

Laid Off? Now What?

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CAREER BUILDING TIPS

There is a good chance that at some point in your career you will find yourself unemployed, whether it's by choice or not. Here are 11 steps to get you moving forward.

Give yourself permission to have a bad day. Really wallow in your own self pity for 24 to 48 hours, then stand up, turn off the sappy music, turn on something upbeat and follow the steps below!

1. Get up at the same time as if you were working

You are not on vacation so don't act like it! Let's say you get an interview tomorrow and the interviewer asks what you've been doing. Are you going to say "Well I've been sleeping until noon and wearing my PJs all day". After you've had your own personal pity party as

mentioned above, you need to start getting up at around the same time you did before. And reasons why are further explained below.

2. Finding a job should be your new job

I am a strong believer in the law of attraction. If you aren't acting like you want to get back to work the universe isn't going to bring it to you. Now I'm not saying that all day, every day, you should be looking for work, but you should be doing something every day that moves you in that direction. Remember too that there is a good chance your new job isn't posted online. So apply to companies that interest you, not just the ones that look like they're hiring.

3. Have a schedule

So now you're getting up at about the same time every day and spending a bit of time each day looking for work. The next step is to schedule other things into your day. This could include coffee meetings, exercise, and projects around the house. Now is the perfect time to get things done around your house that you have been putting off until you 'had more time'. I guarantee once you go back to work you are going to say to yourself, "I wish I had done X while I was off". Having a daily schedule to will help prevent you from getting into a funk and going back to pity party mode.

4. Try something new – mix up your routine

Ok, I know I just said to have a schedule, but your schedule should include things that are new and interesting. I'm sure that you've heard the saying, "If you want something you've never had, you must do something you've never done". Well that's what this tip is all about. When I was unemployed and starting my consulting business, I decided to go to different coffee shop every day to work on my computer for a few hours. Well wouldn't you know that I kept seeing this 'cute guy' whenever I was out and (yada-yada-yada) I married said cute guy and that sure wouldn't have happened if I was cooped up at home all day! Now I know this doesn't relate to finding a job but it could. You could be out and about somewhere new and have a conversation with someone that leads you to a job.

5. Get clear about what you want

Again the universe can't bring you what you want if you don't know what that is. Now is also a good time to take some stock in your career. Why were you let go? Were you unhappy there? Do you really want to be doing something completely different? There is no point going out and finding a job doing the exact same thing you were let-go from if you were unhappy there. If you were let go because of downsizing and loved your job then absolutely go find that job somewhere else.

When I was unemployed the second time, I knew I needed a shift in my career. On the surface I could blame the economy but just below that I knew the truth: I hated what I was doing and was letting my personal life affect my professionalism at work. Bam! With that admission I was able to sit with myself and come up with a plan of attack for the future and, even during a tough economy, I was successful.

6. Talk to the people around you

I'm not saying that you should hit up your friends and acquaintances for a job but you should be talking to people in your network. Now is a great time to reconnect with people. The goal is simply to put the feelers out. Ask your friends if there is anyone they recommend that you connect with. If you've listened to my tip above you can talk to your network about what you're looking for even if just to practice how it sounds. And even when you are happily working it is important to stay connected to your network. You don't want people to think you only reach out to them when you want something!

7. Do not come off as desperate

I cannot bold or stress this point enough. It should almost be #1 but I think the other points need to be read first. Never ever, ever, ever say anything to the effect of "I'll do anything. I just need a job". People like to help each other but when it comes from a place of desperation, it is off-putting.

8. Visualize, meditate, get outside

This relates back to #5. Spend some time getting to know yourself and what makes you tick. Treat this time as a gift. It may be difficult to see that it is a gift and I know your mortgage, rent and bank account may have something to say about it. But really you have nothing to

lose here. Nature also has a way of assisting us through tough times. This step may be tough for some people because it sounds hokey and new age, but I'm dead serious. I don't think I do this step in my life enough. Nature really helps put things in perspective. And it can do the same for you and your career.

9. Say 'yes' to people

If an old friend invites you for coffee or dinner, say 'yes' ! If you're husband or wife wants to go to a play, say 'yes'! Now I'm not saying go crazy like Jim Carey in "Yes Man" but there is a lesson to learn from that idea. And it relates back to #4. Stay busy and be open to whatever the world has to offer. It helps pass the time and then when you get a job, you will feel like you've had a good break and be energized for work again.

10. Revamp your resume

This should go without saying. You aren't working so spend some time making your resume shine. And for tips, see our blogs with [top resume tips](#).

11. Build a LinkedIn profile!

It is a powerful tool in recruitment and in developing a professional network and voice. Again, you have nothing to lose. Read our post on [how to master your LinkedIn profile](#).

By Debbie H.

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