

Keep Your Chin Up! How To Stay Positive During a Long Job Search

For most people, having a job or career is not only a way for them to earn enough money to survive, it's also a part of their identity. Having a job you enjoy is good for the morale and self esteem. So what happens when you find yourself out of work and unable to find another job?

A lot of people find themselves out of work due to company downsizing, and it's often hard to cope with the fact that you weren't considered "necessary" in your workplace any more, especially when most of your colleagues are still working. That, in itself, can be a huge blow to the self esteem. You may find yourself constantly asking yourself why YOU lost your job, while so many others kept theirs. Weren't you as good as they were? Maybe you were less likeable? You may find yourself asking the same questions over and over and feeling worse and worse for it.

Then, there's the fact that you now have to present yourself at the unemployment office asking for money. For some people, turning up for their fortnightly unemployment payment is just a part of life, for others it's a crushing symbol of their perceived uselessness and worthlessness.

Then there's applying for job after job after job, some which are well beneath your old pay packet, and require far less competence or qualifications than you possess, and yet, you are knocked back time after time.

It's no wonder that so many people really struggle with unemployment and the search for a job! The irony is, it's very hard for someone who is depressed and lacking self esteem to get a job, because it's so difficult to be upbeat and positive during the all important job interview.

So how do you remain positive during such a challenging time? The first step is to analyse why you are unemployed. Why did you lose your job? If your particular job role was cut, then it's highly likely that the decision to let you go wasn't personal and wasn't a reflection of your competence. It can be easy to fall into the trap of wallowing in self-pity, but it's vital that you don't.

Start by taking out a piece of paper and writing down every thing you're good at. Everyone has skills and talents, and sometimes you need to remind yourself of that. You also need to start getting more proactive looking for work. Instead of just applying for jobs listed in your local paper, hit the streets with a pile of CVs and go door knocking. Sure it's difficult, but being out of work is harder!

Treat looking for work as a job. Don't sleep in until midday and laze around in your pyjamas. Get out of bed at your usual hour, shower and dress yourself. Then start looking for work. Brush up your CV, even get professional help if you don't think yours measures up. Whenever you get down, go and spend some time with good friends or loved ones who know how to cheer you up. Remember that persistence does pay off in the end and you will get another job.