

## Introduction

The global COVID-19 crisis is unprecedented and severely impacts the aviation sector. Most planes are on the ground, many pilots are jobless or temporarily unemployed. Some airlines went bankrupt, many others have already started discussing restructuring plans.

We do not know how long this crisis will last, what the world will look like tomorrow or how the economy will recover, if and when air transport will pick up again. It is therefore important that we do not remain inactive in the meantime. The [ESF project team, "reorientation of pilots"](#), is therefore exploring the possibilities for the pilot community to (temporarily) change career while maintaining their licence.

## Career planning

Many of you, pilots, are going through a period of temporarily unemployment or redundancy, leading to difficult and emotional times. Even the realisation that all will work out just fine in the end, doesn't stop all of the hurt and anguish that the uncertainty brings.

With this communication we hope to offer you some tools to enable you to stay positive, to gain clarity and focus on your way forward, whilst developing your resilience.

- **Positive mindset**

(Temporarily) losing your dream job is a huge adjustment and it's normal to experience a range of emotions. We may feel shock, anger, resentment, relief and much more all in a short period of time.

Make sure you give yourself space and time to express these feelings, and talk to other people about what you are experiencing. Being made redundant during the pandemic is nothing to be ashamed of. You are not to blame for this turn of events and having some social support during this time can help you cope.

Being out of work can have a big impact on your self-esteem and sense of identity. If your job has always been a big part of your life you may wonder who you are without it. Be kind to yourself during this difficult time and use it as a chance to reflect on what makes you feel happy and fulfilled.



Notice when you become stressed and/or anxious.

Create coping strategies to manage your stress: deep breathing, relaxation, etc.

Create structure and routine to your day/week.



Set small achievable goals to give you purpose and direction.

Make each day count.

As you feel empowered start to create the bigger goals for your future.



Explore what is important to you, your values and consider employment opportunities that align with those values.

What do you love about work, what is it about your friend's job that appeals?

- **Temporary work**

The impact of Covid-19 on the aviation industry means that it may take several months, or even a few years, before those impacted can get back into the cockpit and get back to the career they love. Which means they might be looking for alternative employment.

The idea of side stepping into another career may be daunting, especially if you have been flying for a long time. Temporary work may be a viable option if you don't feel ready to commit to a permanent role and would like to get a feel for the job market. This guide explores the pros and cons of temporary work and how you can get started.

**ESF 9663 team is looking for ways to maintain your pilot license in the meantime**

- **Target industries**

Trying to find a temporary job or career path can be an overwhelming prospect. It can be useful to have some specific industries in mind so that you can target your job search. One way of doing this is to research the industries with the best predicted growth for the next year or so. These are the industries receiving investment, making the most profit and expanding their reach. This means there are more roles opening up and jobs available to you.

Despite the recent uncertainty around the economy, there are still industries which have enjoyed exceptional growth. They also have big projections for the future. Think of the health sector, web shops, odd jobs in and around the house. The list of bottleneck professions can also be inspiring: [Click here for the list of bottleneck professions.](#)

- **Career decisions**

Many job vacancies will require [a degree](#) as part of their application requirements. Often the degree subject has no bearing on the role being applied for, but is merely a mechanism to demonstrate that the applicant has some of the desirable skills associated with completing a degree, such as dedication and the ability to work independently to a high standard.

Many pilots have not completed [a degree](#), but went directly to flight school or the military.

Nevertheless, according to the [codex Higher Education](#)<sup>1</sup> Art. II.378 §3: The airline pilot training programme organised by a private institution recognised by the Belgian Civil Aviation Administration is recognised as a professional bachelor's programme by the Flemish government.

This means that when working or [studying](#) in Flanders (whether or not you are Flemish), your studies as a pilot are to be considered as a professional Bachelor.

**Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering tot codificatie van de decretale bepalingen betreffende het hoger onderwijs (citeeropschrift: "Codex Hoger Onderwijs")**  
BIJLAGE - Codificatie van de decretale bepalingen betreffende het hoger onderwijs  
DEEL 2. STRUCTUUR EN ORGANISATIE VAN HET HOGER ONDERWIJS  
TITEL 8. Overgangsbepalingen  
Hoofdstuk 1. Overgangsrecht voor het verlenen van de graad van bachelor en master  
Art. II.378.  
[§ 3. De opleiding tot lijnpiloot georganiseerd door een door het Belgisch Bestuur van de Luchtvaart erkende privé-instelling wordt gelijkgesteld met een professionele bacheloropleiding.](#)

On top of this, you demonstrated quite some knowledge, skills and competences during your flight training and your job as a pilot as well.

Do not let a degree requirement stop you from applying for a role!

<sup>1</sup> <https://data-onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/edulex/document.aspx?docid=14650#2>

## Careers

Many of you may not have been for a pilot interview and assessment for many years. Therefore we provide you some information and tools for success.

- **Application form**

An application form is your first chance to make a great impression on the airline or company you are applying to.

It is best to formulate your answers truthfully in a Word document, check the word limit and run the spell checker (spelling & grammar). You can even ask a trusted friend or colleague to review your answers.

Then copy and paste everything into the online application.

Some application forms ask more complex questions. You might be asked to provide information on your attitude and behaviour towards particular competencies such as leadership, team work and customer service. You may even have to submit an evidence based example to demonstrate. Therefore it is important to read the question carefully and assess what skills the question wants you to demonstrate. Be concise and ensure your scenario answers the question posed! Demonstrate **your skills** in your example and focus on what you did, how you did it, why you did it and what the outcome was.

- **CV**

Did you know that a recruiter may only look at a CV for 15 seconds? That means your CV has to stand out and your essential information needs to be found quickly by the recruiter.

Some tips:

- ✓ Start with your **personal details and your (flying) experience**
- ✓ Then list your **employment experience** in reverse chronological order, emphasising on the skills you acquired.
- ✓ Add **education**. You can limit it to your highest level of educational experience, especially if you are running out of space on your CV.
- ✓ Be truthful - a recruiter will discover all you have omitted at your assessment day.
- ✓ Keep it short and concise - a CV is a brief overview of your experience.
- ✓ Use language that is easy to understand.
- ✓ Finalise with **personal highlights and information**. Only add hobbies you perform regularly and which are relevant.

You probably don't realise it, **but your pilot skills and competencies** are relevant also to completely different sectors.

Therefore emphasise on following skills: leading people, working in teams, working under pressure, completing objectives on time and at the lowest possible cost, making decisions, understanding complex information, communicating, delivering customer service, dealing with emergencies , ...

- **LinkedIn guide**

LinkedIn is a social network that focuses on professional networking and career development. It is ideal for finding a job or freelance work, promoting a home business, or connecting with joint venture partners. It is a free platform, however, a subscription version called LinkedIn Premium offers additional features like online classes and seminars, as well as insights into who is searching for and viewing your profile. Some of you will already have a LinkedIn account but may have found less use for it once you became settled into an airline. Now might be the time to blow the cobwebs off your profile or start from scratch to create a LinkedIn profile. Especially in the current climate, it is important to be open to new opportunities and to utilise the connections you have already made in your career or previous industries.

You will find numerous free manuals on the Internet. For one of these free manuals, [click here](#).

This manual delivers advice on the site's features, step-by-step how-to instructions to set up your profile and includes tips and tricks for your job search and company analysis.

- **Preparing for interviews**

Preparing for any interview can be a daunting task, especially if it is your first interview after many years or you have just completed your flying training. There are independent career services that can provide you with help.

### Education / training

You may be faced with a lot more spare time than you are used to and may be looking for ways to use it productively. If you feel up to it, there are a multitude of free courses available online on a range of different subjects. If you are looking for a new job, potentially outside of aviation, these could be a good introduction to a new industry or could be something interesting to talk about during a job interview. You may be considering setting up your own business or simply want to broaden your knowledge in another area.

**ESF 9663 team will offer a tailor-made education programme for pilots.**