



BITE-SIZED CAREER STRATEGIES

Preparing for a Job Search

There are typically two times you'll find yourself needing to prepare for a job search — you were let go from your current employer, or you decide that it's time to find a new job.

If you are let go unexpectedly, recognize that this is typically a high stress experience. Give yourself time and space to grieve and be angry; you'll need to be in a positive place when you're ready to move forward. If you have been let go (or think you're about to be):

- Before leaving your organization for the last time, determine what benefits you might be eligible for: outplacement assistance, a letter of reference, COBRA, etc.
- File for Unemployment immediately. Each state has different rules and criteria for applying — make sure you understand the rules in your state.
- Examine your budget; make sure your financial decisions are prudent ones.
- Identify your local American Job Center (AJC) or similar organization; there are many free resources available to upgrade your skills, help you with modern job search techniques, and serve as a resource — there are 2,400 nationwide. See:
<https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/AmericanJobCenters/american-job-centers.aspx> to locate a Center near you.

Regardless of whether your job search is forced or by choice, here are some of the essentials:

- Reach out to your network — that's basically everyone you know — and let them know that you are looking.
- Research the companies and organizations that interest you; find out if you have the required credentials and experience; if not, figure out how to close your gaps. Your local Economic Development Center can provide information on businesses in your area..
- Analyze and list the top skills you offer an employer and have stories that highlight your skills to share during interviews.
- Develop a strong cover letter and resume. Make sure that these documents reflect modern trends, and include plenty of accomplishments and metrics.
- Practice your elevator speech and answer to the question on why you are looking for new position.
- Refresh your technical skills — this includes Microsoft Office, Zoom, and other similar tools.
- Apply for jobs consistently — aim for 5-6 applications each day.
- Keep your spirits up — finding a job takes time. You should expect your search to take anywhere from 60 days to 1 year.



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