

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 **Kris** 3 days ago
 Very inspiring!!! Now if I could get over being the world's shyest person and a total introvert I might be inclined to try it.
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 **AMC** 3 days ago
 That's what I did. I'm 29, was laid off in January and within 3 months, I found my dream job. Everyday, I woke up and went to work - networking. I had about 2 coffee or lunch meetings a day for 3 months straight. I met some great people and made some great connections... and here I am with a corner view of the city!
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 **gmarie1** 3 days ago
 I wish you luck and confidence Sara.... I live in a rural province, never mind a small town.. There are 'X' number of decent jobs period and the better jobs you MUST be bilingual, I seriously feel like a second class citizen in my home province and completely discriminated against... May have to head westagain... I'm 60... this getting to be a bit much.
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 **Sara** 3 days ago
 That is great I wish I was not so shy that I would be able to get out and do that.
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 **Mike in Toronto** 3 days ago
 The fact of the matter is, this gentleman followed his dream, didn't give up, and did what he had to do. Congratulations and respect. It just goes to show how determination pays off. For those who criticize, your condemnations says more about you than it does about him.
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 **Cam13** 3 days ago
 Relationship are everything.
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 **Suki905** 3 days ago
 Hogwash. I do what has always worked for me...apply online. I come from the days when you literally went out every day and "pounded the pavement" so I love job-hunting via the internet. Don't let anyone tell you the "old" methods no longer work. You just have to get lucky...and I think fate has a lot to do with it as well.
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 **Tony Basso** 2 days ago
 This story just goes to show you how pathetic the Canadian employment seen is. We don't need foreign workers.
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 **Scott Fournier** 3 days ago
 The unfortunate truth is that it's become a world of who you know, and not what you know. While I agree that some may find success in applying for a job online, for the most part those who are truly seeking a career need to network. I work in the oil industry and I advise all our entry level new hires to talk to at least 3 new people per day and really ask questions.
 Like | Reply | Share 1

**Dot P**

3 days ago

Networking is huge, to be sure, but I disagree that online applications are a waste of time. If you are simply sending a generic resume "into the abyss", then yes, it might not be very fruitful. But if, like Krieger, you spend the time and effort, you might find that the process is much more useful. A customized resume and a personalized, well written cover letter will go a long ways.

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**NewBee**

3 days ago

There has been lot of talking on the subject of equal opportunity; involving personal liking in professional postings can be disastrous for deserving candidates just because someone seating in power position didn't like their name or personality and didn't have connecting hobbies.

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**Ian**

3 days ago

So, this guy gets a job without any real qualifications. He also invests money that he doesn't need. Nice. Other people are told to go online, as that is the only way that companies will accept applications. They haven't got a hope of getting a job, qualified or not. I fear for the future of Canada. What an HR nightmare.

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**zaneb**2 days ago *(edited)*

So this kid got a law degree...thats a great accomplishment! Does anyone commenting actually know how hard it is to find a job these days...? Probably not. I think the point was missed about networking and how to take every aspect of the job searching process as a positive.

I, on the other hand, don't necessarily agree with using unnecessary money..but as long as it was paid back, the gov is happy

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**Dave R**2 days ago *(edited)*

"Investing" OSAP in markets that are going up makes him an expert? And he's found others in the industry who agree? Just looks like another black mark for the financial industry.

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**Jeremy Parks**

3 days ago

Neat. Instead of working, he decided to do nothing for six months while simply wasting time having coffee with people he didn't know. Unfortunately, very few people are able to enjoy the luxury of unemployment for such an extended period of time to conduct a bizarre social experiment.

He got lucky that, after six months of 'coffee dates', someone pitied him enough to give him a job.

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**Earnshaw**

3 days ago

Why didn't he just go to the Canada Manpower Centre? They always found ME jobs.

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