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Description

Jim Citrin, executive recruiter and columnist for Yahoo Finance, discusses strategies to help recent college graduates land their first jobs.

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Jobs for Recent College Graduates
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**APA**

**CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE**

**Transcript**
Jobs for Recent Graduates
ANN CURRY, anchor:
This morning on TODAY'S CLASSROOM, there's good news for this year's college graduates. Hiring is expected to be up almost 14 percent, making this the best year to pound the pavement since 2001.
CURRY: Jim Citrin is an executive recruiter and columnist for Yahoo! Finance.
Jim, good morning.
Mr. JIM CITRIN (Spencer Stuart): Good morning, Ann.
CURRY: Great news that the market is so good. How should people think about this first job? How important is it?
Mr. CITRIN: The first job's important, but the average college grad is going to have between 12 and 15 jobs over the course of their career, so it's better to think of the first job as a launching pad to create a trajectory.
CURRY: OK. Now we're not talking about, for example, it just brought back a lot of memories watching that tape about my--I got my first job as a waitress out of school. But you're talking about the first job in terms of how to define yourself and your career. So if you factor in your passions, you think you know what you really want, so you should go after this first job saying, `Look, I want this to set me on a path to where I'm going'?
Mr. CITRIN: That's the ideal. You shouldn't overstress it, or parents shouldn't overstress it for their kids, but it is an opportunity to set the career on the right trajectory.
CURRY: OK. You say that parents can help their kids if they think big.
Mr. CITRIN: Think big. There are many opportunities that come into different career paths. People say they're interested in sports or entertainment, there are dozens of different paths into any career path.
CURRY: You say also look for trends.
Mr. CITRIN: Well, trends create opportunities and opportunities create ways to come in. So, for example,
demographics, the aging life spans, the digital technologies, those create growth and growth creates job opportunities.

CURRY: You also say play to strengths and passions. That's so important. I mean, I think--I really think that if you love what you do, you will be successful. And you don't love what you do, you probably won't.

Mr. CITRIN: That's true. And it--while it sounds perhaps a little trite, the fact is that the key differentiator between the most successful executives and those that are just going through the motions are the degree to which people play to the things that they're great at and that they love to do, strengths and passions.

CURRY: You also say use your network. So you help your kids use your network.

Mr. CITRIN: Yeah. This is where--it's OK--it's OK for parents not to be too shy to introduce their kids to friends or colleagues. But then it's incumbent on the kids, the college grads to have what I call an elevator speech, a 30-second answer to the question, `So, Ann, what do you want to do?'

CURRY: That's exactly the question that they can always expect, `Why do you want this job? What do you think you can bring to the table?' And they can practice for that question.

Mr. CITRIN: They can literally stand in front of a mirror, or with your parent, answer that question until you have it rote.

CURRY: And the more authentically you answer it, probably the better off you're going to be.

Mr. CITRIN: That's right.

CURRY: Also, you say practice interviewing, so this is part of that also as well. You say also that, specifically for the kids themselves, what we want to do is we want to help them make that good impression in other ways. Tell them that they have to work hard. You know, one of the biggest complaints I've heard about people coming into the workplace is that they think that they're entitled.

Mr. CITRIN: Yeah.

CURRY: They think that somehow they're not supposed to maybe got pick up a coffee or go run copy of script. I mean, they need to work hard.

Mr. CITRIN: Attitude and hard work are the first two things that a new grad should do. If there's no escaping the fact that putting in the hours is an important thing to do. Not for face time, but for actually demonstrating quality work.

CURRY: You say start positive, be dependable. And here's something I think most people may not think about, help others succeed. In other words, if you are inside your soul, you're thinking `How I can also help so-and-so in do being their job?' And it can be somebody at your level or somebody above you. They will see you as being somebody who actually is a team player and who they can count on.

Mr. CITRIN: That's exactly right. That is probably the single most important piece of advice for anybody, whether a new grad all the way up to the CEO suite. Focus on the success of those around you and--genuinely, and success will come back as a natural result.

CURRY: We--I don't think we have time to get to all of our e-mail questions, but we do have one, and this is from Missouri from a woman named Kathy. She said "My son graduated with a BA in English in December"--I think this is a common question--"and still does not have a full-time job. He says there is nothing he can do with his degree." What can you do with a liberal arts degree, I think a lot, though, can't you?
Mr. CITRIN: A lot. I actually believe passionately in the value of a liberal arts education. The world today is more interdependent, complex than ever before, and the understanding of problem-solving that comes with liberal arts is something that they can apply. So that English student should be creative, energetic, get out and really talk to people follow the other advice.

CURRY: And your information, and what we're really hearing is that parents really should not shirk being involved.

Mr. CITRIN: No.

CURRY: I mean, the kids are going to say, `Mom, mom, mom, and dad, I can handle this.' The truth is...

Mr. CITRIN: There's a spectrum, they can be relatively supportive without being annoying, and they can be more planful. But not—they can't do it for the kids, the motivation has to come from within.

CURRY: All right. Jim Citrin, thanks so much for helping us prepare our children for the brave new world out there, for the future. Thank you.

Mr. CITRIN: Thanks, Ann.