



EXCLUSIVE CAREER COACHING

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Nine Steps to Organize Your Job Search

One of the most important components of an effective job search is creating an infrastructure of organization that facilitates your success. Here are the top benefits for being organized in your job search:

- 1) **TIME** – Whether you are working now or unemployed, you have limited time to look for a job, and you probably want results as quickly as possible. Organizing your job search will allow you to make the best use of your time and get the best results for the time you spend.
- 2) **FOLLOW-THROUGH** – Organization allows you to follow through on what you said you would do with your networking contacts. Are you supposed to call them again in two weeks? Send them your resume? Reach out to a contact someone introduced you to? You need follow-through to make sure all the plates remaining spinning.
- 3) **GOAL ATTAINMENT** – A big piece of achieving success with your job search is setting daily, weekly, and longer-term goals. Organizing your job search greatly increases that chance that you will reach your goals.

So, with all of that in mind, here are nine steps to organize your job search:

1. Set an end goal and put it in writing.

I will have a job as a _____ with _____ (company) by _____ (date).

If you don't have a specific job title, at least put a field (i.e. "I will have a job in the communications field").

Next, post this statement in places where you will see it frequently, and speak it OUT LOUD whenever you see it.

This activity is putting this desired result in your brain. You are literally creating a new neural pathway in your brain for this sentence.

A note: Make sure what you write down is SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-Sensitive.

2. Determine how much time, and what time, you will spend job searching.

If you're working full-time, you may only have 5-10 hours per week to job search.

If you are unemployed, I recommend job searching 30 hours per week.

The next step is to determine where those blocks of time are going to be and put them on your calendar.

10:00-11:00 at night is a good time to look at job boards, so you can save your daytime hours for networking activities.

Make sure you are setting a realistic schedule that, barring an emergency, you can stick with each week.

I encourage you to also calendar a set number of one-on-one networking meetings each week. You may have to move the time of the meeting (i.e. instead of Wednesday morning at 7:00 a.m. for coffee, your contact wants to meet on Thursday at noon for lunch), but there's something magic about setting aside time for networking activities on your calendar.

3. Create a workspace that is conducive to job searching.

Here's what you need for an effective job search:

- Phone
- Computer
- Printer
- A writing surface
- A calendar
- An organization system (see #6)

You won't be at your best if you are sitting on the sofa, with the tv on, trying to job search. Being in bed in your pj's isn't ideal, either.

Create a workspace that tells your brain "We're here to look for a job." No mixed messages, if at all possible.

4. Check your voice mail message.

If I had a nickel for every potential job candidate I've called, only to hear an unprofessional, cutesy, unintelligible, or just plain weird voice mail message...I'd be quite rich.

Make it professional. Period.

Don't worry about what your friends will think; they never call anyway.

5. Create an email account just for your job search.

First of all, you should never use hotsweetcheeks@gmail.com for your job search. Use some configuration of your first and last name, and gmail is preferable.

By having an email account dedicated to your job search, you can better keep track of your job search-related correspondence.

6. Create a system to manage your job search activities.

Whether you use an Excel spreadsheet, paper folders, or a web-based software system, you need a way to keep track of your job search activities.

These include:

- Who you've spoken with, when, and the gist of the conversation

- When you are supposed to follow up with people (this should also be reflected in your calendar)

- What you have submitted to whom, and when

When you submit materials to an employer, I recommend setting up a file folder on your computer for that employer. Include the version of your resume you sent, the cover letter, and anything else you sent that employer. Also include the position description if you have one.

7. Plan daily, or at least weekly, rewards for completing your job search activities.

People often decide that they will reward themselves for their job search efforts when they get a new job.

THAT IS TOO LATE, AND THE NEW JOB IS ITS OWN REWARD.

If you are setting, and achieving, daily goals, you should reward yourself for that on a daily, or at least weekly, basis.

What is rewarding to you? What can you afford, money- and time-wise, on a daily or weekly basis?

There's a sub-skill you have the opportunity to develop here: Delayed Gratification.

You get to take a walk with your pup AFTER you finish your job search goals for the day.

The trip to the yogurt shop comes AFTER you make those 5 calls.

That new pair of shoes comes AFTER you complete 5 in-person one-on-one networking meetings.

8. Secure a job search buddy, or if possible, a coach, to support you throughout your job search.

Guaranteed, you will hit low spots in your job search.

Road blocks.

Dead ends.

You need someone, preferably someone with expertise in the job search, to guide you through these rough patches so you can recharge your job search efforts.

Preferably someone who can help you take a look at your thoughts, feelings, actions, and results – and help you make the necessary shifts to stay on track with the goal you set out in #1.

9. Start with small activities that will virtually guarantee success.

Your first in-person networking meeting shouldn't be with the president of your dream company. (It probably wouldn't be, but stay with me here).

Start out with a few activities that don't seem daunting.

Network with people you know.

Go to a networking event with a friend.

Apply for a job you are fully qualified for.

Get comfortable with putting yourself out there, then begin to gently stretch yourself.

Job search yoga.

Want to schedule a FREE 30-minute consult call with me about your career goals? Here's the link to my calendar: www.timetrade.com/book/D6KLN