



Powerful Steps to a Resilient Job Search

Let's level out the playing field: I too have conducted a desperate job hunt. Fourteen years ago I found myself a single mom and fired from a job that, although no dream job, kept three human (and one canine) bellies fed.

(That was before I hit my stride as a writer, and that detour likely led me to the writing path ... but that's a topic for another post!)

I recall bleak days that stretched into nine months. That was also before I discovered a passion for career management. Ah, had I known then what I know now! I would have been re-employed much faster.

The importance of resilience is this: desperation is a deal-breaker in the job search. Desperation may lead the job hunter to an activity-numbing, depression-induced paralysis, and desperation detracts from a stellar interview.

Here are a few pointers for staying resilient throughout the job search.

1. Do set a few goals because without an end destination you are less likely to reach it! Rather than "I want a job" figure out which job, where, with which potential employers and start working towards that goal. Rather than a nine-month haphazard job search you absolutely can attain a job after a focused three month search.
2. Failure must be reframed from a self-defeating negative to a simple "well that was one more thing that didn't work ... no need to try that again." How you perceive things has a tremendous impact on your mood and reaction, which in turn impacts how others perceive you – either as a mature or needy hire.
3. Don't give into feelings of victimization. If you've not heard back after an interview, it's not about you; it's about the interviewer not following through. You cannot control other people's actions, but you **MUST** control your own thought patterns.

These three deal with key concepts: your control of your thoughts – perception, attitude and emotions, and your level of activity. You are responsible for your own happiness. How you reach that – or if you fail to reach it – is in your hands alone.



Many fear failure, but without action, you fail by default. To add more fuel to your resilience, here are a few tips for how to gear up for the sprint toward the finish line:

1. **Chunk and Define** – a job hunt requires many strategies like sourcing jobs to apply to, customizing the resume and cover (which may include searching out names as well), networking, “working” LinkedIn and other professional media sites and so much more! Assign chunks of time, committing two hours on Monday to “a” and three hours on Wednesday to “b,” and so on. Chunking tasks and assigning time limits are time management techniques for getting work done.
2. **Reward yourself** – for sticking to your commitments and timetable. Apparently humans respond well to *variety* in rewards, so consider creating a “job jar” of a different kind – one that rewards you for job searching! On slips of paper write rewards that are affordable and totally wonderful to you! For example, I would write the following:
 - a. Buy a book at the used book store
 - b. Spend \$20 at the bead store and create a specific project
 - c. Take an afternoon off and go for a long nature walk
 - d. Go out for Pad Thai

And if you need a little more oomph to get you going, consider that perfection is a myth – we all struggle and learn; take one day at a time rather than project failure into the future; focus on the process rather than getting tied up in knots over controlling the outcome; don’t compare yourself to others, especially when those “others” have had success where you have not (resentment is an emotion that is damaging to one’s health); and above all, be kind in your thoughts to yourself. No negative self-talk beating you up!

If you need a professional’s help to get started on the right foot, I would be pleased to be of service. Onward!

- Stephanie Clark survived the many twists and turns of employment and discovered her dream job as a resume writer. Today, Stephanie commits her workdays to “taking resumes from lacklustre to sparkling”!