

[R]energize Your Job Hunt In 8 Steps

“My [job hunt](#) is stuck in the mud. I know I need to fix it, but I’m feeling overwhelmed and I’ve got no energy left. I’ve tried everything, and nothing seems to work.”

Does this ring true for you?

The simple truth is: Hunting for a job can be tiring, demoralizing, and frustrating. I often encounter people who have internalized their inability to find work as a sign of personal failure. Confidence and self-image suffer. As that happens, it becomes increasingly difficult to present the optimistic, energetic “can do” persona that employers seek.

We all hear the longer you are out of work, the harder it is to get work. One of the reasons for this is employers are looking for you, Mr. / Ms. Jobhunter not to be jaded, tired, and “down.” And, they fear that the longer you are out of work, the more likely it is you won’t have the vim and vigor they seek.

There are things you can do to [r]energize your job hunt. This list is hardly exhaustive, but it’s a good start:

1. Remember Getting A Job Is A Job

Treat it with the same sense of professionalism that you would bring to any employment. Show up on time every day. And, at the end of the day don’t feel guilty about packing the work up, and transitioning to “personal” or “family” mode. As with any job, it’s important to [maintain a healthy work/life balance](#).

2. Clarify Your Goals And Envision Success

Imagine yourself in the surroundings of your next job, and then embrace the job hunt as the necessary process to get you there. Make the effort to understand where you are most likely to add value to a potential employer. What are your strongest achievements, areas of expertise, and personal qualities? Think about not just what you would like to do, but about the kinds of jobs and corporate/work culture that are most akin to your background. These are all elements of defining

your target. Once your goals are clearly defined, you can begin to move ahead in a purposeful and meaningful fashion.

3. Recognize And Confront Your Self-Imposed Roadblocks

Are you frozen in place by a fear of possible future failure? Many people have experienced so much rejection that they are afraid to have any more piled on. Such feelings are real, and they need to be acknowledged. Sometimes inaction can be a psychological defense mechanism. It's important, however, to understand that inaction is a certain road to the status quo. Try to move forward every day – even if you only do one or two small “baby step” things that can help to build up your self-confidence.

4. Break Out Of Your Isolation

Figure out who are the members of your support system – your family, friends, other job hunters you meet at networking groups, members of your church or synagogue and so on. Talk to them on a regular basis. Tell them what you've been up to, what seems to be working, and what seems to be frustrating you. Make them part of your team. Ask for their feedback and advice. Help them to help you by creating a context of “us” instead of “me.” And of course: seek a good job hunting coach who can understand and relate to you, and provide both guidance and the occasional “kick in the pants” when it's called for.

5. Balance Your Job Hunting Activities

You can't be everywhere, all the time. Strive to create a balance over the course of a week or two in a cycle. If you think of your search for work as a job hunt, then imagine each tool or tactic as one arrow in your quiver. You need a variety of arrows including: informational interviewing; attending professional meetings and seminars; social networking utilizing LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter; writing your blog, and so on. However, important online activity has become, remember that social networks are but the means to the end of building personal relationships. [Nurture your relationships](#) both in the real and virtual worlds.

6. Stay Focused And Use Your Time Wisely

People who work out of their homes often say that one of the biggest challenges they face is managing their time. It's easy to be distracted by kids, pets, housework, TV, internet, computer games, and so much else! Organize your day and week in advance. Create an hourly schedule and stick to it by setting alarms on your computer calendar or wherever they will best be seen and heard.

7. Practice, Practice, And Practice Some More

Rehearse your elevator speech out loud and prepare answers to interview questions that you can anticipate. For example, don't allow yourself to be flummoxed by opening queries like, "*Tell me about yourself.*" Did you know Larry Bird, one of the greatest basketball players of all time, shot 1,000 baskets EVERY DAY! He was great because he understood the need for constant repetition and skill building.

8. Maintain Your Mental And Physical Health

Eat healthy. Exercise at least three times each week. If it's been a while since you exercised with any regularity, start slow and gradually build yourself back up. Get those endorphins flowing and you will look better, have more energy, and feel better about yourself.

I'm always interested to hear from readers. Tell me what stymies you, what energizes you, what works, and what doesn't. I'd love to hear some success stories!

Happy hunting!