

BATTLING LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED PREJUDICE: THE TRUTH BEHIND THE MISCONCEPTIONS



Of all the unemployed Americans, those who are most fearful of remaining unemployed, even when the economy recovers are the long-term unemployed. Survey after survey reveal that employers are most indisposed towards them and are more likely to put their faith on others. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of long-term unemployed, or those who have been without a job for at least 27 weeks, has swelled to upwards of 5 million. Given the reluctance of employers to employ them and the knowledge that more their prolonged joblessness, the less their chances of employment, it is imperative that they know how they should approach their attempts to get out of the rut they find themselves in. The 2012 Job Preparedness Indicator, a yearly initiative of DeVry University's Career Advisory Board, says that nearly 10 percent more hiring managers in 2012 are reluctant to hire the long-term unemployed, than in 2011. 56 percent of hiring managers said that they would prefer to hire someone else. 74 percent of the employers who responded to the survey said that, following the interview, they relied on their own instincts to judge whether the candidate had the skills to fill the vacant position. Of the 516 hiring managers from Fortune-1000 companies who were asked the question, a mere 17 percent said that they used a person's past performance as a yardstick to measure a person's employable qualities. The survey reveals that there is truth in the conception that job seekers who have a gap in their resume find re-employment more difficult than the other unemployed. So much so that the long-term unemployed have started believing in it and more than half of those whom the survey interviewed said that they would not apply for a job for which they did not have any experience. This reflects that the long gap in their employment is preying on their minds and it would be in their larger interests if they did not dwell on it. Analysts say that they should change the manner in which they present themselves to prospective employers and if questioned about the gap in their resume, should instead talk about the skills they possess and what those skills would mean to the work they intend to do. Job-seekers should seek professional guidance about what to put on their resumes and how they should approach an interview as their long-term unemployment has made them disillusioned and cynical and inadvertent mistakes may creep into their approach that may seriously impact their job chances. Pete Joodi, a member of the Career Advisory Board advised that instead of worrying about where the next job will come from they should use their time to develop themselves professionally and upgrade themselves in understanding technology and upgrading their social media skills. Moreover, they can add to their existing skills by joining a class, or working as volunteers or taking up a less lucrative temporary job. The Career Advisory Board advises the long-term unemployed to make these measures a part of their being to circumvent the existing unfairness and prejudice towards them. Don't just give up on jobs and convince yourself that just because the world says that jobs will be hard to find, you will not land one. Stay connected, both online and off. Make new contacts and practice selling yourself. And last but not the least, you are not alone, there are five million of your American brethren sailing in the same boat. They have a lot to contribute and it is only a matter of time before, these despondent days are history and a new period of growth and prosperity is ushered in.