

Job Search Energy - Get Up and Go

Looking for a job can be demoralizing, humbling, frustrating and stressful. Yet we all know that keeping a positive attitude is important, because people would rather meet with and hire other people who have an upbeat, optimistic and resilient outlook. Are there ways to sincerely keep your energy level up? The answer is a resounding YES. Here are a half-dozen tips.



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1. Learn how to do an effective job search. Most people search haphazardly — this is a devastating energy drain. Once their network runs dry (which happens pretty quickly if they are networking incorrectly), they spend their time answering ads and sending résumés. Some people get interviews this way, but many more don't. Instead of trying other techniques, they spend even more time answering ads. In other words, they do more of what already wasn't working. Learn how to organize your search systematically and how to target properly, and use all four techniques for generating meetings: networking, direct contact, headhunters and ads. Most people do best with the first two: networking and direct contact. Learn to do them right, and your results — as well as your energy — will soar.

2. Commit to your targets. One energy-robber is pursuing jobs that you really don't like or want. People do this because they don't know how to figure out what else they could be doing, other than what they have always done. Do a self-assessment and define targets that are exciting to you as you move toward the rest of your life.

3. Don't judge yourself so harshly. When people are in a job search, they tend to judge their success by whether or not they have landed a job. This is a set-up for failure and frustration. Instead, judge yourself by whether or not you are moving successfully through the process. Have you defined your targets? Go celebrate. Are your campaign materials — your résumé, cover letters and pitch — complete? Go party. Have you finished your research and made a list of companies to contact? Do something fun. Allow yourself to experience the victories you have earned along the way. You'll move through your search with more energy and strength, which in turn will transform your meetings and help you generate more offers, and better offers, more quickly. What could be better than that?

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4. Create a positive, supportive network. Family and friends tends to be very encouraging in the beginning of a job search, but they can quickly run out of patience — especially if you they see you lying around and whining. So the first piece of advice is to get off the couch, stop complaining and approach your search in the systematic fashion described earlier. Your friends and family probably don't understand the process, and so they don't know how to help you. Find people that can help you. Work with a career coach or join a group like the Five O'Clock Club: you will learn how to do a job search, associate with positive people, and get the support you need to move your search forward every week. You will maintain your job search energy, and your family and friends will be relieved. You will be, too.

5. Get physical. When you are in a job search you are under tremendous pressure: emotional, financial, mental and often spiritual. More than ever, you need to take care of your body so that you'll have the energy to sustain yourself. Eat right, sleep regularly, and absolutely take the time to exercise. If your family gets mad — *"How come you get to go to the gym in the middle of the day while I am busy at work?"* — explain to them that it is because of the gym that you are able to generate six to 10 meetings per week with potential job opportunities. And then make sure it's true!

6. Pace yourself. Do not approach your job search as though it were a 26-mile marathon. You'll be full of energy through mile three and burn out by mile 11. Instead, consider it a series of sprints. Work for 90 minutes and then take a break. Work again for another 90 minutes and then take another break. It is far less daunting to approach your work this way, and you'll find that you spend less energy worrying about the work you have to do and more time actually doing it. Go to a movie. Read a book. Go to a museum. Do not feel guilty! So many people believe they must suffer through their search to show how very hard they are trying. If you do, your search will be compromised. You want to be fully charged and enthusiastic when you go out and talk to people. Consider yourself "in training" and act that way.

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