

HOW TO DEAL WITH CAREER SETBACKS



Summary: *How can you deal with career setbacks and excel in your career? Find out how in this article.*

Most of us agree that our workplace is constantly changing. Building a career today is much more uncertain than it was decades ago. Factors such as the global economy, demographics and technological advances can drastically affect many industries each year.

In my job, I have the opportunity to meet with hundreds of people who are affected by these changes. Some individuals struggle under the weight of today's workplace uncertainty and some excel in this ever-changing environment. Surprisingly, factors such as education level or age are not indicators of who will succeed. In talking with these two groups of people, it becomes apparent that the difference is how they approach the work world. For example:

- 1. The people who excel in today's workplace have learned to simply accept the fact that change is here to stay.** This is probably the most important indicator of success. Your first reaction may simply be that some people are risk takers who enjoy the thrill of change and some people are not. Although this may be the case, I have found varying personality traits in each group. That is, the people who excel aren't necessarily sky divers or bungee jumpers. Some of them are quite conservative, but these people have decided that the conservative response to today's job market is to expect change.
- 2. The people who excel look at their job as an opportunity to learn something new.** The key to staying with the same company for several years is to learn, learn, and learn some more. Technology continues to change at a rapid pace and so do the skills needed in the workplace. Successful people take every training opportunity offered at work - and often aim to gain additional skills on their own time. This doesn't mean that they have no leisure time - it can be as simple as learning a new software package by playing with it at home.
- 3. The people who excel take responsibility for themselves.** There are two types of people who come to me for help in finding a job; those who say, "Here I am, help me" and those who say, "Here is what I can bring to an employer, do you have any ideas?" There is a big difference in the attitudes conveyed by these two statements. Employers look for people who can adapt to changes without a lot of hand-holding. Remember, owners and managers are also busy adjusting to their own changes.
- 4. The people who excel think positively.** If you accept that change in the workforce is reality - why not do so with a smile? I have interviewed many people who have lost their job in middle management due to downsizing. One man told me, "I've accepted the fact that I won't find a similar job out there today and I will take other positions - but I won't like it." If you find yourself feeling this way, stop your job search and think about what type of new position might make you happy. Then approach your new career search with a positive goal rather than a negative one.