

6 job-search tips to help you regain your momentum

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When your [job search](#) drags on for weeks and you feel no closer to landing a job than when you first started, it's easy to get discouraged. But even if you aren't getting the callbacks you were hoping for, now is not the time to call it quits. To stay motivated and focused during this frustrating time, use these six [job-search strategies](#) to regain and maintain your momentum.

1. Treat the search like a job

Unemployment often leads to an aimless feeling. The lack of a routine is a major reason your motivation may be waning, as it's a constant reminder of your situation. The key is to treat your search like a real job. Wake up at a reasonable hour and get dressed. Create a schedule with set times for phone calls, emails, social networking and job board searches. Make to-do lists and check off each item as you complete it. After you've completed your to-do list for the day, "clock out" and take part in any leisure activities you enjoy.

In other words, conduct yourself as if a boss were looking over your shoulder. Stay focused on your daily tasks and avoid playing a quick game of Solitaire or Candy Crush when you're supposed to be working. Little indulgences may seem like some of the few perks of unemployment, but they can lead to listlessness and a dip in job-search momentum.

2. Put yourself out there

As important as it is for you to be connected online, you also need to make sure you're occasionally leaving the house. Not only will this help you get out of a rut, but it can also help make you more marketable. Sign up for a class or go to job fairs, workshops, conferences and seminars, where you can meet people and brush up on your skills. Join professional associations and attend their meetings, where you can learn about trends in your field. Volunteer your time and skills with a worthwhile organization, where you can work on your soft skills like written and verbal communications. All of these things will [deepen your network](#) and help you find the right job.

3. Be proactive

Don't wait for opportunity to knock. Instead, take the initiative and knock on opportunity's door. In other words, even if the companies you're interested in don't list any current job openings, contact them anyway and express your desire to work there. This extra effort demonstrates enthusiasm and initiative, and hiring managers may take notice.

4. Track your progress

When you start to feel like you're going nowhere, take some time to create a method to track the efforts you've made. Write up a list of realistic short- and long-term goals with regard to your job search, and work toward them every day. For example, decide how many applications you'd like

to send out this week, or this month. Set a goal for the number of networking events you're going to attend, and for the number of new people you're going to talk to about your search. Then keep track as you move toward the goal. That way, you'll have a tangible way to prove to yourself that you've made progress, something that can help keep you motivated as you continue to look for a job.

5. Consider other work options

A full-time job with a check direct-deposited to your account is not the only type of work out there. You can also expand your search to include part-time and contract work or set yourself up as a consultant or freelancer. Maybe you can barter your skills in exchange for goods and services.

Signing up with a [staffing agency](#) for temporary or project-based gigs can also be a productive approach. It can bring in extra income while you're looking for full-time work. Even better, some part-time or temporary gigs can turn into full-time jobs or long-term contracts. Even if they don't, though, they'll still allow you to make valuable contacts that will help you in your job search.

6. Relax, recharge, revive

Allowing a job search to take over your life is a sure way to burn out. Give yourself permission to take a break from the search at night and on weekends. When you make a point to relax and recharge for a few hours at the end of the work day, you'll be able to start fresh the next day. A change of scenery and new experiences may give you a new perspective on your search and even your career.

The key to finding employment is to keep at it. Don't let a lull discourage you to the point of giving up. By following these job-search tips and persevering, you'll greatly increase your chances of finding full-time work that is satisfying and rewarding.