

Motivation: The Foundation of A Job Search

There are many techniques that increase your chances and ability to look for work. All of them are very common sense approaches to finding job leads. We have discussed many of these throughout my articles on job searching. For example: "Networking", "Information interviewing", "Cold-calling employers", "Career portfolio development", etc.

All relate to the dynamics of marketing your skills and abilities to employers, and evaluating best techniques for effective job searching.

Motivation is the foundation and cornerstone of a job search. Our motivation level has a tremendous impact on how well we carry out a successful job search. All human behaviour is purposeful, meaning that it is "motivated". The driving force of that "motivation" is "need", and the direction is usually towards a perceived reward and away from perceived punishment. Needs are felt, and their intensity varies from one person to another and from time to time, and so does the extent to which they are motivating. Behaviour is also learned, and an earned reward encourages even better performance, thus reinforcing desired behaviour.

How do I increase my motivation level?

One way to increase your motivation levels is to write down your job search goals. Research has shown that writing down goals makes them more achievable. At the end of this article there is a small quiz that will help begin the process of evaluating your goals and assessing your needs in relation to job searching. We will also

assess your "support network"; to find out who can help you realize your goals.

Attaining goals leads to feelings of self-respect, strength and confidence. Few people are able to continue a pattern of achievement and success without the added encouragement provided by others recognizing their achievements. That is why a "support network" of family, friends, employment counsellors, etc. are essential to helping with the job search process.

For example, when a child first begins to speak there is a need to provide a "support network" to encourage and recognize achievements. Parents and family are traditional "support networks" the child relies on. Through this process the child gains feelings of self-respect, strength and confidence, and reinforces behaviours desirable towards speaking better, learning new words, and communicating effectively.

However, continued failure, frustration and defeat can result in feelings of inadequacy and a withdrawal from competitive situations and may stunt a person's growth. Persistent lack of rewards leads to a view of society as being hostile.

Now you can understand why the process of job searching can challenge even the most motivated job seeker.

Rejections from employers or failure to find work can have a serious effect on our ability to remain interested and motivated.

A. H. Maslow (1954) developed a hierarchy of needs for human's primary needs. First there are certain basic needs which have to be

satisfied if people are to exist and survive, such as: Food, shelter, clothing, warmth, affection, esteem, friendly and trustful co-operation and companionship, and security from external threats (i.e. protection from attack).

These needs and wants people strive and sometimes struggle to satisfy and overcome. People will co-operate with each other and work hard and well to satisfy these needs and gain much satisfaction from doing so.

Finding work is also a need, however it is part of a larger process of survival and growth.

Canadian society strives to satisfy those primary needs, and has implemented many programs and laws to assist in helping its citizens. Among these services are free job search centres that provide the tools and expertise to help in motivating, guiding, and promoting effective job search methods.

Job searching alone can be a difficult and laborious task. That is why it is important to keep focused on the rewards of a successful career, and not on the challenges that you encounter throughout your job search.

To help the reader examine their motivation more closely I have included the following quiz. Please fill in the blanks:

1. What are my rewards for working?

2. What are my job search goals for this week?

Goal #1: _____
Goal #2: _____
Goal #3: _____
Goal #4: _____

3. List the names of people who can help with your goals as well as provide encouragement and guidance?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

4. How can I increase my motivation for carrying out a job search?

5. What is my biggest fear in job searching?

6. How will I grow and contribute back to society?

7. What are my priorities?

- Priority #1: _____
- Priority #2: _____
- Priority #3: _____
- Priority #4: _____

Qualified Employment Counsellors are adept at increasing people's motivation and success rates. They help those in need and assist them to complete constructive action plans that balance leisure activities, basic needs, and job searching.

By providing feedback and support, whether by phone, e-mail, or in person, Employment Counsellors provide recognition of success by others, and leads to feelings of self-respect, strength and confidence for job seekers.

To help motivate yourself please do the following exercises:

Step1: Review your goals on a daily basis, checking off those completed. Take a minute out of each day to read the goals you completed. Focus on how you feel about the achievements, and remind yourself of that feeling when you first wake up in the morning.

Step 2: Make sure that your goals can be completed in one week. This keeps your "To Do" list short and easy to read. You should be able to read this list in less than one minute.

Step 3: Review your goals with somebody in order to verify that they are specific and realistic.

Step 4: Once a day review your answers (1-7).

Remember that this is your life and nobody can live it. You are in charge of realizing your full potential, but the key is persistence. And persistence is based on determination, which is driven by your motivation.

Goal setting can be as simple as writing a one minute "To Do" list, and reviewing it at the end of the day or week.

One problem with reaching a goal is in setting priorities. Frequently short-term rewards (i.e. staying in bed on a cold rainy day) can outweigh the potential benefits of long term goals (i.e. working to support your life and growth).

By setting priorities we channel our efforts towards realizing our full potential. Begin by setting your priorities today.

There is an old Chinese saying that says: "*A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step*". And every

morning we all take one step, out of bed, and into the world.

A final important question is:

What is my reason for getting out of bed today?

Have fun filling in the answers, and good luck with your job search. Some ancient words of advice truly summarize the process of motivation and growth. That advice is:

"Carpe Diem"
(Seize the day)