

**DigiGuide**

*Digitising Good  
Guidance Practice*

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



# CASE STUDY: CHRIS IN SEARCH OF A NEW OPPORTUNITY



The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Project reference: 2020-1-IE01-KA226-VET-082926



## Table of contents

<b>Title</b> .....	1
<b>Competence</b> .....	1
<b>Abstract/Introduction/Background</b> .....	1
<b>Key Words</b> .....	2
<b>Key Characters</b> .....	2
<b>The Case Study Story</b> .....	2
<b>Questions, comments and topics of discussion</b> .....	6



## Title

Chris in search of a new opportunity

## Competence

### **Cedefop Competence: 3.1 Manage opportunity information services**

Manage Opportunity Information services competence includes identifying information needed for career development activities, i.e. the needs of service providers and service users, obtaining and preparing information material, classification and storage of materials and review and update information.

### **DigComp Competences:**

Competence area 1: Information and Data Literacy

Competence area 2: Communication and Collaboration

## Abstract/Introduction/Background

This case study was developed to support the continuing professional development of information, advice and guidance (IAG) practitioners who want to improve their competence, effectiveness and performance. The case study is about Chris, a Greek engineer working in the Netherlands. Chris wants to return to Greece, but the opportunities offered there are inferior. Together with Ioanna, a career guidance professional, they explore Chris' potential to find a remote job using LinkedIn.



## Key Words

Opportunity information services, remote working, career development.

## Key Characters

**Chris:** a 38-year-old electrical engineer who managed to make a great career abroad and now wants to return home. However, his opportunities there cannot compare to those offered abroad and he has to find a solution for working remotely.

**Ioanna:** a 32-year-old traditional professional who needs to explore the digital solutions offered to identify opportunities for her beneficiaries. She is based in Greece and her experience so far includes working with people who are in Greece and trying to find work locally. She is not familiar with exploring opportunities abroad, she has only used some Greek employment platforms.

## The Case Study Story

**Background:** The COVID-19 pandemic and the sudden need for businesses and their employees to start working from home has resulted in an increase of people working remotely from 5% to 40% in the EU. Working remotely will be a feature of future labour markets even after the pandemic period and it is estimated that teleworking rates will continue to increase, taking into account the benefits of teleworking for workers, businesses and society as a whole (e.g. work flexibility, work-life balance, reduced travel time and costs, attracting and retaining valued employees, business continuity, reduced fixed and operational costs, increased access to work for special population groups, reduced traffic and air pollution, etc.). Based on relevant research, teleworking appears to have a positive impact on productivity and employee satisfaction, leading some experts to believe that providing employees with flexibility regarding their workplace can be extremely beneficial for businesses in the aftermath of the pandemic.



**The story of Chris:** Chris is an electrical engineer<sup>1</sup>, specialising in building web and mobile platforms. After graduation he worked as an IT technician<sup>2</sup>. Chris started actively seeking for new career opportunities in 2013, when the IT company he was working for stopped paying him on time due to the Greek financial crisis. Several of the people he knew had already gone abroad and although he would rather stay in Greece, he found a job in Eindhoven in the Netherlands in 2014. He started working as a junior developer, where he could work on what he specialized in. He progressed very well and reached the level of senior developer, managing a development team and working on high demanding projects.

However, he always had his mind set on returning to Greece, as he was very close to his family and wanted to be near them. His family lived in Santorini, an island located in the Aegean archipelago. Unfortunately, Santorini did not offer any great career opportunities compared to large urban centres such as Athens. Moreover, even if he found a job in Athens that was worthy of his qualifications, the salary he would receive could not compare with that paid in the Netherlands.

During the Covid period, several companies, particularly in the IT sector, started to offer career opportunities for remote working. Chris decided that he should seize the opportunity and seek a remote job. He could imagine himself working by the sea, in his backyard in Greece, next to his family and childhood friends. For this reason, he contacted the employment agency where Ioanna works to help him find a remote job abroad.

Ioanna's reaction to Chris needs: After meeting Chris and reviewing his resume, Ioanna found it quite difficult to find a job for a person with such high qualifications. Traditional career search avenues, such as job vacancy websites in the country, did not offer remote opportunities suitable for Chris's skills.

Ioanna decided to try some international employment websites. She explored FlexJobs, WeWorkRemotely and several other websites, only to soon realize that a lot of effort was required to effectively demonstrate your qualifications through an online resume, but more importantly, several

---

<sup>1</sup> Graduates of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering in Greece are the engineers involved in new and cutting-edge technologies, having as their role the design and construction of networks and systems of electricity, telecommunications, electronic devices and systems, for the production, transmission, distribution, storage, processing, control and utilization of energy and information. Their work involves designing and managing power systems, researching and developing electronic materials technology, electronics and microelectronics, telecommunications, automatic control (robotics) and information processing systems. In the case of computer engineers, they work on computer systems and networks, software technology and databases. They also organise computer-assisted management systems and study biomedical applications of electronics and information technology. All graduates of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering are called electrical engineers in Greece.

<sup>2</sup> IT technician is not a job that matches the qualifications of graduates from electrical engineering departments. It was a compromise for Chris to accept such a job.



of these websites required the job seeker to pay a subscription fee. She decided to give it a try with LinkedIn<sup>3</sup>, since Chris already had an account. LinkedIn is a business and employment-oriented online service that works through websites and mobile apps. The platform is mainly used for professional networking and career development and allows job seekers to post their CVs and employers to post jobs.

Ioanna checked the information Chris already had available through his LinkedIn account. He had already detailed his educational and professional background; however, he had not listed any relevant skills. She asked Chris to take some skills assessment tests<sup>4</sup> to demonstrate his ability to perform in certain specific areas that he was interested in finding work in. Chris outperformed several technical and business skills assessments, adding several skills badges to his profile.

Ioanna also did a little research on companies that might be of interest to Chris. These included mainly large European companies in the IT sector. She encouraged Chris to follow them and interact with them in various possible ways, such as commenting on posts or sharing their posts. She also told Chris to start following IT experts and professionals. She prepared a template message for Chris and asked him to send it to people in senior management positions in the companies he would be interested to join. She also encouraged Chris to increase his connections by adding people from the company he worked for, then eventually expand his network. Chris asked his network to help him increase his connections.

However, nothing happened. For a few months, Chris spent much of his time on LinkedIn reading articles, commenting and sharing content, building his network, to no avail. Even if he finally got some responses from a few professionals he contacted, they did not give him any solution in finding a job in the way he had in mind.

Chris became impatient and began to worry that this might not be the ideal approach to remote job search. Ioanna had found 3-4 jobs that fitted Chris's profile and had him apply. One company contacted him directly via LinkedIn to interview for an Android developer position; Chris had a lot of experience in web app development, but mobile apps were not his forte. He tried to convince himself that he could do the job. They tried to convince him that he could too. However, he couldn't meet their needs, as he had too basic a knowledge of programming languages like Kotlin to excel as an Android developer. Quitting web applications and starting with mobile applications would mean starting all over again; it was a major turn for him, which he was unwilling to make at this age. He got his interview

---

<sup>3</sup> LinkedIn is a social network specifically designed for career and business professionals to connect. As of 2020, over 722 million professionals use LinkedIn to cultivate their careers and businesses (Official website [link](#))

<sup>4</sup> The LinkedIn Skill Assessments feature allows users to demonstrate their knowledge of the skills you've added on your profile by completing assessments specific to those skills (see more at the following [link](#)).



and was in the process of doing a background check when he contacted them to let them know that working with them would not be wise for both parties. He received a rejection email within a few weeks.

As soon as Ioanna found out that Chris rejected the job, she texted him through LinkedIn:

Ioanna: Why did you reject the position? It was very well paid and the company is similar to the one you work for now in the Netherlands...

Chris: Ioanna I appreciate your efforts, but accepting this job would mean I would have to start all over again. I cannot give up a senior position for a junior one, even if the monthly salary is the same. I also have to think about my career in addition to my return to Greece.

Ioanna was also concerned that her approach to Chris's case would not lead to any results. It had already been 5 months since her initial contact with Chris and they had reached several dead ends using LinkedIn's job search services. She discussed her issue with her colleague Niki during lunch break.

Ioanna: I'm really worried about Chris. He is a very well-qualified individual and I need to support him to find routes and opportunities and promote his skills and perhaps open up discussions about new opportunities in order for him to find a job that matches his high-level skills. However, even if I find a job that seems suitable, there is always something that doesn't work well.

Niki: Finding the ideal opportunity takes time. Finding a job as you imagine it takes patience. Especially for a person as highly qualified as Chris. Give it some time, don't give up.

Finally, after 7 months of trying, Ioanna was able to find a job opportunity that was a perfect fit for both his profile and his needs. Ioanna arranges a meeting with him on LinkedIn:

Ioanna: Hey, I found this job which I think is ideal! It is a Senior Frontend Developer position in Tuscany.

Chris: Sounds good... tell me more about it... do they want someone working remotely?

Ioanna: They say that although they would prefer someone working closer to their company, working remotely is an option they envisage. I think it perfectly fits your skills since they are searching for someone with knowledge of web development-REST Services with Python or Java. Also, the ideal candidate for them will be working from a time zone between GMT-1 and GMT+3, so this also suits working from Greece!

Chris: This sounds great! I could also travel from time to time to Italy, it is not such a long trip!!



Chris was excited! He applied for the job right after finishing the call with Ioanna. He successfully passed all the assessment tests and interviews and easily got the job. He returned to Greece, finally close to his loved ones. He also got in contact with the Digital Nomad Community in Santorini<sup>5</sup> and acquainted himself with the available co-working hub there, and could also work in cafes with wifi all over the island, or even in places near the beach.

**Conclusion:** It's true that finding a job through services like LinkedIn takes time and can seem very difficult at first. To effectively utilize such services, in addition to networking, creating your profile requires you to demonstrate the necessary information that meets the needs of the opportunities offered so that recruiters can access the relevant information. The user profile must be updated regularly. In addition, in order to maintain the network created, the user must be active on the service and be engaged in the information of interest, get involved with groups and interact with others in order to be noticed and build recognition. The connections should be used in such a way as to exponentially increase the user's exposure and access to other connections. Finally, during the job search, the user should research and follow the companies he/she is interested in, in order to be aware of company news and new jobs that become available.

## Questions, comments and topics of discussion

- What are, in your opinion the benefits, exploring opportunities through online information services? Which aspects do you find more challenging? Why?
- What kind of guidance do you think would be needed to effectively use an opportunity information system such as LinkedIn?
- What kind of behavioural norms and know how would be needed to interact in such a system?
- How would you evaluate the information accuracy and currency of the available opportunities' information?

---

<sup>5</sup> More information on <https://digitalnomads.world/city-guide/santorini/>.