

REMAIN POSITIVE DURING A LONG SEARCH

Summary: In this Q&A article, learn some advice about how to stay positive and find success during a long job search.



Question: I'm graduating next month with a bachelor's degree in management and information systems. I've been working for the same company for the last three years and have been looking for a new job for the past six months. I've gone to networking fairs, used the Internet and visited the career center at school, but nothing has worked. People I tutor are landing interviews, but I can't even get my foot in the door. What can I do to improve my results?

Answer: Discouraging is the middle name of a job search. At times, staying upbeat can be the greatest challenge on the road to a job offer. You've been trained in a marketable field and have experience, so my hunch is that it's just a matter of time before you land a position.

To reassure yourself that you're doing everything possible, evaluate your job search. Include your own assessment and gather feedback from others. Measure yourself in the following areas:

Technical expertise

Do you have the skills (coursework, software, and languages) that employers seek?

Printed promotional materials

Do your resume and cover letter lack anything that your peers are including?

Experience

Working your way through college is a definite asset. But since you've worked for one company for three years, prospective employers may think that you're seeking a higher-level position than your peers. Also, is your experience in an area that is in demand?

Personal presentation

How are your attitude, interpersonal skills, and chemistry? Seek feedback from others to determine if your style needs tweaking. Don't let your discouragement show when speaking with prospective employers.

Job-search strategies

It looks as if you're covering the bases. Continue to network proactively.

Check back with your college's career counselor for assistance in conducting this analysis. Pay attention to the subtleties of the advice they give and act on the feedback you receive. At the same time, believe in yourself and keep your chin up.