

A photograph of three college students walking outdoors in a campus setting with autumn foliage in the background. On the left, a young woman with long dark hair, wearing a blue and white plaid shirt, is looking down at her hands. In the center, a young man with short dark hair, wearing a white jacket with a red stripe, is smiling and looking towards the woman on the left. On the right, a young woman with long brown hair, wearing a blue denim jacket, is holding a black folder or book and looking towards the man in the center. The background is a soft-focus view of trees with yellow and orange leaves.

# The Job Search During COVID-19.

What are college students looking for now?

 Handshake

April 2020

# ■ KEY FINDINGS: APRIL 2020

- How are students prioritizing their career search amidst all the change and stress?
  - **Students are still finding time to engage**, but they are balancing the job search with other concerns like family, physical health and mental health.
- Are candidates changing their career priorities and plans? What's changing in the talent pools, and what's not?
  - **Students want personalized proactive outreach from employers**. Regardless of how confident students are about the future, they want to stay connected.
- How are candidates navigating the virtual world, in terms of both searching for roles and the nature of those roles being virtual (at least for now)?
  - **Applicant volumes are in flux across sectors** with increased interest in non-profit, pharma, and healthcare
  - **Students location preferences have remained the same** but they are more open to gig work
- What are effective ways to reach students and build authentic brand / relationships with them virtually?
  - **Students are quickly switching to digital recruiting** and are looking for support from their universities and connection with employers.

# ■ METHODOLOGY

- **Handshake platform data** Handshake has the largest early talent network with over 5,000,000 active students. We leveraged our platform to supplement survey data to uniquely pair what students and employers are saying with how they're behaving
- **Students survey** (N=1,002) We ran a student survey connecting with 1,000 current students about how COVID-19 has impacted their education, their lives, and how they view the future
- **Employer survey** (N=192) We also ran an employer survey that connected with those active on the Handshake platform specifically recruiting and specialized in early talent

“

I know school should be my biggest concern, but my biggest concern right now is maintaining relationships with people that I'm not gonna be able to see for a while. And trying to utilize technology to be able to video chat them.”

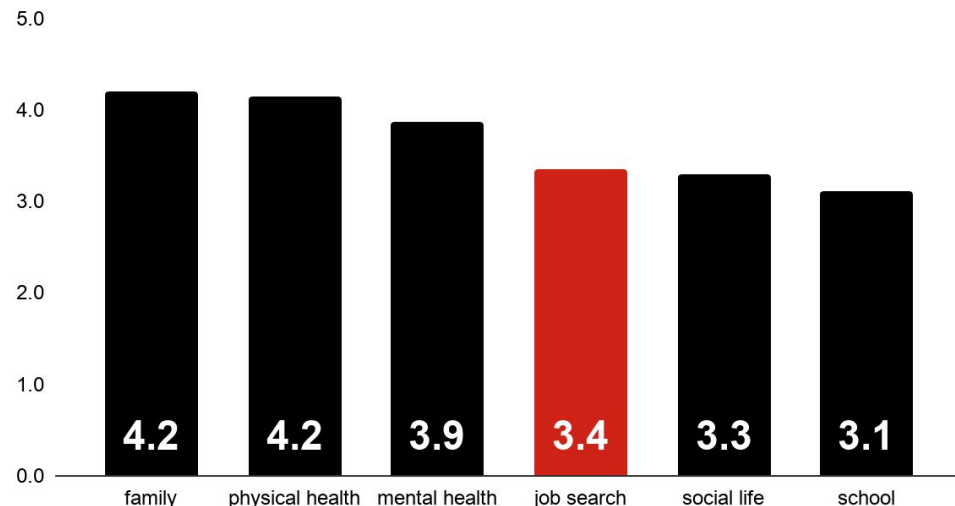
—Sophomore, April 2020

**How are students prioritizing their career search amidst all the change and stress?**

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# Job search has been eclipsed by family & health concerns, but is still on student's minds

Student rankings of importance



Items ranked on a 5-point scale. 5 is most important; 1 is least important.

N = 40 student respondents to a diary study.

Finding a job is lower priority in comparison to health and family.

**77%**

Of students said getting a good job quickly is one of their top three concerns

N = 1002 student respondents to a survey.

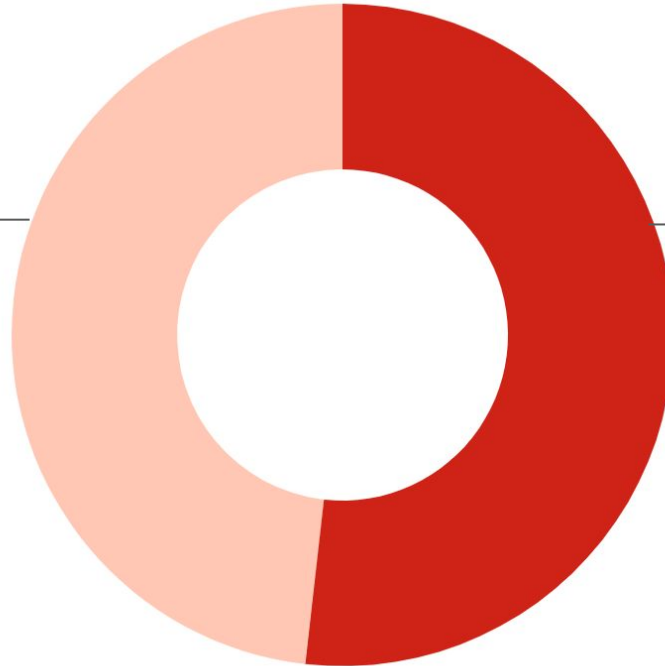


# Students are split about their job prospects

Employers still hiring can win hearts and minds with simple outreach to students not confident in their future work opportunities

**48%**

Of students not confident they'll find a job or internship in the next 12 months



**52%**

Of students are confident they'll find a job or internship in the next 12 months

# Reach out: Students *not confident* about the future want *proactive engagement* from employers about open roles

**66%**

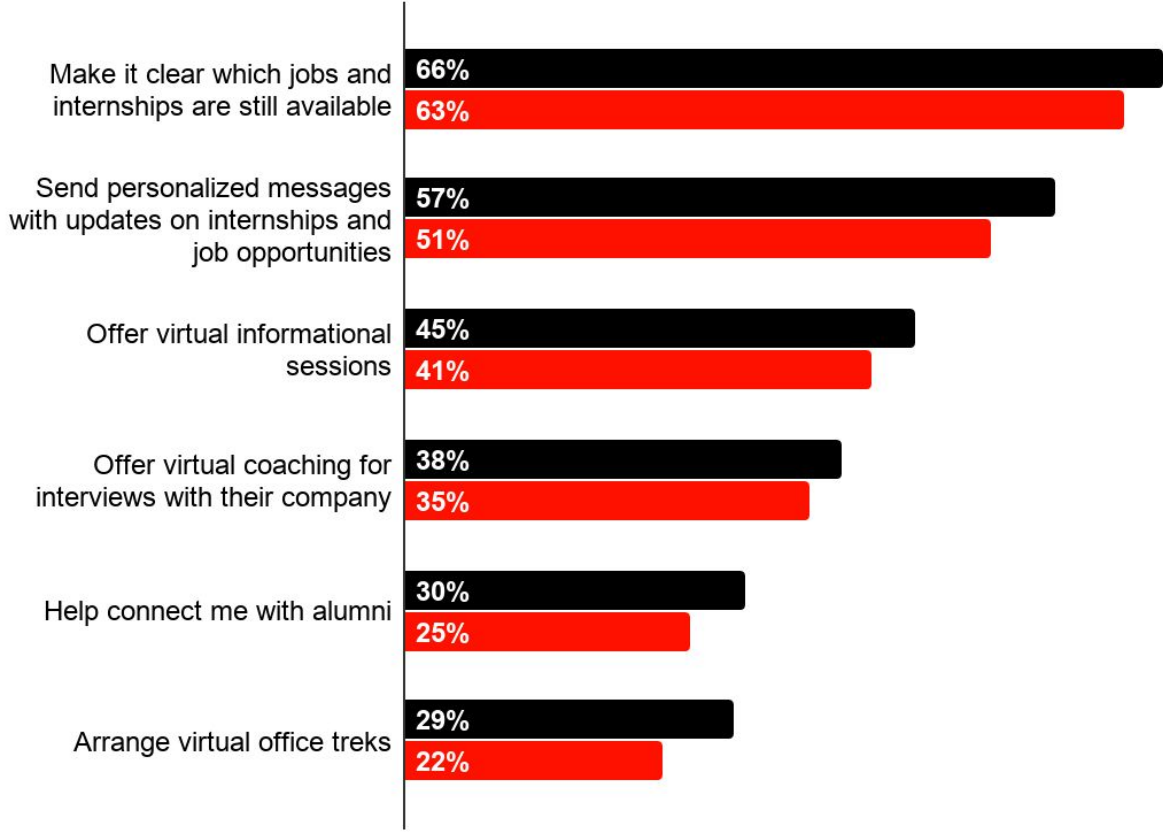
Of students who are not confident about job prospects want to know which jobs and internships are **still available**

**57%**

Of students who are not confident about job prospects want to be contacted with a **personalized message** regarding internships and full-time roles



# Whether confident or not about the future, students want the same thing: more contact from employers



■ Unconfident Students ■ Confident Students

Source: Handshake student COVID-19 survey, March 2020

# Students are still applying to jobs and engaging with employers across the ecosystem

**59%**

Of students view jobs on the Handshake platform

**53%**

Increase in students attending virtual events since February

# \_Students are still active online and engaging with outreach from employers

**Over half**

Of messages sent about jobs in the past four weeks were opened by students

**2 in 3**

Students are looking for a job

**7 in 10**

Students are currently conducting an online career search

**45%**

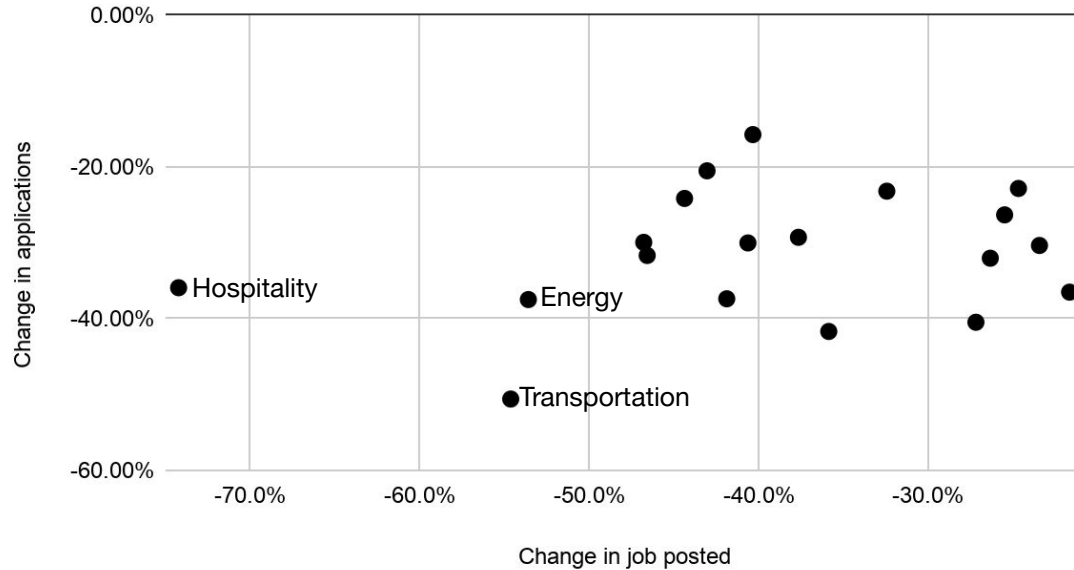
Of seniors still looking for a job, plan to network online

**Are candidates changing their career priorities and plans? What's changing in the talent pool, and what's not?**

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# Amidst the crisis, certain industries are posting fewer jobs but students are still engaging with employers

Change in applications compared to the change in job posted



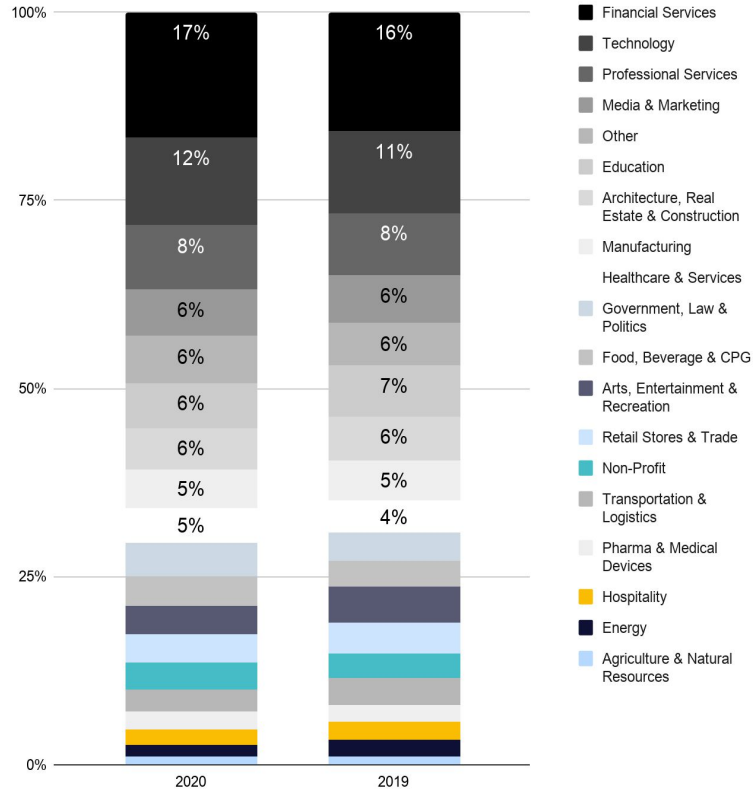
## Most Active

Students are still logging on and engaging on the platform. The most active majors in the past four weeks are:

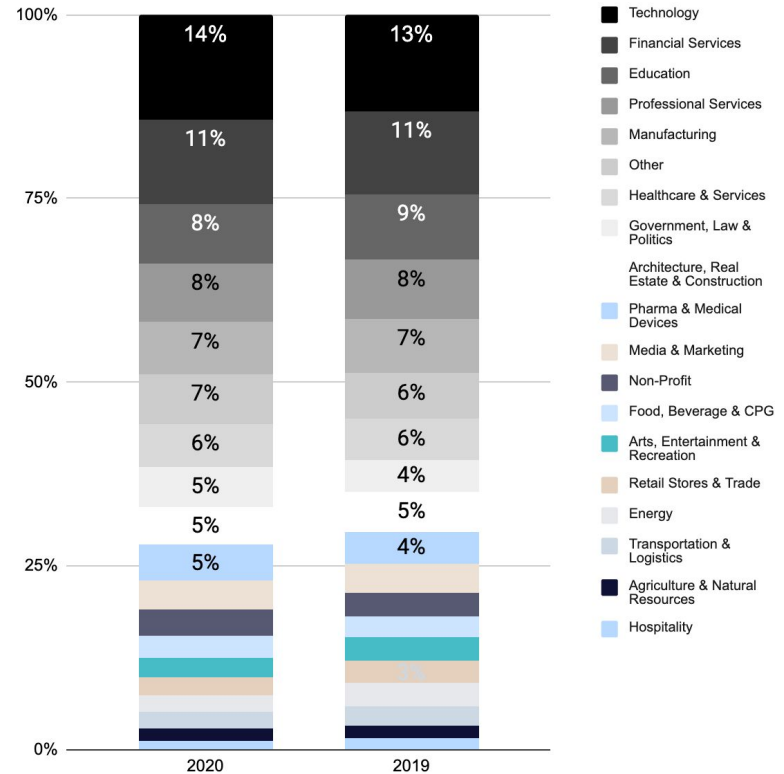
1. Business
2. Social Sciences
3. Engineering
4. Computer Science
5. Civics & Government

# No slowdown: Business and STEM students are applying to jobs in the same sectors as before the pandemic

Industries applied to by Business, Entrepreneurship & HR majors



Industries applied to by STEM majors



# Overall industry preferences have shifted very little but there are some roles that have seen an increase interest

**19%**

Increase in students interested  
in Respiratory Therapy

**15%**

Increase in students interested  
in Emergency Medical  
Technicians and Paramedics

**32%**

Increase in students interested  
in postal services work

**17%**

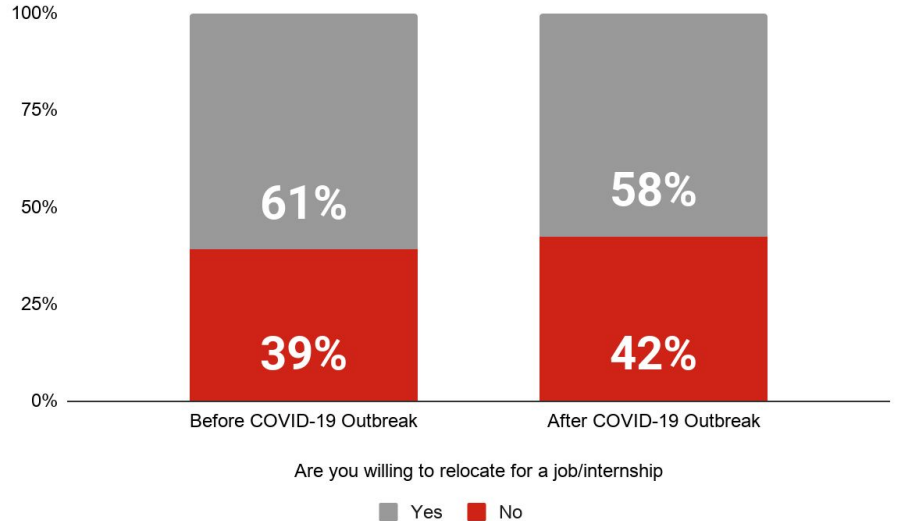
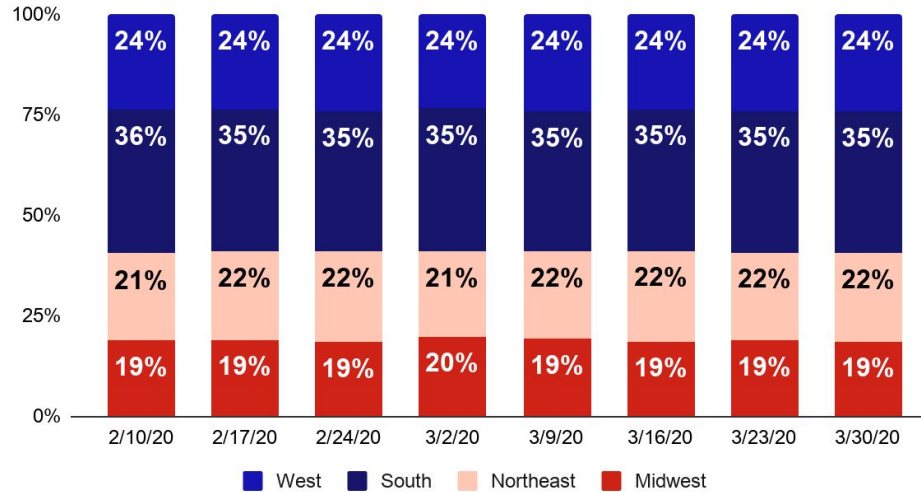
Increase in students interested  
in volunteering

# Student location preferences haven't changed

Students are applying to jobs in the same regions as before the pandemic.

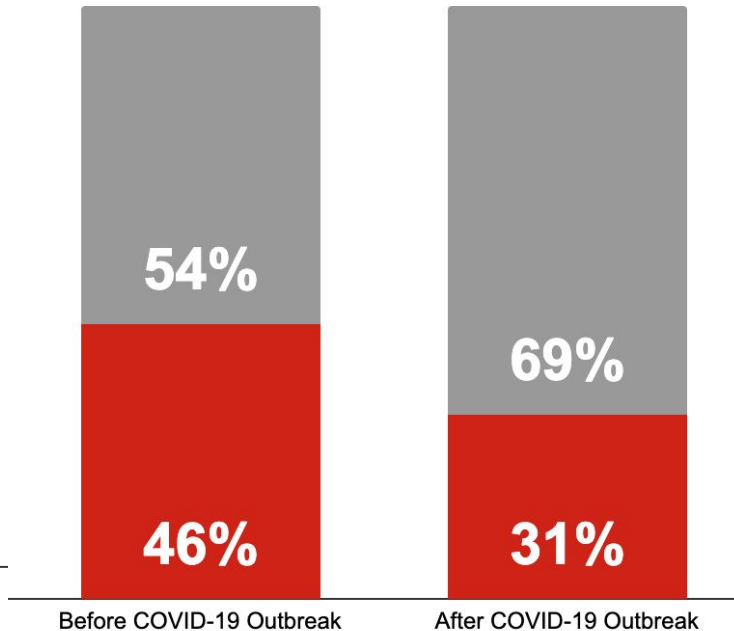
They're still willing to relocate for a job.

Applications by role location





# And they're now more open to gig work to generate cash



Would you have considered taking a job in the gig economy?

■ Yes ■ No

61%

Of **seniors** would consider a job in the gig economy

70%

Of **underclassmen** would consider a job in the gig economy

**How are candidates navigating the virtual world, in terms of both searching for roles and the nature of those roles being virtual (at least for now)?**

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# The road ahead: Students need significant help getting started in their job searches

**99%**

Of students said they wanted their university career services help at this time

Starting a career search for the first time is daunting. Students want help from career services to ramp up online job searches.

They also want to meet employers - especially those still hiring from their school.

Schedule virtual career advising sessions

**54%**

Show me what employers are still hiring at my school

**51%**

Provide feedback on my online profile

**47%**

Facilitate virtual events with employers

**39%**

Facilitate virtual alumni engagement

**25%**

Other

**2%**

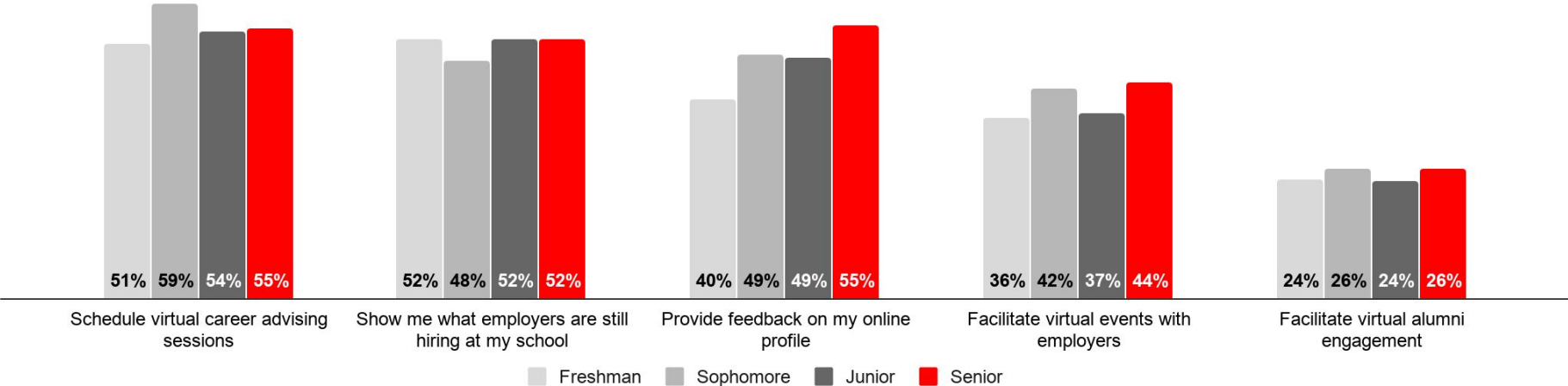
# The new campus visit: Seniors want help polishing their profiles and connecting to employers virtually

**69%**

Of **all students** wants their career center to help facilitate interactions and communications with employers

**74%**

Of **seniors** wants their career center to help facilitate interactions and communications with employers



# Without access to on-campus resources and processes, students are focusing on their digital presence

**Seniors**

**All students**

**44%**

**41%**

Plan to **network online** in the coming weeks

**59%**

**51%**

Plan to **update their online profiles** in the coming weeks

**20%**

**19%**

Plan to **attend a virtual recruiting event**

# Ready and willing: Students are interested and able to work remotely

**84%**

Of students would consider a remote job/internship

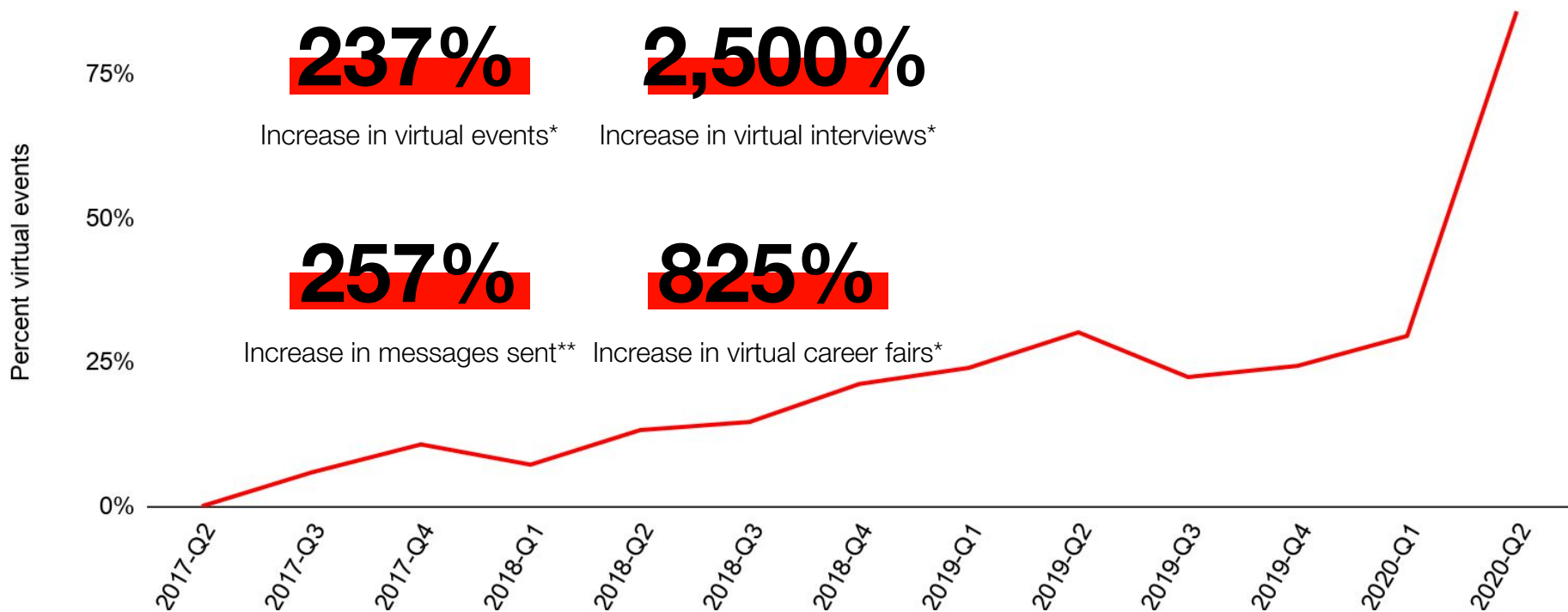
**75%**

Of students are set up and able to do a remote job/internship from home

**What are effective ways to reach students  
and build authentic brand / relationships with  
them virtually?**

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# Employers are shifting to digital approaches to connect with students about available roles.



\*Source: Handshake platform data, March 30, 2020-April 13, 2020 (planned events) as compared to April 1, 2019-April 27, 2019

\*\*Source: Handshake platform data, March 9, 2020-April 13, 2020 (planned events) as compared to March 11, 2019-April 8, 2019