



## Simplify Your Job Search

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**W**e've recently experienced one of the most difficult employment periods in history. Whether you're a recent college graduate or an employee looking for the Holy Grail, here are some ideas to simplify your job search:

**Get your mind in shape.** Just as you'd want to be in peak physical shape before a big game, it's important to be in a good frame of mind before a job search. Consider beginning an exercise routine, reading a self-help book, finding an outlet that you enjoy, eating well, getting plenty of sleep, and meditating to make yourself feel better and to reduce stress. [A positive attitude is key.](#)

**Ignore the law of averages.** According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employed people work an average of 7.5 hours per day and get 8.67 hours of sleep. If these figures don't exactly apply to you, what makes you think that national unemployment averages do? So, next time you hear that it's tough to find a job, remember, the unemployment rate is only a broad indicator of the job market. Even in a lousy job market, people get job offers every day. It may as well be you.

**Don't fool yourself.** Some people think, "My phone will start ringing when I begin my job search." Yeah, sure. When was the last time someone called you with a job opportunity? Dreams, unlike eggs, don't hatch from sitting on them.

**Cash isn't the only currency.** Some people forgo opportunities if they don't provide big bucks. The fact is, every experience is an investment in your future. If you leave your job, you'll take that experience with you and cash it in for a bigger prize.

**If the shoe fits.** Put yourself in the employer's shoes. Would you rather hire someone referred by a person you

trust or receive a resume from someone unknown? So, [network...network...network.](#)

**Are you playing bumper cars?** Unfortunately, some treat networking like a game of bumper cars in which progress is measured by the number of people they run into rather than the quality of the underlying relationships. Simply put, just handing out more business cards and adding more friends to Facebook or LinkedIn is "networking." These "networkers" don't understand the importance of building long-lasting relationships; instead, they'll reach out to others only when they need something themselves. And then they're surprised when their requests produce little. Don't wait until you desperately need a network to begin developing one. Networks are built on trust, respect, and personal chemistry — that doesn't happen overnight. In contrast to bumper-car networking, members of a well-developed network will be more likely to offer advice, provide an informational interview, or grant a referral.

**Have an indoor picnic.** If you planned a picnic and it started raining, you'd bring the picnic indoors. So, if Plan "A" doesn't go exactly as expected, be prepared to roll with the punches. Don't be bullheaded. You may have to modify your expectations. Your new

job may require a longer commute, lower salary, or accepting a different type of job than the one you had your sights on. This is your Plan "B." It doesn't mean you should settle for the first opportunity that comes along or, worse, sell your soul. It does mean you may have to compromise. Remember, broadening your search doesn't mean you have to accept any job that is offered, but you should give serious consideration to any offer you receive. Maybe Plan "B" will work out better after all.

**Don't concentrate on getting the job; instead, focus on the quality activity that you generate. Every good interview or meeting...brings you one step closer to your goal.**

**Are you swimming against the tide?** Rip currents are powerful channel currents of water flowing away from the shore. Many people swept out to sea try to fight their way back by swimming against the current. That's how people drown, from exhaustion. The fact is, people who remain calm and swim parallel to the shore swim out of the current and to safety. The same is true with a job search. Remember to go with the flow.

**How do you measure success?** Some people beat themselves up if they don't get a job in a week. Like the legendary football coach Vince Lombardi, I believe you don't have to worry about winning games if you focus on fundamentals such as blocking and tackling. So, don't concentrate on getting the job; instead, focus on the quality activity that you generate. Every good interview or meeting with a member of your network brings you one step closer to your goal. Make sure to treat yourself to something special for moving one step closer to the finish line. You deserve it.

**It takes two to tango.** Some applicants feel that potential employers hold all the cards during the hiring process. The fact is, organizations need great talent as much as you want a great employer. Be selective. It'll be a win-win proposition.

**If you believe you can't, you won't.** A job search doesn't have to be a terrible experience. It's the beginning of an exciting new opportunity. Have fun. Reconnect with members of your network. And remember your experience so that you can lend a helpful hand to someone in need once you've landed your great new job.

I would say good luck, but you won't need it. You'll be making your own. ●

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Frank Sonnenberg, a marketing strategist, has written three books and published over 300 articles. • *Industry Week* named his book, *Managing With a Conscience* one of the Top Ten Business Books of the Year • Salon.com named Sonnenberg's blog among the top 100 in 2009 • *Trust Across America* named Sonnenberg one of the Top 100 Thought Leaders of 2010 • In 2011, *Social Media Marketing Magazine* (SMM) selected Sonnenberg as one of the top 77 marketing authors in the world on Twitter. [www.franksonnenbergonline.com](http://www.franksonnenbergonline.com) © 2011 Frank K. Sonnenberg. All rights reserved.