

Is it time to reassess your job search plan?

Telltale signs that your search tactics need a makeover

It's easy to get frustrated with your job search, especially if you've been searching for a while. But not making headway can mean that you need to reassess your approach. Not sure if your job seeking process needs a makeover? Here are eight telltale signs that it's time to rethink your job search approach.

You're not hearing back from employers

If you've spent months applying and aren't hearing back from employers, it's time to reassess. Most likely, you're not tailoring your résumé and cover letters enough to warrant a response, explains Heather Huhman, founder of Come Recommended, a career consultancy. Also, check for other errors, such as spelling, in your documents.

You're landing interviews but no offers

Not getting an offer means your interviewing techniques could be out of date. Do your due diligence to find out what interviewing skills you're lacking. "Identify your weaknesses during interviews and improve upon them," Huhman says. "Do this by practicing interview questions with a friend or family member, attending mock interview sessions at a career center or videotaping yourself answering questions."

You're reaching too high

While it's always recommended to go for your dream job, those dreams must be realistic. Applying for jobs "without the necessary qualifications" can be a waste of time, unless you're willing to take time and build that experience, Huhman explains.

You're focusing on job roles not companies

Instead of conducting a broad search based on function, tailor your search to specific firms where you'd really like to work. "Focusing on five to ten specific companies of interest in your desired location allows for a much more focused job search," Huhman says.

You're depressed

A job search is never fun, but if you find yourself getting sadder each day, it's a sign that you need a new approach, says Dawn Rasmussen, founder of Pathfinder Writing and Career Services. "If you start to feel

down, try volunteering in industry organizations to help increase your visibility, make yourself a known entity, and help build skills during a job search," she adds.

You're unaware of your web presence

If you've never paid attention to how your name appears online, it's time to start. "Nearly every HR professional now will check Google and Facebook to research potential candidate," Huhman says. Complete your LinkedIn profile, check privacy settings for Facebook and Twitter and make sure any other online forums you've involved in are appropriate for a professional audience.

You're not circling back with contacts

Whether it's a thank-you note after the interview or a simple email to check in with someone in your network, it's important to keep an open channel of communication with those who've been helping you with your search. "No one wants to feel used, so disregarding new contacts after the initial contact is a huge problem that many people don't realize is killing their job search," Rasmussen says.

Your network is not helpful

Just because you're spending your time talking to contacts, doesn't mean these are people that can actually be useful in your search. Instead, reassess your network and find contacts that are a match for the industry and position you're trying to pursue -- even if it means approaching well-regarded experts. "Swallow your fear and pursue meaningful connections with contacts relevant to your area," Rasmussen says.

You're ready to take any job available

Even if you're desperate, announcing that you're looking for any paying job can actually hurt your chances. Take time to figure out the specifics of your job search and ask for assistance based on these requirements. Even those closest to you who would really like to help feel lost without any direction, Rasmussen explains. "Many job seekers fail to understand this basic rule of asking for help: Specifics get you farther in terms of assistance from your network than vague generalities," she says.

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