

Fast track your job search



By Carole Brown

Looking for a new job whether you are currently employed or between jobs can be very challenging and test your resilience. Finding your next job requires focus, commitment and a smart efficient approach. Here are **three key steps** that will help you to fast track your job search, maintain a positive mindset and to give your attention to what really counts.

1. Enlist your support crew

Job seeking can be challenging, confusing and take longer than you want it to. Experience shows that those who have a good 'support crew' around them have the best chance of maintaining the resilience and focus needed to succeed. My clients report that some of the best support has come from **trusted friends, colleagues and family** who are there to encourage them, proof read applications and generally listen to their plans and ideas.

Professional networks are also important as they are often the source of job leads and market information. Aim to be well connected through a variety of networks and be active in keeping healthy and diverse professional relationships beyond your immediate work place.

As important, can be a **qualified career coach** who will improve your efficiency in the professional world, provide expert advice on how to plan your career and be 'on your side' as you plan and implement your transition. In all of the leadership and career training that I have managed, coaching has been the single most valued element by participants. If you have never had a career coach, now may be the time to try. You can find a listing of qualified career coaches at www.cdaa.org.au

2. Identify what work you are looking for

If you already know what sort of job you are looking for, then skip right on to point 3. However, remember that the following points are **fundamental to a fast, efficient and effective job search**. Many people sort of know what kind of work they are looking for. They then go straight to updating their resume and applying for jobs. However, I encourage you to **take some time to reflect** on where you are currently at in your career and **what you really want** from your next job. This is just as true for people truly desperate for a job right now, as it is for those who have more time to plan a transition. Consider the following:

What DO you really want from your next job? What do you want to be able to contribute and with whom? Everyone has a different set of **work values**. They can relate to income, security, flexibility, work-life balance, team work, work culture, career progression, learning opportunities and so much more. They are **very important to identify** and try to achieve, at least for the most part, in your job. Use them as a reference point or a compass in your job search.

What are your key skills sets? Conduct a real and objective assessment of your skills. Check this with someone who knows you well, because most people tend to chronically underestimate their capabilities. Note the skills that you **really like to use, and want to develop**. Importantly, remember that many of your skills will be **transferable** into other jobs, organisations and even industries, such as communication and technical skills. Ask yourself, what are you **really good at** that sets you apart from others? Your **unique skill set** will help to differentiate yourself from other job seekers.

Where do your interests lie? Who would you like to work for? What do you want to do? Do you have favourite brands or organisations? What activities and environments provide you with most motivation? **When are you at your best?** Changing jobs is a perfect opportunity to **think expansively** about your job interests **and be open** to suggestions and possibilities. What you have done in the past is not necessarily what you need to do in the future. In a world of **multiple job changes**, it is very likely that what you first qualify in will not be what you are doing a few years later.

3. Be smart in your job search

By completing Step 2 you will have some good signposts towards what you are looking for. This means that your job search can now be **targeted and efficient**. There are many job seekers who unfortunately subscribe to the 'more is better' philosophy which sees them submitting multiple (sometimes hundreds) of applications through job vacancy sites. The problem is that these are usually the same resume submitted time and again for many different kinds of jobs. Unsurprisingly they have a very low success rate, because they do not take into account **what the employer is looking for**. It is **much more efficient** to take the time to prepare targeted applications for each and every job you apply for. And, ensure these jobs are a good fit for your skills, values and interests.

Approach employers that need people with your expertise and attributes. **Be clear** about how you can add value and help them solve the problems they are trying to solve. **Connect to your networks**. People need to know that you are looking for a job or considering a change. Recruitment agencies and on-line job boards are also obviously very important, search for the ones that best match your needs. Finally, make sure your applications are well-written and your interview skills are polished. For more advice about preparing for interviews, take a look at **best tips for succeeding at job interviews**.

If you have a career question, I'd be delighted to answer it and will get back to you as soon as I can. Go to <http://careeractually.com/ask-a-question/>

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