



Announcer ([00:02](#)):

You're listening to The Faith & Work podcast, where we explore what it means to serve God, neighbor and society through our daily work.

Dustin Moody ([00:17](#)):

Thanks for listening to The Faith & Work podcast. I'm Dustin Moody, Director of Communications at Denver Institute for Faith & Work. At the end of April, unemployment in the US reached 15% of the workforce in response to the coronavirus pandemic. And some economists believe that could actually go up to 20%. This means that many of you listening to the podcast are either currently unemployed, at risk of being unemployed or you know someone who is.

Dustin Moody ([00:39](#)):

We want you to know that you're not alone, that God still loves you regardless of your employment status. And we want to offer both practical advice and biblical wisdom if you find yourself in a season of employment transition. We, at Denver Institute, often say, "That work is a way to love God and serve our neighbors, and demonstrate the gospel." But that can feel challenging in work, at least in the traditional sense. It feels very uncertain right now for many people.

Dustin Moody ([01:00](#)):

My colleague, Joanna Meyer, recently talked with Matt Thomas of Core Ventures, a recruiting firm in Denver. Matt is an employment recruiter. And he is also a committed Christian. Joanna and Matt talked through some practical ideas for finding a job. But they also shared some spiritual encouragement for those of you facing job transitions right now or in the future. I know from my own experience that unemployment or underemployment can bring up issues of an identity, anxiety, and questions about our calling.

Dustin Moody ([01:25](#)):

Joanna and Matt will talk about all of these things and more. So, we hope you enjoy this episode of the podcast.

Joanna Meyer ([01:36](#)):

I want to introduce you to a dear friend of Denver Institute. His name is Matt Thomas. Matt runs Core Ventures, which is a corporate consulting and job placement of recruiting firm here in the Denver area. And it's been so fun to watch Matt's influence and wisdom grow over the years. So, he will be sharing with us a little bit about what he is seeing in his unique role. And we'll have a couple moments of pause throughout the call to give you a chance to just rest and reflect on what we're learning together. So, Matt, welcome.

Matt Thomas ([02:05](#)):

Hello, everybody.

Joanna Meyer ([02:06](#)):

Hi. Hey, as we're getting started, will you tell us a little bit about, in a thumbnail sketch, the road to starting Core Ventures? Tell us a little bit about your career.



Matt Thomas ([02:15](#)):

Yeah. So, my wife and I started the business together, an outfitter, that we ran for six years. And then in the middle of that, I got into residential construction and sales, and did that for a couple years. And then, I was approached by a friend about jumping into the recruiting game with him. And really, I had no interest in that. But I talked to them for over a year. I really prayed about it pretty hard with my spouse. And we felt like it was something we should jump into, so we did.

Matt Thomas ([02:42](#)):

And that was three and a half years ago. I really started as strictly a recruiting firm and has now morphed into a combination of recruiting and management consulting, and leadership development work. But the bulk of what we do is in job placements.

Joanna Meyer ([02:59](#)):

Awesome.

Matt Thomas ([02:59](#)):

So, that's it.

Joanna Meyer ([03:01](#)):

So, I am curious to know, we've all seen the headlines. And from the employee perspective, I think we realized that the economy is nuts. There's huge levels of unemployment. But tell us a little bit, from your perspective, from the placement and recruiting side, what are you seeing in the work world?

Matt Thomas ([03:19](#)):

Yeah. Most of our clients have us on a monthly retainer. And when all this hit, I'd say, right out about a third of our clients press pause. They said, "Hey, we don't know what to do. And we're definitely can't hire right now," which wasn't a huge shock. But the other two-thirds, most of them in essential businesses, just kept on functioning as normal. And so, I think what we're seeing is construction. The construction industry is still moving at a breakneck pace.

Matt Thomas ([03:49](#)):

If anything, it's ramped up, because people are wanting to get as much work in and make it while the sun is shining. And so, every subcontractor we know and every general contractor, is really moving quickly. What we are seeing is that the development side start to slow down a little bit. And so, that will have a ripple effect on construction. I would bet in probably a year, maybe a little less, things will start to slow down on that front.

Matt Thomas ([04:16](#)):

Manufacturing was really dependent upon what they were manufacturing. I think we had one client who was manufacturing and distributing restaurant equipment, and their business evaporated overnight. It went from a \$20 million fourth quarter to closing their doors last week.

Joanna Meyer ([04:34](#)):

Wow.



Matt Thomas ([04:34](#)):

So, pretty significant shifts in that industry. But really, yeah. Manufacturing depends on the industry, because others are ramping up, depending on what it is they're making. In finance world, we've done quite a bit in, and we're seeing... yeah, everything, ebbs and flows with the market. So, as everyone saw the market started to tank and then come back aggressively, and level out a little bit, that's the move of your financial advisor, if you have one.

Matt Thomas ([04:59](#)):

If you're watching the market go, that's a good indicator how they're feeling about things. Yeah. So, I think it's really is industry-dependent. I would say, in general, people are reticent to move quickly on anything. But it does seem that there is a premium on revenue generators right now. And so, people are actively looking to fill sales positions, business development positions, those types of roles, across industries.

Joanna Meyer ([05:29](#)):

That's fascinating. Really, really fascinating. And it's interesting to see that a year from now, the needs may look different. So, people may need to consider a couple of hops as they're looking for work.

Matt Thomas ([05:39](#)):

Yeah, absolutely.

Joanna Meyer ([05:39](#)):

What is unusual for a job placement specialist, Matt, is that you're also educated. You're also seminary-educated. You went to Denver Seminary. So, I want to ask you to put up your pastoral hat for a second. Because I'm guessing that you come alongside people in this process. We have a little bit of a pastoral influence, caring for them and helping them think well about things that are job fit. And I want to talk a little bit about what it's like to lose a job. I have lost jobs.

Joanna Meyer ([06:06](#)):

And I remember just how hard it was for my identity and how I felt about myself. And you guys may be feeling the same way because you feel demoralizing or even humiliating when it happens. You may think, "Did I do something wrong? What if I'm the problem that I didn't succeed at work?" And I'm curious, how do we deal with that blow to our identity when we lose work? And what does it look like to recenter our understanding of who we are in the Lord to be able to move forward towards looking for work?

Matt Thomas ([06:36](#)):

Yeah, that's a great question. The disclaimer here is that I would claim Denver Seminary. I don't know if they'd claim me. So, they could, I'd say with a grain of salt. But I do feel like situations like unemployment, when you lose your job, it's such a shock to the system. The reverberations, they just don't go away for a while. And so, usually, everybody enters into some cycle of grief when they're let go from a position, even if they didn't like the job, right?

Matt Thomas ([07:07](#)):



Because at a minimum, it dings our ego, and nobody likes that very much. But on the other end of the spectrum, it can be completely devastating financially. But also, just for identity like you were talking about. And so, I think when some people try... when you lose a job, you'll have all kinds of people come to you with advice like, "It's okay. It's going to be great. Make lemonade out of lemons," all that junk.

Matt Thomas ([07:33](#)):

And I just don't think that that's consistent with a theology of suffering or even just a theology of discomfort. Because I think those are great gifts that God gives us. We have a hard time seeing that or even saying that or believing that in the moment. But what happens in suffering or discomfort, at least, is that our sacred cows bubble up to the surface. All of our junk is right in front of us on the table, and we have a choice whether or not to look at it honestly and make some changes.

Matt Thomas ([08:04](#)):

I can say that I would never want to go through some of the things that I have gone through personally and professionally again. But some of those times, without a doubt, were the most formative. And so, I think in the difficult season, like being let go or experiencing unemployment, it's important to be as faithful as we can, whatever that looks like for each of us. I don't think you have to pretend to be optimistic or overjoyed about the new opportunities you have.

Matt Thomas ([08:31](#)):

I think it's okay to grieve. And you need to do that in a way that's consistent with the way God's wired you. And then, figure out what it looks like to get back on your feet. Because the call isn't necessarily impact or making a difference like we always talk about, it's really just faithfulness. And so, being faithful in difficult seasons like this, as hard as it is, I think that's the path that we want to get on. And really, it truly is, even though it doesn't feel like it now, it could be one of the greatest gifts God gives you.

Matt Thomas ([09:03](#)):

And just the time to reflect and really think about what's important, what you were valuing in your previous position, what you're aiming for, and the different things that maybe shouldn't have been first things. But I'd supplanted some of those things that should have been first things. So, yeah, that's how I would speak to that.

Joanna Meyer ([09:19](#)):

Good insight. I want to share a quote from Tom Nelson. He's a pastor in Kansas City. And he is really thoughtful about work. He wrote a book called *Work Matters* where he shared some insight. I found it to be one of the most helpful books for thinking about a theology of work and how to think about our jobs. And here's what he said. He said, "God's preferred path of transformation is not a path of ease, but it is one of enduring hope."

Joanna Meyer ([09:44](#)):

We must embed deeply in our hearts and minds that our work, though often filled with tribulations, is one of God's main means for our spiritual growth and transformation. Work is where perseverance, proven character, and hope, are forged in our lives. When we face the formidable winds of workplace trials, rather than running from or becoming embittered by them, we would be wise to lean into them with trust and confidence, knowing that God has allowed them for a reason.



Joanna Meyer ([10:10](#)):

Now, often this reason is not fully known by us. But through the eyes of faith, we find contagious joy and enduring hope." And we'll include that quote for you in an email that we'll send out after the call. But just a thoughtful reminder that one of the most powerful tools that God has in our lives to help us grow is the tensions that we face around work. One of the things I'm curious about, Matt, is how we deal with anxiety.

Joanna Meyer ([10:36](#)):

I found when I've lost work, like one of the first things that comes up, is I just panic about how I'm going to get my bills paid, which I think is common, right? Now, I would expect it. Any thoughts on how to respond to the anxiety, both of financial anxiety, the nerves of applying for job and going through interviews, the fear that maybe jobs won't come up? How can we deal with that tension?

Matt Thomas ([10:55](#)):

Yeah. I think one of the most important things to be asking yourself if you find yourself unemployed, as it pertains to anxiety is, "What am I doing to keep my mind sharp?" A lot of people, when they experience something like this, they spiral very quickly, right? And they're binge watching shows on Netflix, and they're eating terrible. And I think that's probably appropriate and okay for about a week. But once you start to get back on your feet, I think asking that question daily, "What am I doing to keep my mind sharp?"

Matt Thomas ([11:24](#)):

And then, we encourage people to think about a couple other things. "Am I taking care of myself physically, emotionally and spiritually," right? Like, "What are the mechanisms that I've built into my life that I need to rebuild now in a new season that ensure that I'm caring for myself," right? The second thing is, "Am I approaching unemployment as if this is my full-time job?" Looking for a job is the job. And it's amazing how much that pursuit when it's viewed from with that lens, can help ease anxiety.

Matt Thomas ([11:55](#)):

I think human beings get anxious when we feel out of control, right? And we feel out of control when we're not doing anything. We're not active. We're not problem solving, right? When we're just sitting back and letting things come to us. And so, I think being proactive, and I mean, practicing building in a daily liturgy, reminding yourself that this too shall pass, right? This is not a forever thing. I mean, one of my good friends has been unemployed for 13 months. And a really talented individual, newly married.

Matt Thomas ([12:27](#)):

I think now, they have a child on the way. And walking with him through that has been difficult. But it's been amazing to see him transition from this anxious state of just totally freaking out to where God has just loved on him and pushed on him, and finally said, "All right, I want to do whatever it is you want to do." And for me, that's the only place I can find any freedom from anxiety, is when my trust is truly like, "God, I want whatever you want because every time I've done what I wanted, it's typically gone bad."

Matt Thomas ([13:01](#)):

So, that's probably what I'd offer there.



Joanna Meyer ([13:03](#)):

I echo that sentiment. Hey, you mentioned the idea of a daily liturgy. Tell us, what is the liturgy, and what this looks like in our daily life to incorporate something like that?

Matt Thomas ([13:12](#)):

Yeah. We're Anglican. So, we love the Book of Common Prayer. But there's all kinds of hipster liturgies out there now. But I think a daily liturgy is something that you implement or practice as a prayer, or an opportunity to remind yourself of what is true. And the beauty in ancient liturgy is that you have these just deep, deep wells of wisdom that have flown out of men and women over the centuries that we get to lean into, but figuring out something that you can practice daily that remind yourself of what is true.

Matt Thomas ([13:48](#)):

Because for me at least, so much of living in 2020 is navigating what's real and what's not. And it's really, really easy to fall into these divots or we start to believe things that aren't true about our surroundings, about our circumstances, and probably more importantly about ourselves. And so, a healthy daily liturgy that remind you of what's true, that God is faithful, that God does see you. He has not abandoned you and that this too shall pass. I think that's a good thing to practice.

Joanna Meyer ([14:20](#)):

I love it. And you can get sensory with it. It could be something like you physically take a walk or you meditate in certain words, or you sit with a certain posture to help remind you. But there are things that you can do to help you physically, sensorially experience those truths.

Jeff Haanen ([14:38](#)):

Hi, this is Jeff Haanen, the founder of Denver Institute for Faith & Work. Thanks for listening to The Faith & Work podcast and for letting me interrupt you briefly to share this request. I want to ask you to consider becoming a financial contributor to Denver Institute. Each day, thousands of people listen to our podcasts, engage our short courses, and grow spiritually as a result of generous donors like you.

Jeff Haanen ([14:59](#)):

Each podcast episode is 100%-funded by generous donors who believe that work is a way to love God, serve our neighbors, and demonstrate the gospel to our world. If you've enjoyed the Faith & Work podcast, would you consider paying it forward by giving right now? You can give by visiting difw.org/donate or by visiting the show notes page from this episode. Whether it'd be \$50 a month, \$25 a month or gift of any amount, we are so grateful for your support.

Jeff Haanen ([15:26](#)):

Again, you can give by visiting difw.org/donate or by checking out this episode's show notes. Thanks again for your generosity towards God's people and toward the mission of Denver Institute. And now, back to the Faith & Work podcast.

Joanna Meyer ([15:40](#)):

I want to ask a little bit about, how do we find a job that works, Matt? Because often in Christian circles, we use this term, calling. The idea that God has this supernatural purpose that He'll reveal to us. And it can make it really hard to look for work I think, because we have this hope that a work will be a perfect



fit that will match this idealized sense of how God is at work. And in the ideal economy you pointed out six months ago, I would have said, "If you moved to Denver, you're coming to a great place, because their economy is so hot.

Joanna Meyer ([16:11](#)):

You had more freedom to find your ideal job." But when we're job hunting now, that may not be true. We may not find jobs that are perfect fit. How hard do you think people should push for a job that's a perfect fit versus just getting reemployed?

Matt Thomas ([16:26](#)):

Yeah, great question. So, most of you know this. But in March, in our country, the unemployment was 4.4%, which is insanely low. I think the average over the last 50 years were some around 6%. So, that's 2% that's actually significantly lower. And Colorado is even lower than that. And now, in April unemployment on top nationally to 14.7%. And people are saying it will go as high as 20%. The Fed came out yesterday and saying it might get to 25%. So, basic math tells you that you will be competing against more talent than you were before.

Matt Thomas ([17:05](#)):

Six months ago in Denver, people could be picky because companies could not find talent. That just completely changed overnight. It's completely changed our day of the recruiting game. We went from just clawing every entry code to find talent somewhere and convince them to consider new opportunity. And now, that's just not the case. There are tons of applications out there and tons of resumes flying around. And so, it is a totally different market.

Matt Thomas ([17:31](#)):

And so, Joanna, for your question about looking for a job that's just like the perfect fit versus just finding a good job that pays the bills, I would say, pursue the latter. For sure right now, that is the wise move. And I also think not even just strategically or tactically, it's the best move. There is a sickness in our country, for sure, and also in our labor market. People have bought this illusion that the dream job exists and it's waiting for me somewhere.

Matt Thomas ([17:59](#)):

And when I find it, everything that is not currently fulfilled in me will be fulfilled. And unfortunately, some people do find great jobs and love talking about it and spraying it all over the internet. And so, everyone thinks that's supposed to be their story. And if you look back at the history of labor and work, that's just not the case. We tilled the soil because we're called to do that. And that doesn't mean that we find tons of life in our energy, right?

Matt Thomas ([18:26](#)):

There are ways to find joy in work that we don't necessarily enjoy. But yeah, I think it's really is waking. It's shaking. I think it's a good thing for some people I've talked to that have just been sitting on their hands waiting for the perfect opportunity to present themselves. I think this is, in some ways, is a good thing, because many of us are going to be forced to go take a job that we don't really get excited about, and that's okay.



Matt Thomas ([18:50](#)):

I mean, I don't know where that lie crept in that we should find this job that we love.

Joanna Meyer ([18:55](#)):

Hired.

Matt Thomas ([18:55](#)):

Yeah, and you can get hired, right? And you can go even farther not just a job that we love but a job that has ski days on Fridays and a kegerator, and flexible PTO, whatever the heck that is. So, I think it really is going to put people back into a place where their felt needs are going to set the front. And that's going to be employment. And so, if you can get ahead of that and say, "All right, I'm done looking for the sexy job. I'm not looking for that. I'm looking for work that I know I can do and do well. There's upward mobility, great.

Matt Thomas ([19:30](#)):

If the comp is right, great. But I'm not going to be over picky right now. I'm going to get in somewhere and get some stability." Then, you can start to look for a job that might be a better fit. That's when you can really start to look for something that might be more of that sweet spot, which there's nothing wrong with that. It's just like everything in our lives. Our motivations really, really matter.

Joanna Meyer ([19:52](#)):

Yeah. We often laugh at Denver Institute because if you're a fan of either Instagram or Pinterest, you've seen those beautiful calligraphy hand drawn signs that say, "Do what you love." And I think that's the sentiment of a booming economy. There's this idea that we should love every moment of work. And reality is, like you said, Matt, biblically, there are thistles and thorns in any job. And especially at the moment, work is a valuable thing, even if it's not the perfect fit.

Joanna Meyer ([20:17](#)):

I wanted to draw a couple principles related to calling, because one of the things we find is that most Christians have a lot of misconceptions about calling. We think it's this grand revelation from God, a lightning bolt in the sky that He's going to call us to do something dramatic and overly spiritual. But the reality is, all of us have callings, very general callings. But if that's the only insight we get from God, it's enough to keep us busy and purposeful in life, and be very rich and rewarding.

Joanna Meyer ([20:45](#)):

So, we think about calling, remember, that God has a general call for every Christian. Before He calls us to anything specific, He calls us into relationship with Himself. He calls us to a life of discipleship, to follow Christ, and to a life of service. And if that's all He ever tells you, that's enough to keep you busy. We can love God and serve our neighbors in a wide variety of work. And that brings a sense of rest that even at this next step doesn't make sense or seem like it's a linear career path, that it can be perfectly in line with what God is working in your life.

Joanna Meyer ([21:20](#)):

And the second principle about calling is that, calling often unfolds that over a lifetime, and it's a very winding path. And so, if you're looking at job opportunities and you're thinking, "None of this makes



sense." If I was planning my career path a year ago, I would not have chosen this route. You can rest in God's sovereignty and direction. Brian Gray on our team often says that, "Calling is discerned in the rearview mirror."

Joanna Meyer ([21:41](#)):

And so, sometimes, we don't know until we look back at the path that God has taken us on to see how the pieces all fit together. So, don't despair, and keep trusting God. Keep looking for Him every step of the way. Matt, I want to ask a few practical questions for job seekers. How do we start finding open positions? We're going to transition to just practical stuff. How do we find open positions?

Matt Thomas ([22:03](#)):

Yeah. So, if you're looking for a job, chances are you have been on Indeed a few times. You've been on ZipRecruiter, CareerBuilder, Monster. I mean, hired a bunch of different places. Those platforms, first of all, they're behemoths, right? And they're all basically pushing all their chips into the AI table. And I can say as a back-end user with our team on some of those platforms, it's not nearly. It's a 10th as effective as they think it is.

Matt Thomas ([22:35](#)):

And the problem for the job seeker on those platforms is that you really just get lost. And it really is a chance, a game that your resume will end up in the right inbox. And then, for employers that have applications open on their websites, if you're looking for a job, I bet you've already been there. You fill out the form. You send in all the information and you press send. And it's like it's just going into the void. And you don't hear anything.

Matt Thomas ([23:00](#)):

And if you do, it's an auto-generated update or from an administrative assistant saying, "We're currently reviewing resumes." You can get lucky on those two paths. But if that's all you're doing, you're going to have a really hard time finding a good job. The best way to find a good job still is via relationships and networking. And so, the way that we recommend people go about looking for a job is to make your list of 10 companies that you know of, that you would like to work for.

Matt Thomas ([23:32](#)):

And again, not the sexy companies, but the ones where you know your skills and your experience would match. And if you are a culture fit, even better. Make that list of 10 companies. And then, mine your network, everyone you know, to figure out, who do you know who works there? Or who do you know who knows someone who works at one of those companies? And you need to get them on the phone. You take them probably not out to coffee, maybe go for a walk.

Matt Thomas ([23:58](#)):

Get them on a Zoom call, and just pick their brain about the company. It's the best way to play this. "Hey, I'm considering looking for a job in this company, what can you tell me about it?" And then, if you build a relationship that's strong enough, which can happen quickly, because people actually really do want to help and want to do favors for people. You can ask for an introduction to a decision maker.

Matt Thomas ([24:17](#)):



And so, the way to do that is to say, "Hey, who do I need to talk to about employment opportunities with this company? I could fill out the thing online, I'm happy to do that. But I'd love to just get to the top of the pile, if possible." And most people will be happy to make that introduction if they believe that you're qualified. And really, where we see more often than not, is people are probably too liberal in putting their name behind someone. They're not conservative enough. They take more risk than they should.

Matt Thomas ([24:47](#)):

And so, you should be able to get, I'm not saying you're not qualified, but you should be able to get introductions relatively easily, just ask. People are afraid to ask. And if you're a severe introvert or that's just... you hear the word network and you just start having a panic attack, figure out your own way of doing it. But it's still the best way to find a job, is to get in. Get to know someone who works there who can make an introduction to someone who can make the decisions.

Matt Thomas ([25:11](#)):

And that really is the equation. Start with your top 10. Don't stop until you've talked to someone who works at those companies for the top 10 list. If you get nowhere, throw that to the side. Make another list of 10. And you keep going. The goal being to get on the phone with someone who can make a decision or to get an actual email address that you can send your resume to, or even better, someone could send it for you with a quick note of recommendation.

Matt Thomas ([25:36](#)):

So, that is the best way. And I think people are hiring out there. I mean, if you're on LinkedIn, I think it's always one of the trending topics. Here are the companies that are hiring. Obviously, the behemoths like Amazon and Walmart, and Kroger, and whomever else. But there are people that are looking for talent right now and need help. And really, it's not rocket science. You need to think about, "What are the industries that are probably doing well right now?"

Matt Thomas ([26:00](#)):

What am I good at? Okay, is there a match? Let me figure out how to get in front of someone who could make a decision or make an introduction to someone who can."

Joanna Meyer ([26:08](#)):

Yeah. I've been surprised how often if I'm thinking of reaching out to someone about something work-related, I always get on LinkedIn. And I'm surprised at how many people have un-updated pages. It's not current, their profile. And also, how often the language is confusing, I think. I have no idea what this person does, because it's a bunch of corporate mumbo jumbo. So, the fact that it could be updated and clear can make a world of difference.

Joanna Meyer ([26:33](#)):

Matt, I'm wondering, once you get a chance to get in front of a potential employer, what do you do to catch their eye? Whether it's in a form of a resume or an in-person contact, how do you grab their attention?

Matt Thomas ([26:44](#)):



Yeah. So, most employers are looking at three things. They want to gauge as best they can your character, how trustworthy are you, how full of integrity are you. So, people that come in all sleazy, and obviously, high in themselves or overconfident, just typically don't ever do well unless they're hiring young sales guys to go out in the field or something. And so, don't do that. A manager worth their salt is measuring up your character with every, and every interaction.

Matt Thomas ([27:11](#)):

Because it's such a risky move to hire someone you don't know. Second thing that they're looking at is competency. And competency is going to come break down in two categories, relevant experience and IQ. So, your basic human intelligence, "Is this person smart enough to do the job?" Nobody likes talking about that, but that is a very real thing that is assessed in every interview. And then, "Do they have relevant experience?"

Matt Thomas ([27:33](#)):

Now, in a tighter market, people are way more loose with those things. Relevant experience, the definition gets bigger and broader. They're going to get more specific now because they can. So, I think you have to be looking for jobs where you have that relevant experience. It's not the time to try to get in with someone and just see if you can learn on the job. You need to be able to add value immediately.

Matt Thomas ([27:55](#)):

Because if they're hiring, that means that they're crunched and they really need people right now. And so, they need someone who can jump in, that's not going to have a six-month or 12-month on ramp, right? And I mean, taking a haircut and pay to get into the right place. And the third thing would be culture, right? So, their people are looking to see if you match their culture, whether or not they even talk about culture or pretend to care about culture, that is what they're doing.

Matt Thomas ([28:18](#)):

They're figuring out whether or not you fit with them. And so, you want to be in a place where you fit. So, I wouldn't look at companies that you know you would not be a good culture fit, right? And I think culture largely is going to flow out of the senior leadership. And so, if the senior leadership of an organization has questionable character or you've heard stories, or whatever, where there's smoke, there's fire.

Matt Thomas ([28:40](#)):

So, stay away from those places. But I think, be real. Be honest. Be direct. Be funny. People who don't laugh in interviews, if they can't, they're so scared or they're so anxious, or so nervous, that's a total knock. If we believe that we're going to land exactly where God wants us to, then, we should have no fear going into interviews. Have zero fear engaging with someone who can make a meaningful introduction to us.

Matt Thomas ([29:08](#)):

Because if it doesn't work out, great, it wasn't supposed to work out, right? I have nothing to lose in any given setting. I can walk in totally confident, not just me but with what God's doing, way out in front of me. And so, don't be nervous. You got nothing to be afraid of. And honestly, the best place you could be



is if the house is burned down and you haven't paid your mortgage, whatever else, and you can walk into an interview and just feel totally free.

Matt Thomas ([29:33](#)):

I mean, that is a beautiful thing, right? So, yeah. People are snowing for that fear, especially right now. So, do whatever you got to do to psych yourself up in the car before you walk in that interview or get on that Zoom call. But don't walk in fear.

Joanna Meyer ([29:49](#)):

Okay. What are some common mistakes you see jobseekers making? And I'm sure you see a lot.

Matt Thomas ([29:55](#)):

Well, we got a resume last week that was 48 pages long. Don't do that. Don't be that guy or gal.

Joanna Meyer ([30:04](#)):

That's possible?

Matt Thomas ([30:05](#)):

It was definitely a guy. And so, a resume should be one to two pages at most. People try to get too creative with their resumes, and it's just distracting. People that just have Times New Roman, 12 font, it reads like a research paper, keep it succinct. It's okay to put hobbies and interests, especially in Colorado. I mean, so many people are building. They care about quality of life, whether they'd say it or not. And so, it's okay to have hobbies and interests on your resume.

Matt Thomas ([30:32](#)):

Never lie. Don't even fudge even just a little bit, right? If anybody interviewing you is worth their salt, they're going to ask you about past successes and past failures. Be specific to the detail because there's a good chance they're going to... if your story of success is just really incredible, they're probably going to check up on it. And if it's just even a hair off, and we call those cracks in the windshield, we can deal with one, maybe two little things in windshield.

Matt Thomas ([31:00](#)):

But when they start becoming cracks, our candidate's out. It doesn't matter how well they match the job description. So, yeah. P.S., there's just no place for it in the interview process. You need to get it. If it's in you, some people have it in them. Get it out. Do what you got to do, because there's just no place for it. And then, on the flip side, some people are really so passive that they can't talk about themselves because they feel it makes them uncomfortable.

Matt Thomas ([31:26](#)):

They feel arrogant, whatever else. If I'm interviewing someone, I want to know where they've kicked tail in the past. I want to know where they've kicked butt, where the wins are, what they contributed to those wins. And what I'm listening for is, can they tell that story without glorifying themselves, right? They don't have to deflect all the praise to everyone else. Because then, it just gets nauseating, but they can tell the story of when in a way that's really healthy and it's collaborative, and it's not just them patting themselves on the back?



Matt Thomas ([31:55](#)):

But yeah, no fluff. I mean, just zero, zero fluff. Titles don't matter, right? And if you're a title person, you have bigger issues and probably need to go to therapy. The title stuff, just it drives me crazy when the candidate is like, "Well, I was a senior project manager at such and such company. So, I really can't take a position lower than that." It's like, they mean different things at every company and in every industry. And so, very rarely do they match up specifically those job descriptions company to company unless you're going to a direct competitor.

Matt Thomas ([32:32](#)):

So, drop the title stuff. It just doesn't mean anything. I mean, any entrepreneur who has a part-time guy in the back working on something can call himself a CEO. It doesn't mean anything anymore. So, I don't get hung up on titles. "I was the VP of there or there on the last job." Tell us about what you did? What did you do? Not the title that someone gave you. Is that enough ranting? I'm sorry, Joanna. You asked me a question that's obviously-

Joanna Meyer ([33:00](#)):

That's awesome. It's awesome. That's what we want to know. Because those are the things that leave a bad taste in the mouth of a potential employer. And so, that's what we want to hear. I have a question I've heard. It's research-based, but I've heard that when it comes to applying for work, a man will look at a job description. And if he fits, for example, six out of the 10 qualifications, he'll feel confident applying.

Joanna Meyer ([33:20](#)):

If a woman's looking at it and she doesn't meet all 10, she may hold back from filling up a job application. Do you see that live out in real life? And what does that mean for the ladies that are on the call when it comes to looking for work?

Matt Thomas ([33:30](#)):

I had, yeah. I see it all the time. There's a reason that my team is 85% female. And it is, because in our work, females are better at it, right? They're better at reading people. They're hyperorganized and efficient. And some of the women on our team, Joanna, you know a handful of them.

Joanna Meyer ([33:52](#)):

I do.

Matt Thomas ([33:52](#)):

They will rip your head off, right? People are getting wise, which is good. There is just such an untapped market out there in females, and in leadership positions too. I mean, we just started a work with a new client. They're in the Fortune 500. They're like 200 something, and their CEO is a female. And on the leadership team, five of the eight are females. And of the regional VPs, 16 of 20 are female. They've made this huge, huge shift from old school boys club to being largely female, which is just a great thing.

Matt Thomas ([34:26](#)):

So, my warning for the guys is, you better get busy, because things are changing for the better. And women, don't be afraid. Don't be afraid of anything. Don't disqualify yourself. I mean, even for moms that are coming back into the workforce or moms that are in the workforce, to me, if you've not even



just birthed a child, if you've been parented, you've mastered efficiency at some level, even if you don't feel it. And so, those are huge wins. Don't feel anxious about those things at all.

Matt Thomas ([34:55](#)):

And really, you don't want to work in a company that doesn't value your voice and will not give you opportunities to succeed. And so, yeah. Go in there, that not just that you're as qualified as your male counterparts, but that you could take him in a fight one-on-one, if you had to.

Joanna Meyer ([35:12](#)):

When offline, I'd love to hear about a company that has had such a significant shift in the gender of the leadership team. It would be interesting to hear more about that story. So, we're going to take a moment and solicit questions from you. We have a chance to open your mics and ask some Q&A with Matt. If you're more comfortable submitting a question by chat, you can do that too. But what do you want to know? Tell us a little bit about what you are learning as you apply for work.

Joanna Meyer ([35:37](#)):

Is anything standing out? Are you figuring out some best practices or techniques that are working for you in this season?

Lois ([35:45](#)):

I'm a teacher. Can you hear me?

Joanna Meyer ([35:48](#)):

We can hear you. We can hear you, Lois.

Lois ([35:49](#)):

I've been doing a lot of studying, long-term studies. And a couple of the people in my school, they heard that the jobs are going to new first year teachers for budget reasons. That's a little discouraging to anybody with some experience in teaching. And that might be a trend, a big trend like you were talking about, that what's the future looking like in teaching. And it's already, bam, that's what I've heard this spring.

Lois ([36:24](#)):

So, I'm in special education. It always seems to [inaudible 00:36:32] even at the last minute as school gets back, even though this year might be really, really different. So, I'm thinking of it would be a really good pivot to become an accountability coach for families, for kids, because parents have handed up to hear with teachers. And so, I'm trying to figure out how that would work. I feel like I need the confidence of some coaching or even a coaching, just maybe 30 hours or something.

Lois ([37:10](#)):

And I'm not trying to get that International Coaching Federation a little credential. It's practical, it also gives me the confidence to go ahead and have the tools to be like, "Call me an accountability coach," teaching parents to kids. So, I don't know if that's something you could help me with.



Joanna Meyer ([37:40](#)):

I hear a couple questions from Lois. One is, what do you do if you feel like age is not working in your favor in your job?

Lois ([37:44](#)):

Yeah, that's true.

Joanna Meyer ([37:46](#)):

And another one is, how do you pivot if someone wants to enlist... another question that came in, what should people do if they want to switch careers or industries now? How do they allow that to be reflected in their resumes?

Matt Thomas ([37:58](#)):

Yeah, that's a good question. So, for people that are farther along in their careers that are finding themselves being replaced by younger, cheaper talent, what we usually recommend is, go find a small business with a young leader to plug into. Because young entrepreneurs and business leaders usually, year one, they're bulletproof. They're going to take over the world. Year two, this is way harder than I thought it would be. Year three, I don't know if I can do this. I need help.

Matt Thomas ([38:29](#)):

And that's when they started looking for someone with more salt and more wisdom. And really, we've had clients that their business is run by guys or gals in their young 30s that are like, "I need someone in their 50s or 60s. And if they could give me five years, that would be incredibly helpful. That's all I'm asking, because we just need some wisdom in the room to help level us out." And we see that more and more. I think it's a natural part of the entrepreneur's journey, realizing there's a lot that you just don't know.

Matt Thomas ([39:02](#)):

And there are people who've walked this path long before they could bring a ton of wisdom. So, I would look for opportunities with organizations that are ran by young leaders, as counterintuitive as that sounds, because if they're having a hard time for any reason, you can be an incredible resource for them and an employee, even if it's not necessarily a longer term deal. And then, the other question was about switching industries.

Joanna Meyer ([39:26](#)):

Yeah.

Matt Thomas ([39:26](#)):

I didn't say this earlier, but I don't want to leave it out. It is a great time to build something. And so, if you have the entrepreneurial itch and you find yourself unemployed, you're looking for jobs, you're actively searching, you should work your tail off at that, but you're still going to have some extra time. This will be the time to build, right? To build something from nothing. And really, because why not, right? What is the risk, right?

Matt Thomas ([39:53](#)):



Most people don't make the jump into starting something from nothing because the risk was too high. But when you're unemployed, there's just not any risk. As long as it's not taking from your job search time, this would be a great time to do it. And then, in terms of switching or pivoting industries, it's really going to depend on... that's going to be case by case. I wouldn't necessarily recommend it right now, but we are seeing lots of people.

Matt Thomas ([40:15](#)):

For instance, a lot of people coming out of the energy space that have been let go are now looking around going, "What do I do?" I mean, guys that are making \$150,000 to \$200,000 last year that now have no idea where to go because the entire energy industry has been uprooted and flipped on its head. And so, a lot of them were placed in sales roles or revenue generation roles, or middle management, or lower level roles with construction companies.

Matt Thomas ([40:45](#)):

Just because there's some connection. I think when you pivot industries 180, like all the way, that can be really, really difficult unless you've done your due diligence. But everything else, there's a spectrum. And if the industry you're pivoting into isn't far off from what you've been in, then it could be a phenomenal jump for a lot of people.

Joanna Meyer ([41:05](#)):

That's awesome. How do you handle if someone has a gap in their resume? They've been out of work for a length of time. How should they address that when looking for work?

Matt Thomas ([41:14](#)):

Yeah. This comes up all the time. So, short, short, quick story. We had two candidates for a position. We love both of them. Both of them had gaps in their resume. I already presented them to a client. Client interviewed them, loved both of them. He said, "Hey, press into these gaps. I want to figure out what's going on." So, we do. And the two stories we got. One was, "Oh, yeah, I was a missionary in my top in the day."

Matt Thomas ([41:40](#)):

"Oh, great. Well, what organization you're with?" "Well, we didn't really know." "Well, what did you do?" "Well, mission work." "Okay." The other person, "Oh, I was an ex-con. This is what happened," very specific. He was wrongly accused of some things, but he did screw up some other stuff. He owned it 100%. He gave us a really clear picture of why that happened, why he has that gap in his resume. He said, "I don't typically put that on a resume for obvious reasons, but I'm happy to talk about it."

Matt Thomas ([42:03](#)):

He's the one who got the job. The lesson there is, as long as you can clearly articulate the gap, it's no big deal. It doesn't matter. It's not a thing at all, especially nowadays with people taking gap years and gap decades, and pursuing passion projects over, it's just everyone is used to it now. It's not a huge knock as long as you can articulate what you were doing. If you took a couple years off to travel, that's a little different.

Matt Thomas ([42:29](#)):



But that didn't even really hurt you if you can clearly articulate why it was a beneficial life experience for you. What you cannot do is have a gap in your resume and not be willing to explain why that gap exists, even if it's something heartbreaking. A lot of times, people lose a family member. They're caring for them or they go through a divorce, or they lose a child. I mean, all kinds of stuff happens, and you need to talk about that stuff.

Joanna Meyer ([42:54](#)):

Yeah. I hear you when you say succinct too. People don't need a 15-minute explanation, but they just need something that makes sense and is compelling for why you have that gap. Any tips on where we can go to get help with our resumes?

Matt Thomas ([43:07](#)):

So, there are resume coaches. I don't know any good ones, to be really honest. So, if I sent you to someone, I just can't do that. So, I could give you a contact list of resume coaches with no recommendations for any of them. The best thing you can do is talk to someone you know who routinely is making hire, sees a ton of resumes, and say, "Hey, will you send me the best resume you've seen last year?"

Joanna Meyer ([43:33](#)):

That's a great idea.

Matt Thomas ([43:33](#)):

Let me just copy that." Right? Block out the name, contact, whatever, "Send me the best resume you've seen in the last year," and then copy that. I bet you're going to be in okay shape. So, yeah.

Joanna Meyer ([43:47](#)):

Wow.

Matt Thomas ([43:47](#)):

But don't pay someone to put a resume together for you. It's not worth the investment. It's a sleazy business.

Joanna Meyer ([43:54](#)):

Yeah. We have time for one more question, so feel free either to put it in the chat or you can verbalize if you want to ask. And Matt, as we're waiting for a question, I just want to say, thank you. This conversation has been an absolute gift. And I love seeing the intersection of both your heart for people, your spiritual wisdom, and your sense of organization and culture, and getting stuff done. I love seeing you thrive in this role. So, thanks for sharing your wisdom with us.

Matt Thomas ([44:19](#)):

Yeah. I'm happy to be here.

Joanna Meyer ([44:21](#)):

Any final questions?



Speaker 7 ([44:23](#)):

Yes, please. May I know, what do you mean by cultural fit? If one is applying for a job, so what do you actually mean by looking at the culture fit? I mean, fitting into an organizational culture when you don't even know that?

Matt Thomas ([44:43](#)):

Yeah. So, that's where talking to someone who has worked there has got to be one of your first steps, because you're going to get a pulse on what the culture is like. For instance, if you are connected to Jimmy through your friend who works at the company you want to work at, and you and Jimmy go grab coffee, and Jimmy loves his job. It's like the best thing that's ever happened to him. And you can't stand being around Jimmy for five more minutes, you're probably not going to be a culture fit at that organization.

Matt Thomas ([45:12](#)):

But if you sit down with Jimmy and he loves his job, and you're like, "Man, I love this guy. I would love to work with him." And I think that's going to give you an indicator that, "Hey, I might match the culture here." Because if they're loving what they're doing, believe in the leadership, I connect with this person. They're passing this sniff check, and I might fit the culture too. But the more specific answer is, figure out what their core values are and how real they are.

Matt Thomas ([45:37](#)):

So, when you're in the interview, you're being interviewed. You should also be interviewing the company, even in a market like this. Ask them about their core values. Ask, "Which of your core values do you resonate with the most and why personally?" That's a great question to ask someone interviewing you, because you can really see very quickly how real those core values are. Or if they're just some guy plastered on the wall 10 years ago and nobody pays attention to.

Matt Thomas ([46:06](#)):

That will tell you something about the culture of the organization.

Joanna Meyer ([46:08](#)):

You could even ask what type of person has thrived most in this type of environment. If a company is highly structured and you're not a highly structured person, that's not going to be a fit. But if you're somebody who needs a high level of structure and it's a Colorado style company where it's very laid back, they give you a ton of autonomy and freedom to work from home. Of course, everybody is working from home right now. But in normal circumstances, that may not be a fit if you thrive in a more structured collaborative team environment.

Joanna Meyer ([46:35](#)):

So, just knowing, how do they go about their work? We have a note from Lois in the chat box saying that Jefferson County Public Library, their website, has a resume and interview help. So, you may find help in unexpected places. And I've heard that a lot of the libraries are having to repurpose their staff in this season of not having as many live visitors walking through the library. So, that's fantastic. Well, let's wrap up our call. We've gone about 50 minutes. And I want to end our call with a word of encouragement for you.



Joanna Meyer ([47:05](#)):

A benediction will connect with your Anglican roots, matches. A benediction is a good word. It's a way of sending you out into the work of the week with just the blessing from the Lord. So, one thing I'd like to do is I like to put myself in a posture of receiving the benediction. So, take a second and just relax. Put your hands out. You could put it out like this or you could put it on your lap. But just put yourself in a posture where you can receive these words. You may even close your eyes just be able to absorb them.

Joanna Meyer ([47:31](#)):

But this is some encouragement from the Lord. Be held in the center of God's will today and know the joy, freedom and power of walking by faith and in faithfulness. Amen. Thanks for joining us tonight, you guys. We love you. We want to walk through with you through this season. So, know that we're praying for you and thinking of you often.

Announcer ([48:00](#)):

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