

ATTITUDE and JOB SEARCH*

A successful job search is a matter of attitude. A positive attitude is the **cause** of a successful job search, not the result. It's just common sense that the more negative you are about your own abilities, your job prospects, the companies you apply to work for, and life in general, the less likely you are to land a job. Employers want people who believe in themselves and their skills, who want to work, who want to work for *them*, and who generally have a positive attitude.

While maintaining a positive attitude is vital to a successful job search, there will be times when you get discouraged. It may seem impossible to revive that positive energy level. But there are many things you can do to bring your rosy outlook back to life and keep it in good shape. Think of the following tips as a crash course in CPR: Cheerful Positiveness Resuscitation.

★ **Feel good about yourself.** This is the key to a positive attitude, and all the points that follow are ways of helping you feel good about yourself.

★ **Talk positively about yourself and your abilities.** You know the story about the little engine that could, right? What you believe about yourself is the foundation of all your future actions.

★ **Take charge!** Accept responsibility for your life and your job search. It is not up to your mother, father, girlfriend or boyfriend, or your aunt Zelda in Jasper to find you a job. Although your network can be a definite help, YOU are responsible for the success of your job search.

★ **Let go of regrets about the past.** Instead of blaming yourself and constantly rehashing past mistakes, take the opportunity to learn from the past. Build on past experiences to improve yourself and your abilities.

★ **Stop worrying about the future.** While you don't want to live in the past, you also don't want to live in the future. Worrying is a habit, and you can change the habit if you really try. If you find yourself stuck in a negativity rut, shovel yourself out by focusing on your hopes and dreams rather than on your fears.

★ **Flatter yourself.** The job search is no time to be humble. Read every complimentary thing about yourself that you can find. Letters of praise, past awards, performance appraisals, or any other positive recognitions you have are good ways to remind yourself of your worth and talents. Paste these things on a wall or a bulletin board in your work area to boost your spirits whenever you feel a little down.

★ **Start each day on a positive, upbeat note.** The start of your day will set the tempo for everything that follows. Do something every morning that will put you in a good mood, whether that is taking a walk, listening to some upbeat music, doing a crossword, or just relaxing with a good cup of coffee.

★ **Get physical!** You've heard the saying, "healthy body, healthy mind." Keeping yourself healthy and in good physical shape will boost your energy level and make it easier to maintain a positive mental attitude.

- Exercise regularly.

- Eat a well-balanced diet.
- Get enough sleep.



Create a schedule and stick to it. Knowing what you are supposed to do each day can prevent you from feeling lost or bored. Sticking to your schedule as closely as possible will provide focus to your job search.



Keep up appearances. While nobody expects you to wear a suit and tie every day on your job search, try not to dress too casually. Keep your work space and living space neat and tidy as well. Lying around the house in your old sweats with pizza boxes strewn all over the floor may be relaxing, but it won't help you set a positive framework for your job search.



Take a team approach to finding a job. Even if the team is only two people, it is helpful to have somebody else to share ideas with and to review your progress on a regular basis.



Accept your cycles. While it is important to maintain a positive attitude, it's unrealistic to think that you will be 100 per cent positive forever. The trick is not to get down on *yourself* when you get down. Set a time limit on how long (30 minutes, for example) you will allow yourself to stay down when you feel a little depressed.



Join a professional group. If you are looking for a job in a certain profession, joining an association can be an excellent way to keep up to date on developments and trends. It will help you develop your network and put you in contact with people that have interests similar to yours.



Keep growing. Continue to develop your skills and knowledge while looking for work. Do this by:

- Taking a class.
- Attending conferences, workshops and seminars.
- Subscribing to trade magazines.
- Reading the newspaper and other current-affair magazines.
- Doing volunteer work that uses the skills and knowledge you want to use in your next job.


If you are not immediately successful in finding work, you might start to question your skills and qualifications. Keeping on top of the skills, knowledge and trends in your field will make you feel positive about your ability to do the type of work you want to do.




Don't take rejections personally. Very few people land the very first job they apply to or are interviewed for. Your attitude really depends on how you look at things. You can see a job rejection as a personal attack on your abilities or character, or you can see it as an opportunity to grow and learn more about yourself.




Order now, don't delay. Procrastination is a sure way to lower your self-esteem. Nobody actually considers putting things off as a positive trait, do they? The more you delay, the more depressed you will be when you realize all the things you have left to do. On the other hand, doing something every day will make you feel like you are putting in a real effort and you will feel good about yourself.

 **Attitude is contagious.** Surround yourself with supportive, positive people.

 **Reward yourself.** Make sure you take time out to relax after a day of job hunting:

- Go to a movie or rent a video.
- Read a book.
- Take a walk.
- Do anything else that you find enjoyable and relaxing and that will take your mind off job hunting.

 **Talk to someone.** You might feel really burned out, angry or frustrated after a long, unsuccessful job search. Or you might reach a stage where you want to give up looking for work altogether. At this point it might be a good idea to talk to a trained professional, such as a counsellor, psychologist or religious leader, that can help you sort out your feelings.

* Taken from www.nextsteps.org