

## Staying Positive and Productive When You Are Laid Off

Being laid off can be one of the biggest life changes a person experiences. Making efforts to remain positive and productive during this transition time will serve you well in your efforts to get back on the employment track. Try to remember these tips:



1. **This situation is not your fault.** You are a victim of the economy, plain and simple. Remembering this is very important—every day when you wake up in the morning, you must remind yourself that you are not to blame for being unemployed.
2. **Avoid negative self-talk.** Our thinking drives our feelings. It is difficult to move forward when you are constantly putting yourself down or playing the victim. So much of how we feel comes from how we perceive ourselves. Self-talk is a very powerful psychological tool that can work for you or against you. Be vigilant—if you catch yourself thinking that you will never find a job, that you are worthless, a failure... STOP! These things are not true. Tell yourself you are a worthwhile human being, there is a job out there and you will find it, and you will be successful again. Even if you are having trouble believing that these things are true, say them out loud, to yourself every day.
3. **Make a list of all your marketable skills and examine them closely.** Think outside the box—what can you do with these skills, what might you be lacking, what can you do to pump the list up? Once you've got it down put the list in a prominent place and review it daily. When you get the chance to talk about your past work experience, speak to your skills, not your past job titles and descriptions. (Keep this in mind when writing your resume, also.)
4. **Keep to a schedule.** Get up, get showered and get dressed—keep your daily routine. This is incredibly important. Make “finding a job” your new job. Work at it with purpose. Update your resume, get online and “fine tooth comb” the job ads, take a class to boost your skills and therefore your marketability, or learn what you've always been interested in learning. Write a blog or learn a new hobby—it doesn't matter what you put into your schedule as long as you have one and you stick to it.
5. **Practice good self-care.** Eat three meals each day. Get enough sleep. Be active. Taking care of yourself will increase the chances of you landing that job when the opportunity comes along.
6. **Get out and do things.** Do not stay indoors or in your yard all day, every day. Don't just run errands, either. Go somewhere—a park in your area, nature trails, a museum or community theater, or meet a friend for coffee. Whatever your personal tastes and interests are—indulge them. Do something you love, outside of your home at least once every week.
7. **Use the Internet wisely.** It is very easy to get caught up in online social networks. They are fun and keep you busy for hours, but is it really productive to spend your day playing internet games or tweeting and posting Facebook messages? These sites with their games, instant messaging and artificial connections can be a trap that you will fall into if you're not careful. Use these sites for networking, self-promotion, keeping in touch with friends and family, and yes, maybe even an hour of self indulgence, but be careful not to lose yourself to them.
8. **Network with your network.** If you've got good relationships with your colleagues and ex-colleagues, you may have a leg up with your job search. Call on people you know and ask them to keep an eye out for you. Take them out for a cup of coffee and make sure to let them know of your skills and interests.
9. **Seek support.** Some people may feel uncomfortable sharing their job loss with their families. Ever hear of those laid off folks who continue the charade of getting up to “go to work,” hiding the fact that they've lost their jobs to their families? Deciding to seek out support and share your predicament with others better your chances of finding a replacement job as others may pitch in to help you with your search. It feels better when people are trying to support you—be it with a hug, a card or a kind word.
10. **Set Goals.** Not just goals for your job search, although these should be at the top of your list, but personal goals. Keep them simple and attainable, do not set yourself up for failure—a small success is still a success. Maybe you

want to shed a couple of pounds, learn a new skill or hobby, projects that you have been putting off, plan a party or family get together. Your goals need to be personal—they are there to keep you focused and on track. Post them next to your list of skills.

11. **Think outside the box.** Don't assume that because you've fulfilled a certain job or role for many years, or because it's always been your ambition to pursue a particular career, that you must, at all costs, continue down a particular path. Tough times require flexibility, resourcefulness and practical thinking. Don't pigeonhole yourself into specific role or type of work—go where the demand is (if your skills are a fit), in order to increase your chances of finding work.
12. **Don't give up.** Don't feel discouraged! It's easy to feel out of sorts when the job search takes longer than you expect. But these days, a lot of people are in the same boat. It's important to stay persistent though and to keep your spirits up when you're on your hunt. Tomorrow may just be the day you land something.
13. **Be self-aware.** A self-aware person is able to be proactive when it comes to taking care of themselves. It is all too easy to ignore the warning signs that may signal the onset of depression or substance abuse. If you think you have a problem—you probably do—seek counseling right away. Depression or addiction can spiral out of control quickly. It may not even seem very dramatic—it's just a passing thought, a bad day, a few drinks to help you sleep. Don't let it derail you—find a professional to talk to, work it out, and get back in top form. You have a schedule to keep!
14. **Leverage online job resources.** Depending on the type of work you do, certain sites may work out better for you than others as far as generating job leads. The best way to use job sites is to use them to give you leads on potential jobs. You may have to do some filtering and research to sidestep the bogus jobs that may be listed on these places. Some well rated sites include:

**Monster.com:** ranks in the top 20 of most visited web sites in existence. It's recognized as one of the most popular job search engines in the world. It's also the largest, as it houses job postings and resumes numbering in the millions.

**Job.com:** a resource for local jobs, career advice and other services to manage your job and career.

**Executive Search Online:** a leading nationwide job matching service for more experienced executives. Pay levels for these executive jobs are typically higher.

**Beyond.com:** an extensive career network that's set up as a community of niche sites in various industries.

**EssayEdge:** an essay editing resource for those who need a little help with their college, graduate or other academic admission essays. They help out students seeking to gain admission to the colleges and universities of their choice.

**ResumeEdge:** a resume editing resource for those who need a little help writing a high quality resume and/or cover letter. They are the leading provider of resume writing services online and the chosen resume partner of well-known job sites such as Yahoo! Hot Jobs, CareerJournal and Dice.com.

**Resume Rabbit:** a resume distribution service that submits your resume to top online job banks such as Monster, HotJobs, Career Builder, Dice, etc, as well as job search engines.

**Snag A Job:** a tool to help you find hourly jobs. This job site specializes in finding part-time and full-time hourly jobs.

**Indeed.com:** this site aggregates information from newspapers, company listings, and job boards. You can essentially search multiple sources with one search.

Source: "Ten ways to keep your sanity after being laid off", T. Anzaldi, Feb. 2010; Silicon Valley Blogger, Dec. 10, 2008