



Stay sane while on the job-hunt

By Holly Cunliffe

So you've been unemployed for a while now, and you're tearing your hair out with boredom and frustration. Read our tips on how to stay sane and motivated while looking for that dream job:

Get Temping

Taking a temp job will solve a myriad of woes. It will get you earning some money, keep you occupied for a few days, and help fill in the dreaded "gap" in your resume. Also, there is always the chance that the employer you're temping for will like you and offer you a full time opportunity, or you may become aware of other positions in the company that you could apply for.

Gather together all your letters of recommendation

Put all your letters of reference, nice emails from past bosses, certificates, testing scores and anything else that makes you feel good about yourself into a binder. On days when you're feeling low, pull it out, and remind yourself how great you are!

Get a Hobby

Find an activity that will keep you busy and keep you motivated to get up each day. It doesn't have to be expensive; try running, hiking, knitting, at-home workout DVDs, reading library books, photography (you could start a photo blog and share it with friends and family!), painting, or scrapbooking (your local dollar store will have fantastic cheap art supplies!). Also, check out the website www.meetup.com where locals who are interested in similar things can find each other and go on planned activities, often for free! And of course there's always many volunteer opportunities that would love to have you helping out!

Plan your day as if you were at work

The worst thing you can do is treat every day like the weekend (although tempting as it sounds!). You need to give yourself structure; get up at a set time, get dressed (moping around in sweats or pajamas will not keep you motivated!), spend the first few hours of the day on the job hunt. Check specific websites each day for new postings, follow up with employers with whom you have applied to, update your resume and customize cover letters to each job you apply for, phone a few people from your phonebook each day to check in and remind them that you're still looking for work. Have a checklist of things you need to accomplish each day (even doing the laundry and getting the groceries will help you feel like you have achieved something).

Chill Out

Some days you may have "one of those days" where you freak out because you're not getting any bites. But just take a deep breath, remind yourself that you *won't* be unemployed forever, and tomorrow will be one step closer to having that job. Enjoy the time you have off - see it as an opportunity to do all the things you never had time to do when you were working!

"God gives every bird a worm, but he doesn't throw it into the nest!" Swedish Proverb

