

*Are you searching for a new job? If so, you have probably figured out that looking is itself a full-time job and can be highly stressful. You must get yourself organized to reap the results you want. Setting certain boundaries during your search will help you maintain your sanity and your well-being.*

*The following tips and resources will assist you in creating balance during your job search. Many of these tips apply to those who are recovering from any type of loss or are struggling through a stressful time.*

### Get Organized!

- **Create a routine:** By organizing your job search, you create a routine to conduct the search as well as to clear time for yourself. That free time is for spending with family or friends, or in other ways that allow you to rest and rejuvenate yourself. Staying organized requires perseverance and attention to follow-up.
- **Set achievable goals:** This is especially important if you are still employed. Make two or three calls a day, and strive to obtain two or three new names or leads per week – whatever is manageable for you. Be sure to keep the number realistic, so you don't stress yourself out, and so you can feel a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. If you set your goals too high, you will constantly be chasing them and feeling dissatisfied, and you'll become discouraged.
- **Do what works:** Different things work for different people. Use an app or the calendar on your phone, or be more traditional and use a notebook to keep track of to-do list items that can be crossed off. The key is not to let things slip through the cracks.
- **Carve out time for exercise!** You may think you should be devoting this time to your job search, but consistently exercising is truly a smart move for you. It will help keep you relaxed and thinking clearly. Exercise prevents burnout and is a great outlet for job search frustration and angst. You will feel better after a good hour of sweat-inducing cardio. It also releases endorphins that will lift your mood and brighten your day.
- **Have an accountability partner:** It can be a career coach or a friend – but have someone with whom you can share your milestones — both large and small. Check in with that person at least once a week. Choose someone with no vested interest in you (other than wanting to help you). Discuss only accomplishments – not regrets.
- **Divide and conquer:** Set mini-goals and chunk job search activities into two-hour windows. Set timer to keep track of your time during cold calling and follow-up calls. First, call a friend who makes you feel good, then use that to set the tone for your next calls.
- **Limit your work:** Don't work past 5 pm. Don't become obsessed.
- **Limit conversations:** Do not get into long discussions about your job search with friends or family; that will only drain your energy and bore others.

## Job Search Stress-relief Tips

- **Volunteer:** Work for free somewhere fun, and do not discuss your job search there. Helping others will reenergize you.
- **Breathe:** Practice deep breathing several times per day for 3 or 4 minutes. Deep breathing reduces stress hormones, increases oxygen to the brain, makes you feel good, and doesn't cost anything.
- **Give yourself permission to feel real:** If you have a less-than-productive day, accept it. It happens. Don't be hard on yourself.
- **Get out:** Take yourself to the public library for a change of scenery. While you are there, pick up a movie to watch with your family that evening.
- **Do something:** If you are feeling paralyzed by your job search, take some action (any action), because action builds clarity.
- **Read inspirational quotes:** Place them where you will see them throughout the day.
- **Chart and block your time:** If you feel like time is getting away from you, draw a pie chart to see where your time is really spent. Are you getting sidetracked by emails, Facebook posts, or Web surfing? Are your lunches turning into 3-hour naps? Are you getting up later and later?

Once you know where you are losing valuable time, begin to block your time more effectively. Use your calendar and checklists so you know what you are supposed to do, and you will get a sense of accomplishment when you do it.

- **Be kind to yourself:** Don't beat yourself up about the responses you are or aren't getting. Just keep working toward your goal, checking things off your list, and patting yourself on the back for each and every action you take. You **MUST** celebrate each step, or you risk becoming focused on what you still have to do.
- **Keep a gratitude list:** It will help you to cultivate and maintain a positive attitude. Start and end your day by going through the list. It may be hard at first, but the more you do it, the more you will search for and find the silver lining in every situation.
- **Don't isolate:** Take a coffee break, see your friends, or go to an art class – whatever gets you out and about. Now is when you need friends and family the most.
- **Act “as if”:** Think of someone who is a *role model for you* – an actor, a humanitarian, a public figure, a character in a book – and ask yourself “What would \_\_\_\_\_ do?”. You can spend tons of time looking in the mirror, telling yourself you are good enough.

However, you won't realize how much you can accomplish and that you really **ARE** good enough until you step out of your comfort zone and prove to yourself “I can do this.”

- **Feed your body well:** Be sure to eat healthy meals and eat regularly. Do not binge on “comfort foods” or overeat. Focus on good nutrition and staying healthy.

- **Find a job search support group** (these groups are typically guided by career professionals): Find and spend time with like-minded individuals. Make sure the group is positive, however, and not just a place where people go to complain. You will be filled with fear and negative thoughts if you surround yourself with those kinds of people.
- **Avoid negativity:** Stay away from people who are negative or doomsayers in general. You won't get anywhere in your job search if people are chirping dire predictions in your ear about the job market. There is room for success. Stay focused on that thought.
- **Visualize your success:** If you paint a vivid enough picture in your mind, your brain cannot tell the difference between fantasy and reality. Spend a few minutes each day picturing your current actions going well.

Perhaps you need to make a cold call, and you are anxious about it. Run through the entire event in your mind, seeing the positive outcome that you want. You are the director for this "movie," and it can be whatever you visualize. See the other person responding positively and see yourself getting what you want. Visualizing this repeatedly will lessen and maybe even eliminate the butterflies in the stomach.

- **Knowledge is power:** Increase your confidence by setting aside time to learn more about your job field or another topic that interests you. Spend time reading books or informative blogs on job searching and how to interview, but take the time to feed your brain with entertaining content as well.
- **Have fun.** Smile. Laugh. By doing this, it will reduce the release of cortisol (a stress hormone). It is critical to your health and well-being that you make time for laughter. Make time for fun with friends and family or watch a funny movie or video clips from YouTube.
- **Take "me time":** It is also critical to have YOU time. Whatever positive activity you enjoy, make time for it. If your days are not well-balanced, you will become stressed and anxious, which can easily lead you to feel defeated. You must maintain a mindset for success.
- **Find professional help:** Finally, if you need to speak to someone outside your circle of family and friends, perhaps a professional career or résumé coach can help you with your job search. If you are feeling depressed or need additional help dealing with a loss, do not hesitate to reach out to a professional counselor or therapist. Get the help you need to support yourself.

## Job Search Web Tools

- <http://www.myjobsapp.com> – Job search organizer
- <http://www.jibberjobber.com/login.php> – Job search and career management tool
- <http://www.startwire.com/> – Job search assistant and organizer; helps with state-mandated unemployment job search reporting

## Life Balance and Positive Mind-set Resources

- “The Art of Extreme Self Care: Transform Your Life One Month at a Time” by Cheryl Richardson
- “50 Ways to Soothe Yourself Without Food” by Susan Albers, Psy.D.
- “The Alchemist” by Paulo Coelho
- Take a 2-minute break: <http://www.donothingfor2minutes.com/>
- “The Job-Loss Recovery Program Guide: The Ultimate Visualization System for Landing a Great Job Now” by Lynn Joseph, Ph.D.
- “The Grief Recovery Handbook, 20th Anniversary Expanded Edition: The Action Program for Moving Beyond Death, Divorce, and Other Losses including Health, Career, and Faith” by John W. James and Russell Friedman
- “How Much Joy Can You Stand?: A Creative Guide to Facing Your Fears and Making Your Dreams Come True” by Suzanne Falter-Barns
- “I See Your Dream Job: A Career Intuitive Shows You How to Discover What You Were Put on Earth to Do” by Sue Frederick
- “Law of Attraction: The Science of Attracting More of What You Want and Less of What You Don’t” by Michael J. Losier
- “Living Your Joy: A Practical Guide to Happiness” by Suzanne Falter-Barns
- Find a therapist in your city: [http://www.networktherapy.com/directory/find\\_therapist.asp](http://www.networktherapy.com/directory/find_therapist.asp)
- “The Magic (Secret)” by Rhonda Byrne
- Learn about body language: [http://www.ted.com/talks/amy\\_cuddy\\_your\\_body\\_language\\_shapes\\_who\\_you\\_are](http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are)

## Is Your Job Search Working?

- ✓ Even when we make the most of our time and resources for our job search we sometimes don’t get the results we hoped for. I can help by providing a **targeted resume and cover letters** with compelling language and all the key elements to get you noticed in less than 7 seconds.
- ✓ Learn tactical skills to navigate and hunt in the job search jungle with our **Innovative Job Search Training**. Get the **edge** you need to land a new job *faster*.
- ✓ Get the information and practice **you need to shine brighter during your next job interview** with our **Interview Coaching**.

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